



Today is the Third Sunday of Advent. Over 50 years ago, St. Pope Paul VI began the tradition of blessing the Baby Jesus figurines for the families' Creches. Pope Francis continued the tradition today. For our Weekly Word reflection, I'd like to share some quotes from Pope Francis. I think they give us a good perspective as we travel the final days of Advent.

“Preparing the Nativity display for the Infant Jesus, we learn again who our Lord is; a time to leave behind certain mindsets and prejudices about God and our brothers and sisters; a time in which, instead of thinking about gifts for ourselves, we can give words and gestures of consolation to those who are wounded, as Jesus did with the blind, the deaf and the lame.”

“I invite you to pray, before the creche, that the Nativity of the Lord will bring a ray of peace to children all over the world, especially those forced to live the terrible and dark days of war, this war in Ukraine that destroys many lives, so many lives, and many children.”

In conclusion, the Pope encouraged everyone to allow the Blessed Mother to "take us by the hand" as we prepare for Christmas and to recognize in the smallness of the Infant Jesus the greatness of God who is coming to dwell among us.”

Retrieved on December 11, 2022 from <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2022-12/pope-advent-offers-us-a-time-to-know-the-lord-in-new-ways.html>

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+Dear St. Cecilia School Community, December 11, 2022

Happy Third Sunday of Advent! I do not need to add to the words of Pope Francis. His message is simple yet challenging.

During these final days of Advent, it would be good to take time for Adoration on Mondays, from 12:00 to 7:00 p.m. and for the sacrament of Confession. Confessions are heard on Mondays, from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m., on Wednesdays, from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., and on Saturday, from 4:00 to 4:45 p.m.

May you have a great week!

God bless you,
Sister Catherine Irene, IHM

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We have quite a few flyers/announcements with this Weekly Word. Please look for them in your email and on the school website. These are the things to look for:

- **Toys for Tots Collection**
- **Strings Concert on December 14 and how to purchase tickets**
- **Happy Birthday Baby Jesus**
- **Holy Innocents Mass for Joseph Augustus Zarelli**

Looking Ahead:

December 12	School Liturgy, 10:00 a.m. for Our Lady of Guadalupe
December 13	Report Cards will be posted
December 14	Strings' Concert in the Evening in the Auditorium: 7:00 p.m.
December 15	Christmas Band Concert – Auditorium – 7:00 p.m.
December 16	Christmas Buddy Day TOY COLLECTION ENDS TODAY
December 19	Christmas Pageant for Families: 7:00 p.m. - Church
December 20	Kindergarten Christmas Play – 9:15 a.m. Pre-K Christmas Celebration – 10:45 a.m.
December 21	Archdiocese of Philadelphia Christmas Party-SERVICE COMMISSION attends/helps
December 22	Christmas Pageant & Grade 8 Tableau; All Students attend at 1:00 p.m. Christmas Vacation begins@ Dismissal-FULL DAY OF SCHOOL-NO CARES today Faculty Christmas Celebration after school Auditorium Faculty Meeting (if necessary)
December 23	Faculty Meeting (if necessary)
December 25	Merry Christmas!
December 26 – 39	Christmas Vacation: Enjoy these days with your families and friends!
January 3	Classes Resume!
January 9	Picture Retake Day
January 13	Faculty Meeting – Full Day; NO SCHOOL for STUDENTS

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Reminders:

- We thank you for keeping your children home if they are not feeling good. Today, we returned to our normal absence rate. Before Thanksgiving, we had over 125 people absent. I just remind you that if your children are sick, they need to stay home. All students, faculty, and staff must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning. Thank you!
- Sneakers are only worn to school on gym days with the gym uniforms. There are also Nike and other sports socks being worn instead of knee socks. Please help us by making sure that your children are following all parts of our dress code. Thank you!
- We are seeing an increase of students not having everything they need for lunch. That means that they should have napkins and utensils in their lunch boxes. If your child brings a lunch, then he or she should also have a drink with it. Please remember as well that EVERY CHILD in St. Cecilia School is entitled to both a FREE breakfast and a FREE lunch. Thank you!
- Report cards will be posted on Tuesday, 12/13. In the meantime, if you have never used Option C, please let us know so you can receive your log-in information. Thank you!

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Change in the Calendar IN JANUARY: As you might remember from the beginning of the year and from seeing it on the calendar, St. Cecilia School is working on their Middle States Re-Accreditation. We meet regularly before and after school and we are scheduled to meet as a faculty on December 23. Nevertheless, we still have a lot of work to do. As a result, we will need to have a full-day faculty meeting in January. **THEREFORE, FRIDAY, JANUARY 13 WILL BE A FULL-DAY FACULTY MEETING AND NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS. PLEASE MAKE THIS CHANGE TO ALL OF YOUR FAMILY CALENDARS AS WELL. (THIS IS THE FRIDAY BEFORE THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY.)**

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The next page contains the emails that I sent out on Friday and Saturday, in case you missed them.

From Friday, December 9: Updates about Report Cards, Mass, and More

I am writing with a few updates. First, the Report Cards will be posted on Option C on Tuesday. With teachers and students being sick recently, we needed this week to catch up. If you do not have your login for Option C, please email Mrs. Cihak. She will help you get set up on Option C. Her email is mcihak@stceciliafc.com.

We thank our Home and School and our many volunteers for all of their help with our Secret Santa Shop. It was great to see our students with their Buddies, shopping together. This is always an event that I enjoy!

We have a lot of special events coming up. On Monday, December 12, we will celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe during our school mass at 10:00 a.m. Our Third Graders will lead us during our liturgy. We invite you to celebrate with us!

We hope you can come to our Christmas concerts this week. On Wednesday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium, we will have our Strings Concert. Students from St. Hillary School and from Mr. Kraft's classes will perform and the Dupee Brothers will join in our concert as well. Please see the attached flyer.

On Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. in the Auditorium, we will have our annual Band Concert. Come out and hear our 8th Graders in their final Christmas concert!

Our Buddy Day is on Friday, December 16. Each class will have the opportunity to spend time with their Buddies. The Home and School will provide a soft pretzel for each student as well. We know that they have missed pretzels! Please know that Buddy Day will not last all day, but we hope that the students will enjoy their time with each other.

On Monday, December 19, we will have our Christmas pageant at 7:00 p.m. in Church. Our 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Graders will lead our singing while our 8th Graders will be our narrators and will create the Tableau. It will be a beautiful way to help us get prepare for Christmas. We invite all of our families to this special night!

(Planning Ahead: Our 5th, 6th, and 7th Graders will lead us in prayer with the Living Stations during Lent.)

Finally, I share with you the Weekly Update from Fr. Chris. Here is the link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1x8DdqDMzGuBWL4exwPFtUuZ80mprRe3/view>

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RE: Participation in the Christmas Pageant from Saturday, December 10

We are excited about our Christmas pageant this year! It will be held in Church for families and parishioners on Monday, December 19, at 7:00 p.m. In order to have space for our families, Grades 1 to 4 will join Grade 8 for the Christmas Pageant with the Tableau! Our classes will be practicing this week and we will be ready for our families next week. We will finish our day before Christmas vacation with the Christmas pageant for the entire school on December 22.

In order to plan accordingly, we ask you to let us know if your child will attend the evening performance on December 19 and the afternoon performance on December 22. We want to make sure that students with key narrator or Tableau parts will be present. For Grades 1 to 4, we also need to know to who will present to make sure the children's beautiful voices will be heard. We ask you to complete this Google Form. The link is: <https://forms.gle/HKfmfFpr1EWcRkZ88> . Please complete the form by Monday, December 12.

Thank you for your support! We surely hope that all of our students in Grades 1 to 4 and in Grade 8 will attend.