

# SHSF NEWS



Monthly Newsletter of Information

December 2014

## Advent Season Upon Us

During the season of Advent, various activities have been planned for our students. These include our morning prayer services with the Advent Wreath and daily reflections about the liturgical season.

There are also a number of activities listed on our school calendar and in our parish bulletins that will give you and your family an opportunity to fully prepare for the coming of our Lord.



Advent calendars were sent home last week to help you and your family prepare for the birth of Jesus. Suggested ideas will help everyone understand how important the season of Advent really is and that Jesus is the reason for the season. These calendars definitely add to the richness of the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Please try to encourage your children to appreciate the true meaning of Christmas during the weeks ahead by taking part in these activities.

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## Mission Statement

*Providing excellence in academics and a deepening faith in God and Gospel Values in an environment that is caring, challenging, and respectful, striving to develop in every student the habits of thinking critically and acting responsibly in daily life.*

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The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales 307 School Street Bennington, VT

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## “An Unplugged Christmas”

“An Unplugged Christmas” will be presented by the students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5 on Monday, December 15, at 6:30 PM at Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Church. The show will be approximately 30 minutes long. Unless your child is in the Nativity Scene (We will let you know.), they must wear nice Christmas attire. More detailed information will follow.

All students in the elementary grades will be participating in this performance. This activity is not optional. We are a community that celebrates this tradition together.

We will be having a run-through rehearsal at the church on Friday morning, December 12. We will walk to the church and then back to school when we are done.

### REFLECTION

*O God, our loving  
Father, help us rightly to  
remember the birth of Jesus,  
That we may share in the  
song of the angels, the  
gladness of the shepherds,  
and the worship of the wise  
men.*

*Close the door of hate and  
open the door of love all  
over the world.*

*Deliver us from evil by the  
blessing that Christ brings,  
and teach us  
to be merry with clear  
hearts.*

*May the Christmas morning  
make us happy to be your  
children and the Christmas  
evening bring us to our beds  
with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving, and  
forgiven, for Jesus' sake.*

## Tree Lighting Celebration

Third and Fourth Grade parents will be hosting a Christmas Tree Lighting on Tuesday, December 2, from 6:30 PM until 7:30 PM on the school grounds. This will be an outdoor event, so dress warmly! There will be refreshments, caroling led by our Middle School Chorus, and a very special visitor. Please join us as we begin our countdown to Christmas. All families are welcome to attend.



### CALENDAR NOTE

**THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4 and 5.**

**NOON DISMISSAL—PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19—NOON DISMISSAL**

**CHRISTMAS BREAK— NO SCHOOL—DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 2**

## Christmas Wish List

Many times during the Christmas season parents and friends wonder if there is something in particular that the school needs and how can they can help. If anyone is willing to donate a special gift during the holidays, the following items are suggested:

- postage stamps
- lunch room aprons
- Staples gift cards
- hand sanitizer
- blank CD-R discs
- file folders



**HOLIDAY**

**BOOK FAIR**

**THURSDAY AND FRIDAY**

**DECEMBER 11 and 12**

**8 AM—8 PM**

**Multi-Purpose Room**

## Sounds of the Season

Our School Bands and Chorus, under the direction of Mr. Daniel Timmermans, will present an evening of Christmas Music on Tuesday, December 16, starting at 7:00 PM in our multi-purpose room. If you can attend the concert on the 16<sup>th</sup>, you will be surely entertained by the beautiful music they have prepared for your listening pleasure.



## Christmas Parties

Our Classroom Christmas Celebrations will take place on Friday morning, December 19, following our 10 AM Mass. This is the last school day before vacation begins. Room parents will be contacting you about the details once they have spoken with each of the classroom teachers about the necessary arrangements. All parents are welcome to join us.

**WISHING YOU THE SPECIAL**

**BLESSINGS OF CHRISTMAS**

**FROM ALL OF US AT**

**SACRED HEART ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL!**



# From the Principal's Desk

This month we will explore the value of gratitude and discuss ways in which you can help your child develop a grateful heart. Gratitude means counting your blessings, noticing simple pleasures, and acknowledging everything you receive. Studies have shown that practicing gratitude can increase happiness levels by around 25 percent, and that those who express gratitude daily have reported higher levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism, and energy. This holiday season, rather than letting life's challenges burden you, practice gratitude and appreciate the abundance that is present in your life.

- ◆ Emphasize the real meaning of Christmas. What does it mean to your faith?
- ◆ Shift attention to giving more than receiving. Encourage your child to help an elderly neighbor put up Christmas decorations or help a mother by playing with her children — simply because it is richer to give than to receive.
- ◆ Make a “gratefulness garland” - Drape a ribbon in a doorway and keep a basket with paper and clothespin nearby. When people visit, have them write something they are grateful for on a piece of note paper and pin it to the garland.
- ◆ Plan family experiences and moments—Create opportunities for your family to share simple moments together. Think about family traditions you would like to establish, such as going out with the family to see Christmas lights or attending a play during the holidays. Creating shared memories will be an invaluable gift to your whole family.
- ◆ Model gratitude—Be mindful of expressing your gratitude to others. Thank your children or your spouse for their kindness and thoughtful acts. Show gratitude to the cashier, the dry cleaner, and other service providers. The most effective way to teach your children gratitude is by being an example yourself.

Your child's life will be enriched in countless ways by developing a grateful heart. This is a most precious gift you can give your child and your family during this holiday season.



**The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales**  
**307 School Street**  
**Bennington, Vermont 05201**  
**802-442-2446**  
**[www.sacredheartbennington.org](http://www.sacredheartbennington.org)**

*We are always seeking new students. If you know of any family who may be interested in enrolling their children, please let us know or have them give us a call. Word of mouth is a great marketing tool. Maintaining our enrollment is crucial to our existence. Please help your school community.*

