



SCS FAMILY NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2023

**"IT IS THE BEAUTIFUL
TASK OF ADVENT
TO AWAKEN
IN ALL OF US
MEMORIES OF
GOODNESS
AND THUS TO OPEN
DOORS OF HOPE."**

-POPE BENEDICT XVI



Dear SCS Families,

Now that we have flipped the calendar to December, we are celebrating all things Advent including the following:

- **Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass:** How appropriate is it that this feast day is always celebrated during the beginning of Advent as it celebrates the conception of Mary who was born without original sin—already “preparing the way” for her eventual “yes” to God’s invitation to be the mother of Jesus. Without this blessed event, there would no Advent as there would be no Christmas. Our school family will be attending this special Mass on December 8th at 9:00 AM and invite you to join us.
- **Advent Food Shelf Collection:** Yes, we have begun collecting food items for our annual all school Advent project. Not only will this project provide the ideal time to speak with your children about our call to be Jesus to others, it will also serve the needs of families in Wells and our surrounding communities. When the kids bring the donated items to the food shelf center on December 15th, they will receive a tour of the facility and receive a first-hand look at how we all gather to serve others in need. A listing of suggested donation items has been included later in this newsletter. Thank you for your donations!
- **Advent Family Night:** Wasn’t this event a wonderful way to usher in Advent? We are so very fortunate to have individuals within our communities who are so gifted in sharing the Faith with our families. As former SCS teachers, Lea Nowak and Linda Raimann, have certainly not lost their teaching skills nor their love of bringing others to Jesus. We were also fortunate to have the gifts of Jackie Mullery who shared about the Advent calendar and Randy and Barb Feist who prepared the delicious spaghetti meal. Jinger Woodring put in time behind the scenes so ensure that we had everything necessary for a successful night. Thank you, parents, for taking the time to share this night with your children and school community. Also, many thanks to the members of the Advent committee! In fact, we received the following compliments on their behalf from our school families:

“Thank you for hosting such a wonderful advent night! This was my family’s first time attending this event, and I was so happy to have been there. The food was good, and the speakers were wonderful. Getting to take home to supplies to make our own advent wreath at home was a fun bonus. We look forward to doing more evenings with all of the school families.”

“Great event last night! Many thanks for all the work put into this!!”



Blessings to you and your family for a wonderful Advent season and Christmas!

John Hengel
SCS Principal

Teacher Talk

Grades K-2: The kindergarten, first and second grade SCS students began November with the celebration of All Saints Day. In order to prepare for our celebration, the children spent the week prior looking through saint books and digging into the saint card box. Because the Church has provided us with so many wonderful saints, the children had a really hard time narrowing down their selections! But once they figured it out, we found coloring book pages to match their saint and read about each saint during Religion class.

The children also had to study their saint's icon and figure out what symbol was associated with their saint. On All Saints Day, we gathered with the entire school in Father Mikolai Hall to give mini presentations about the saints they had chosen. The younger children named their saint and showed their saint's symbol, and the older children recapped what they had learned about their saint along with showing a saint symbol. We ended the morning with hot apple cider and donuts.

For next year, the children are already asking to be allowed to dress up in costume so that they can look even more like their saint! I love how we have so many beautiful mentors and spiritual guides to help teach our children the faith.

Submitted by Jinger Woodring, Classroom Teacher



Grades 3-5: It's hard to believe that we're already nearing the end of the third month of the school year. Our combined 3rd-5th grade classroom has been a dynamic environment, brimming with opportunities for growth and positive change.

While an extensive list of academic materials has been covered, the sheer volume makes it impractical to detail here. However, I'm thrilled to share that each day in our classroom is full of rich learning and fun. Beyond academic achievements, we've mastered the art of sharing space with other grades, fostering cooperation, and extending helping hands to one another. As a teacher, witnessing the seamless adaptation of students to this new normal fills me with pride. Their hard work this year is truly commendable.

A standout moment in the journey so far has been the delightful discovery that our desks can be used like whiteboards. Yes, you read that correctly! With dry-erase markers in hand, students can work through problems, jot down notes, and even create personalized to-do lists directly on their desks. Who would have thought that writing on desks could be such a helpful and innovative learning tool?

Submitted by Ethel Aranda, Classroom Teacher





SCS Hospitality Committee: Good news—the Hospitality Committee is being brought back to SCS! We have always known that our school parents have many talents and skills that can greatly enrich the entire SCS experience. In order to do that, we are requesting your assistance to serve on the hospitality committee whose main purpose is to add those “little extras” that punch up the activities already hosted by the school. Like what, you ask? Well, this committee would assist the entire school by organizing treats and decorations for our main school programs such as the upcoming Christmas program and the spring concert. The committee members would assist with organizing treats/gifts for the teachers at the beginning of school, for parent-teacher conferences and for staff birthdays, just to name a few. They may be recruited to help with events such as the recent Advent Family Night or the spring recruitment carnival. If you are willing to serve in this manner, please note that you would not be expected to assist with EVERY activity/event—only those that work into your schedule. Hopefully, we will have enough parents volunteer in this manner that we will have no problem covering all of the bases! If you would like to join this renewed committee, please contact the school at your earliest convenience. Thank you!

Weather-Related Early Dismissals/Late Starts/School Cancellation

Now that we have seen a few flakes on the ground, it's not too early for a reminder of our weather-related dismissal policy. As SCS is located within the USC School District, you will most likely be first informed of a change to the standard schedule by a text/voice mail alert from the USC Superintendent. Please note that whenever there is an unexpected change to the school's normal routine for any reason (USC or SCS directed), your children will be dismissed according to the emergency plans provided on your annual family information form. If you would like to be reminded of what these plans state, please contact the office. We want to make sure that all of our students are arriving to a safe place, so we do not mind at all sharing with you what emergency plans were made for your children. Also, the plans listed on your form will supersede any individual plans you may have made for that day, such as having your child go to a friend's house. If classes are cancelled early, the directive you have provided on the annual form will be followed in all cases.



December Need to Know

December Events:

In addition to the events and activities already mentioned, please make note of the following:

- **Second Sunday Social and Library Benefit:** Home and School will once again be hosting a social on December 10th beginning at 9:00 AM in St. Casimir Church Hall. In conjunction with this event, the annual Library Benefit will also be held. The benefit provides such a great manner in which our library shelves can be restocked with new reading materials. Donors wishing to purchase a book do so and then donate the book to the school library and into the hands of our students. Please feel free to check out the book selection and purchase a book or two. Once purchased, you may complete the label inside the cover of each book stating who donated the book to the library.
- **Two Hour Late Start:** Please be aware of the late start occurring on December 12th in which classes will not begin until 10:25 AM. If your child attends morning Kid Zone, they may still attend at their regular time and remain there until the bell rings at 10:15 to allow the kids into their classrooms. The teachers will be using the first two hours for staff development.



More December Need to Know

December Events:

- Christmas Program Decorating:** If you would like to help decorate the gym for the Christmas program being held the following day, your assistance would be greatly appreciated either during the school day or after school. If you are able to help, please contact the school office to set up a time. Thank you, thank you, thank you!
- Christmas Program:** We are very much looking forward to this year's Christmas program in which Mr. Edwards music classes will perform, but there will also be a selection or two performed by Ms. Woodring's band students! As a reminder, the program will be held on December 14th beginning at 6:00 PM in the school gymnasium. With this being such a special occasion, please make sure that your children are dressed in their "Sunday Best". If there are any other specific requests from Mr. Edwards or Ms. Woodring, they will be shared directly with the individual students.
- Christmas Treats:** As this is such a festive occasion, we are asking each family to provide 1 ½ dozen treats which will be served following the program. Again, if you are able to help serve, please contact the school office. It would be much appreciated!
- Care Center Caroling:** As a last "Merry Christmas" before beginning our school break, the students will be traveling to a few of the care centers in Wells to share songs and possibly a treat or two—maybe even Bingo! Plans are still in the works, and a field trip permission form will soon be sent home as we will be using a bus to transport the kids around town.
- NO SCHOOL—Christmas Vacation:** Please be aware that our first day of Christmas vacation will occur on December 22nd and will run through January 1st. Classes will resume on January 2nd. Hopefully, this will be a time of many great holiday memory-making moments!



20 Items Food Shelve Need the Most (and 3 Things to Skip)

When you give to your local food shelf, make sure you're stocking their shelves with what they really need—and avoid what they don't. Next time you're headed to the grocery store, bulk up your shopping list with a few of these non-perishable items. They're the items food pantries—and your neighbors in need—can really put to good use. According to Feeding America, your best bets for supplying what your neighbors need include:



- Applesauce:** Plastic jars of unsweetened applesauce provide a quick snack, fiber and vitamin C. Applesauce also keeps well on food bank shelves.
- Canned Beans:** Loaded with protein and fiber, canned beans provide an excellent, nutritious way to fill a hungry tummy. Opt for the low-sodium varieties whenever possible.
- Canned Chicken:** It's simple to toss this non-perishable item into soups and casseroles or add it to a sandwich or cracker. Its versatility and high protein content make it a popular item at food banks.
- Canned Fish (Tuna and Salmon):** Canned fish has vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids and protein, and it makes for a quick and easy meal. Food banks are most in need of canned tuna and salmon.
- Canned Meat (SPAM and Ham):** Grab some SPAM or canned ham and drop it into a food donation bin. It's shelf-stable, doesn't require much prep or equipment to eat, and delivers a quick hit of protein to keep individuals feeling full for longer.

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(food shelf list continued)

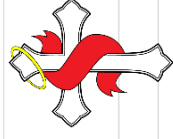
- 6. Canned Vegetables:** Colorful, nutrient-dense and fiber-rich vegetables are always in high demand, and canned varieties last the longest on a food bank's shelves. Look for low-sodium options.
- 7. Cooking Oils (Olive and Canola):** Food banks rely heavily on these essential and pricier items being donated. Canola and olive oils are the best choices because of their monounsaturated fats and mild flavor.
- 8. Crackers:** Perfect as a snack or as a base for canned meats, crackers are shelf-stable and portable, making them ideal for snacks and lunches. Whole grain crackers are the best bet.
- 9. Dried Herbs and Spices:** It's hard to cook a tasty meal without herbs and spices, so drop some in your cart to donate. Stick to the basics, like oregano, basil, cumin, pepper, rosemary, thyme and cinnamon.
- 10. Fruit (Canned or Dried):** Fruit, whether dried, canned or in plastic cups, makes excellent snacks for kids and adults and provide some nutrition and fiber. Choose those that are packed in water or fruit juice rather than sugary syrups.
- 11. Granola Bars:** Food banks are always in need of quick and easy items that families can toss into lunches or eat on the go, and granola bars are just the thing. Look for ones with less sugar made with oats or other whole grains.
- 12. Instant Mashed Potatoes:** Instant potatoes last longer and require minimal tools and ingredients to whip up. They're also a favorite of every age group, making them a popular item.
- 13. Meals in a Box:** An entire meal that's shelf-stable and in one package—dinner doesn't get easier than that, which is plus for those without stocked kitchens. Look for pasta, rice and soup kits, especially those that are lower in sodium and higher in fiber and protein.
- 14. Nuts:** A handful of nuts provides protein and nutrients in a hurry and is perfect for snacks and lunches. Food banks have a hard time finding them due to their higher price, so donations are essential. Opt for unsalted varieties when possible.
- 15. Pasta:** This is a food bank staple since it's easy to turn into a meal. Whole grain varieties offer more fiber and nutrition than white pasta.
- 16. Peanut Butter:** Kids and adults like it, and it's high in protein, making peanut butter one of the most popular items at food banks. Look for varieties that are lower in sugar.
- 17. Rice:** It's filling, versatile and easy to prepare and store. Skip the white stuff and donate brown rice when possible, because it provides more fiber. Quinoa is also a great item to donate.
- 18. Shelf-stable and Powdered Milk:** Because no fridge is required to keep this milk fresh, it's accessible for everyone. Plus, it provides much-needed calcium and protein.
- 19. Soup, Stew and Chili:** These canned or packaged items acts as a warm and filling lunch or dinner and often come complete with protein (meat) and veggies. If possible, try to find reduced sodium options.
- 20. Whole Grain Cereal:** Here's another popular item with all ages, since whole grain cereal makes a healthy breakfast or snack. Select varieties that are low in sugar and high in fiber.

And three to skip: When purchasing items for a food bank, try to avoid:





- junk food
- items with glass or cellophane packaging, which can be broken in transit
- things that need can openers or special equipment (pop-top cans—whether for veggies, meat or fruit—are a plus).

**A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and Happy New Year!**

2023 December



St. Casimir's School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
					December Program Payments Withdrawn	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
First Day of Advent 			 St. Nicholas Day!	Chess Club, 3:00-4:00 PM	Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass, 9:00 AM Clara & Abby Serve	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Second Sunday Social & Library Benefit, 9:00 AM, St. Casimir Church Hall	Two Hour Late Start, Classes begin at 10:25 AM		 Decorating for Christmas Program, 3:00 PM?	Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal, 12:30 PM; Christmas Program, 6:00 PM	Children's Mass, 9:00 AM Juliana & Lennox Serve; Wells Food Shelf Delivery of Items, leave SCS at 12:15 PM	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Christmas Program Snow Date		First Day of Winter! Care Centers Christmas Caroling, 12:45-2:30 PM	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	
24	25	26	26	28	29	30
	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	NO SCHOOL-- Christmas Vacation	