



# St. John Catholic School

Educational Ministry of St. John Parish

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December 16, 2015

### **Letter from the Principal**

This prayer was shared with us at a recent principals' meeting, and it touched my heart – I hope it touches yours as well. In today's world, it is challenging to remember the reason for the season.

Blessings to you and your families for a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year! See you in 2016!

*If You Look for Me at Christmas*

*If you look for me at Christmas,  
you won't need a special star  
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,  
I'm right there where you are.  
You may not be aware of Me  
amid the celebrations  
You'll have to look beyond the stores  
and all the decorations.  
But if you take a moment  
from your list of things to do,  
and listen to your heart,  
you'll find I'm waiting there for  
you.  
You're the one I want to be with,  
you're the reason that I came,  
and you'll find me in the stillness  
as I'm whispering your name.*

*Love, Jesus*

Blessings,  
*Mrs. Rachel Gonsalves*

### **IMPORTANT**

#### **SJCS Christmas Program Reminder**

All families are invited to our annual SJCS Christmas Program on Thursday, **December 17 at 6:30 p.m.** in the church. Students must report to their classrooms by 6 p.m. Please check with your child's teacher for specific details.

Our parish is blessed with many active ministries celebrating various cultural and faith activities in December. Please note that the parish will be celebrating Posadas in the gym tomorrow night, so parking may be a challenge. Exercise patience and caution in the parking lot, arrive early, and consider carpooling for convenience. Parking will also be available at San Lorenzo High School.



### **Pope Francis Declares Year of Mercy**

From Advent 2015 to the end of the liturgical year in 2016, the Catholic Church is celebrating a Jubilee Year of Mercy. Pope Francis is encouraging the entire Church to meditate on God's mercy in their lives and to share that mercy with others. Year of Mercy website (Vatican)  
<http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en.html>

**A gentle reminder that SEP  
will not be available after school  
on Friday, December 18.  
Thank you!**

### **Parking Lot Protocol Reminder**

As a courtesy to all of our parents and to avoid traffic backups on Lewelling Blvd., park your car in a designated spot if you and your children require more time, e.g. opening the trunk, being unbuckled from a car seat, zipping jackets, etc. as this will allow vehicles behind you to keep the line moving.

Remember that all families are invited to walk children to the schoolyard and join us for morning assembly, pledge, and prayer. We look forward to seeing you!

### **Book Fair Volunteers Needed**

We welcome Mrs. Monica Gioukaris as the SJCS winter Book Fair coordinator. The Scholastic Book Fair will run from January 28-February 2, and volunteers will be needed to set up, help with sales, and pack up at the end of the fair. Mrs. Gioukaris will have sign ups available on line in early January, but if you're interested in helping, please e-mail her at [moni21luv@sbcglobal.net](mailto:moni21luv@sbcglobal.net).

### **SCRIP Orders**

Thank you to all of our families who used our SCRIP program to purchase gift cards this holiday season! We appreciate your support and thank you for using this fundraising service.

### **A Special Volunteer Thank You!**

We would like to offer a special thank you to so many families who have volunteered their time and talent to the numerous programs these past few weeks. Thank you to the families who volunteered to run our annual Santa

Shoppe, field trip drivers and chaperones, hot lunch volunteers, Wednesday newsletter helpers, those who coordinated and came to our Parent Club presentation about Internet and On-line safety by Deputy Silva from Alameda County Sheriffs Dept., and to everyone who is volunteering in our classrooms for holiday parties and festivities. It is this spirit of volunteering and supporting SJCS that gives all of our children a wonderful school experience!

### **A Special Thank You**

The following thank you letter was sent to our school community from our parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society:

*To the students and their families at St. John the Baptist School,  
We, the officers and members of St. Vincent de Paul Society here at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church wish to thank you very much for your generosity and assistance helping us during the annual Thanksgiving and upcoming Christmas food distribution to the people who are in need.*

*Your help and your presence for those in need was much appreciated by those receiving your help and by our officers and members. You all made a big difference in their lives. We pray that God will bless you and our families and reward you abundantly – “for whatever you do for one of mine, you do for Me” – and we pray for you always. Keep the Vincentian spirit of giving forever in your hearts.*

*The St. Vincent de Paul Society*

### **Grades 6-8 Service Opportunity! St. Vincent de Paul Needs Your Help**

The ministry of St. Vincent de Paul at St. John would like to open up the Christmas basket assembly and distribution to students and parents in grades 6-8. Parent service hours will be

given for supervising students on Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup> from 12-2 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. If you would like to sign up for a time slot, please contact Mr. Epperson at [sepperson@csdo.org](mailto:sepperson@csdo.org) or sign up at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094faba62ba0ff2-stvincent>. Thank you for giving your time and service to the needy in our community during this holiday season!

### **Reminder! Student Emergency Kits**

St. John Catholic School recently completed an inventory of emergency supplies. We have a good stock of medical supplies and emergency blankets, but need to ensure emergency food and water packs for each child. Schools customarily ask families to provide an emergency pack for each child at the beginning of the school year, and then the packs are sent home at the end of each school year to be restocked with non-expired products.

Beginning in January 2016, families will be asked to provide an emergency pack for their child(ren). Required supplies will include two 16oz. bottles of water, six high protein bars or one 2400-calorie Datrix food ration bar, and one pair of underwear. All consumable items should not expire before June 2016.

More information regarding these kits will be sent home the first week in January. Your child's safety and comfort are our first priority, and your cooperation is much appreciated.

### **San Francisco Boys Choir Auditions**

Auditions for the San Francisco Boys Chorus will take place at the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland on Saturday, January 9, 2016. Boys 5-12 years old with unchanged voices are encouraged to apply, and no prior music training is necessary.

For more information, contact San Francisco Boys Chorus Office at 415-861-7464 or visit them at [sfbcfinance@sfbc.org](mailto:sfbcfinance@sfbc.org)  
[Sfbc.org/auditions](http://Sfbc.org/auditions)

### **Brrr! It's Cold Outside**

Students may wear non-uniform jackets to and from school only, and are required to wear uniform sweatshirts, sweaters, and jackets during the school day, including recess and lunch. There are plenty of uniform options to keep you warm during these chilly months.

Boots and flats (shoes without a strap across the instep) are not allowed at any time, including non-uniform days.

Remember that **leggings are not allowed**. Girls may wear solid black, solid green, or solid white tights with skirts and jumpers only.

When purchasing shoes for school, please remember to follow our dress code guidelines – shoes must be solid black, brown, or white – no patterns or prints.

### **Advent Reconciliation Services at St. John**

Families and students in grades 3-8 are invited to Advent reconciliation services at St. John the Baptist Church. Reconciliation in English will be on Saturday, December 19 from 3-4 p.m. in the church. Reconciliación en Español será el Lunes, Diciembre 21 de 6-7 p.m. en la iglesia.

### **Christmas Eve Family Mass**

Thank you to all of our students who volunteered to participate in the Children's Christmas Liturgy on December 24 at 4:30 p.m.

**Rehearsal** for this mass will be **Saturday, December 19 at 9:30 a.m. in the church.** If you didn't get a chance to sign up but still wish to participate, please come to the rehearsal and you'll be given a role in this special holiday celebration. See you there!



### **Calendar Reminders**

#### **Christmas Program – Church**

Thursday, December 17, 6:30 p.m.

#### **Noon Dismissal - No After School SEP**

Friday, December 18

#### **Christmas Vacation**

December 21 – January 4, 2016



#### **School Resumes**

Monday, January 4, 2016

#### **Children's Mass - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Sunday, January 10, 9:30 a.m.

#### **8<sup>th</sup> gr. Nacho Sale**

Wednesday, January 13

#### **MUSE Band Concert**

Wednesday, January 13, 4 p.m.

#### **Peace Prayer Service**

Thursday, January 14, 2:20 p.m.

#### **No School – Elementary Staff Day**

Friday, January 15

#### **No School – MLK, Jr. Day**

Monday, January 18

#### **Open House, Pancake Breakfast, Book Fair for the Opening of Catholic Schools Week**

Sunday, January 31, 2016

8 a.m. Pancake Breakfast

9:30 a.m. Mass

10:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Open  
House and Book Fair