

## From the Principal

### HAPPY EASTER!!! The Lord is Risen!

During this Easter time, let us rest in the HOPE of the Resurrection. Even though for many of us, it was different and quieter, we hope all our families had a wonderful Easter.

We are so grateful for all you are doing and for your willingness to reach out and let us know how things are going. We are here to serve you, so **please** continue to contact us to let us know how we can help, how things are going, or if you have any concerns. We want to make this the best experience we can for you and your children so do not hesitate to let us know how we are doing.

As we continue to move forward with this school year, we are looking at upcoming school events and evaluating if/how we may be able to move forward with them in some way. We are looking at options as we follow state and health guidelines, but know that some may unfortunately need to be cancelled. Please watch for announcements about these possible events in the next couple of weeks.

As you saw in Father's email today, we have some exciting news! We have two ways this weekend for you to pray with us.

1. Archbishop Hebda will be joining us for Mass at 4:30 PM on Saturday, April 18th as we celebrate Divine Mercy! He will preside and preach at our live streamed Mass on the [St. John's YouTube Channel](#) and on CTV North Suburbs Comcast Cable - Channels 15 (standard definition) and 859 (high definition). The Mass guide may be found on the [SJB Church website](#) or by clicking [HERE](#).
2. Sunday, April 19th, parishioners are invited to come and park in the Church lot at 3:00pm for a *Holy Half Hour* as we pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet before our Risen Lord in the Eucharist. We will sing, chant the Divine Mercy Chaplet and receive the Lord's Blessing through the Rite of Benediction. **PLEASE STAY IN YOUR CAR!** If cars are 6 feet apart you are allowed to roll down your windows. If you are parked closer together, we ask you to keep the windows rolled up. This will also be live streamed, so you can join us virtually on our [Facebook page](#). For those who will attend the event in the parking lot, please follow the directions of the ushers and park facing north (towards 694). We will have an altar set up on the north side of the parking lot where we will have Jesus on the altar. Click [HERE](#) for the liturgy guide.

A reminder that Aim Higher has a reserve fund for those experiencing financial difficulty during this time. See the information to the right on how to apply for this potential grant. Also, we know that some families' financial situation has changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The application for tuition assistance for the 2020-2021 school year is still open for you at [www.mytads.com](http://www.mytads.com).

Thank you and God Bless all of you. We especially keep in our prayers our healthcare, first responders, and other essential workers. May He keep you safe and healthy during this time.

Ann Laird, Principal

## AIM Higher Scholarship

The AIM Higher Foundation is an organization whose mission is to help families realize the goal of their children attending a Catholic school. Each year, they award thousands of dollars in scholarships to families for Catholic school tuition. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they are now taking applications for additional \$1000 scholarships to families who are experiencing financial hardship which may make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to keep their children in grades K-8 at their Catholic school.

We know that some of our St. John's families may be experiencing this financial hardship. If you would like to be considered for a scholarship, please complete the Google form below:

<https://forms.gle/eoUzch9Y95bwNpyC9>

Please be sure to fill out the form completely and with a **detailed reason** for needing the scholarship. Once you have completed this form, we will then apply for this scholarship on your behalf (they are only taking applications submitted by the school – not by individual families). Information submitted on this form will be kept confidential.

\*Note that any award decisions are not determined by anyone at St. John's, but by the AIM Higher Foundation only.

## Amazon Smile

As many of us have gone to online ordering of items, please remember if you order through Amazon to use Amazon Smile and select St. John's as your charity of choice. St. John's receives a percentage of all sales made through this option. Thank you!

**amazon smile**  
You shop. Amazon gives.

## Sunday School

Even though Sunday school has not been allowed to meet the last several weeks, we have still been connecting via email. One of the main objectives of Sunday school is to provide the Gospel message in a way that kids can understand and learn. Families have been receiving the Gospel lesson from the Bible that we use in Sunday school along with some activities and crafts to reinforce the Gospel lesson.

Some crafts/activities examples:

- \* A great link for parents is [www.sermons4kids.com](http://www.sermons4kids.com) which has a whole library of coloring sheets, crossword puzzles and other activities
- \* Students used blocks to build with when they learned about St. Joseph, a carpenter.
- \* They made palms on Palm Sunday.
- \* They made a prayer card out of praying hands when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- \* Parents were encouraged to wash their children's feet and make rolls for the Last Supper. We act out the Last Supper every year at Sunday school with every child getting their feet washed, costumes for the disciples and real food to eat. It is always a hit and helps drive home the message of Jesus, King of the Universe, humbling himself as a servant to care for the disciples.
- \* Families also received a recipe for Easter cookies. Every ingredient corresponds to a Bible passage. You make the cookies and leave them in the oven overnight and in the morning the cookie "tombs" are empty!

## Family Formation

You might think that COVID-19 has slowed down ministry these days. That nothing is happening at church until we can all be together again. Well, that is not the case at all – ministry has had to transform to fit the occasion along with everything else, so it may look different but it is still reaching the goals set for it at the start. Children's ministry is happening in the home but connected to church...

The First Communion Retreat was to happen the Sunday after the lockdown happened. So the children were able to take home a Retreat-In-A-Bag and do all the activities with their family including watching videos, discussing them with Mom and Dad and working on worksheets; baking unleavened bread and sharing it with others and doing a prayer time together using their decorated candle from their Kickoff. Here are a couple of pictures to show you some results.



If you would like a taste of the retreat, get a tour of the Sacristy by Stephanie Waite on our parish website at: <http://stjohnnb.com/worship/sacraments/first-eucharist/> Family Formation parents had a couple of Zoom meetings to choose from to meet and discuss the March Home Lessons and how things are going in general. If you would like to hear the March Presentation on the "Our Father" by our seminarian, Ben Snyder, go to our parish website Family Formation page to watch and learn at: <https://stjohnnb.com/faith-formation/children/family-formation/>

- Family Formation Classroom Lessons were sent home via email and Home Lessons are available for pick up in St. Paul Plaza of Church. Don't forget to stop by for them!
- Lessons for RCIC (children who are catching up on their sacraments or coming into the Church) are still happening but over the phone. It's an interesting way to go but it works. We have two teens entering the Church and they have joined the RCIA group of adults through Lent and are continuing to do so via Zoom meetings every week. Their desire to come into the Church is palpable so please pray for them all as we walk with them in this waiting period. It is a difficult wait but the embrace of the Church will be so much sweeter for all the prayer and longing.
- This week, catechists sent postcards out to their students. Just a note to say we are thinking of you and missing you! So be sure to watch the mail for yours! We are hoping to do grade level Zoom meetings with the Family Formation children starting this week too. It will be a new way to touch base and have some fun! Maybe a scavenger hunt or a prayer, we'll see what it brings! And in the meantime, we'll be calling to see how you are doing – is it "sheltering in place" or captivity by now?

As a family, a parish, a community, let's support each other in this time of physical distance never letting there be "heart distance" from one another. Let's think of one another, pray for one another, call or text or letter write one another just to say "hello" and "how are you doing?" and "I am praying for you". Any one of those statements can change the direction of the day for someone. And if you really want to stretch, write a note or draw a picture for someone in the nearby nursing homes. You don't have to know them, just send the card and let God guide its destination. There is lots of room for joy there. And please pray for those in ministry, that we are sensitive and creative and find ways to bring Jesus to others. Many Easter Blessings to you!

