

# DECEMBER NEWSLETTER - 2009

Dear St. Stephen School Families,

With the Thanksgiving celebration behind us we look ahead to embracing the season of hope and faith – the season of Advent. During these four weeks we take time to reflect on our lives and the true meaning of the Christmas season. Amid all the hustle and bustle that surrounds us at this time of the year, listen for the gentle whisper of the Christ Child proclaiming his message of Peace and Hope at Christmas. Let us open our hearts for His message as we await the coming of the Savior.

Consider using the visible sign of the advent wreath to make this time meaningful for your family. Place it on your table and light one candle at mealtime for each week of the season. This practice will help instill in your children the concept of waiting, hoping, and preparing for the Christ Child.

During the next four weeks many activities fill the school calendar. Dates and times are listed in this packet for the Santa Shop, Book Fair, Santa Breakfast and Christmas Concert. Please post this listing for your reference.

At Christmas we remember all those benefactors to our school who share their time, talent, and treasure with St. Stephen School. Among those are Fr. Matt, Msgr. Karg and our families who honor their commitment to Catholic education.

The staff of SSS extends to all of you our warmest wishes for a blessed Christmas season. We wish for you and your family health and happiness. We pray that the Savior will bring you hope, strength, and His peace.

**Peace,**

*Mrs. Hajduk*

## **SANTA BREAKFAST**

Information concerning this seasonal event has been sent home. This activity will take place from 9:00 AM until noon on Saturday, Dec. 5, 2009 in our cafeteria. It is fast becoming a “must do” activity as part of Oil City’s “Christmas Past” celebration.

Plan to come and see Mike and company flip their famous pancakes along with a full breakfast menu and activities for the entire family. The children will be treated to a visit with Santa and the Chinese Auction will feature an array of wonderful items sure to please children and adults.

Our Varsity Girls’ Tournament will run Friday (5:00-10:00 PM) and Saturday (9:00- finish) so its’ a full day of action at SSS! Thanks to everyone who makes these events possible.

### SCRIP PROGRAM

Don't forget to use Scrip for your holiday shopping. This is a very simple way to put your money to work to reduce tuition costs. Orders are taken on Monday or the first school day of the week and orders are filled on Thursdays for pickup or are sent home. Remember Scrip gift cards can be used for all your online orders as well. They also make great gifts!

### WEATHER DELAYS/CANCELLATIONS

Winter weather often brings changes to the school schedule. Delays or cancellations are announced on the local radio and TV stations as well as the local newspaper and internet. St. Stephen School follows the same schedule as the Oil City Area School District. In the event of a 2 hour delay, preschool classes are cancelled.

### CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Our annual Christmas Concert will be held on Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009 at 7:00 PM. Students report to classrooms at 6:40 PM when the doors open attired in dress clothes. The concert provides an opportunity to showcase the talents of our students.

The Book Fair/Santa Shop will be open after the concert for your shopping pleasure!

### CHRISTMAS GIFTS

It is our custom to accept monetary donations toward gifts for our priests, Fr. Matt and Msgr Karg, for their presence and support throughout the year. You may send your donation to the school in an envelope marked "Priests' Gifts" by Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>.

### SQUARE DANCING WITH MR. SLAUTTERBACK

We are happy to have Lou Slautterback returning again this year to instruct our students in this physical education activity. Lou provides a wonderful presence to our students and they learn so much about our virtues of respect, cooperation, perseverance, etc. from his instruction. Lou brings to SSS a wealth of knowledge, a love and respect for all, and his presentation is based on Christian principles and values. Lou will instruct our students on Dec. 21, Jan. 4 & 5.

**Students should bring tennis shoes and wear jeans/sweats and appropriate tops on these days. We are accepting donations to help defray the cost of this very worthwhile program.**

### FAITH AND SERVICE

December brings many activities and busyness to our lives. It also provided us with many opportunities to practice our virtues of **FAITH** and **SERVICE**. Use this time to model these virtues for your children by doing something that demonstrates the virtues this holiday season.

Thank you to all who make our recent food drive so successful. We sent over 1700 items to the St. Elizabeth Center. Congratulations to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade for sponsoring this event. Our families have made it possible for area families to find comfort this Christmas season. Great job!!

Please post this list of special December events...

## DATES TO REMEMBER

1. Dec. 4-5 - SSS Varsity Girls' Tournament. Games begin at 5:00 PM on Dec. 4.  
Come enjoy teams from Erie, Pittsburgh, and our area as well.
2. Dec. 5 - Santa Breakfast - games, Chinese Auction & Santa – 9:00 AM – Noon.
3. Dec. 8 - Advent Service 1:30 PM followed by Mass for Immaculate Conception  
At 1:45 PM (3<sup>rd</sup> grade).
4. Dec. 9-17 - Book Fair
5. Dec. 10-11- Santa Shop
6. Dec. 11 - Penance Service – 1:00 PM
7. Dec. 12 - Boys' home game vs Seton
8. Dec. 13 - Boys' home game vs Notre Dame
9. Dec. 14 - St. Joseph Parish Penance Service – 4:00 PM  
VCHS Bell Choir 11:10 AM – noon  
**Early Dismissal – 1:30 PM**
10. Dec. 16 - St. Stephen Penance Service – 7:00 PM
11. Dec. 17 - Christmas Concert – 7:00 PM - Doors open at 6:40 PM.
12. Dec. 18 - Mass – 1:45 PM (8<sup>th</sup> grade)
13. Dec. 19-20- JV Boys at Titusville tournament.
14. Dec. 20 - St. Patrick Parish Penance Service – 4:00 PM
15. Dec. 21, Jan. 4-5 – Square Dancing
16. Dec. 22 - Prayer Service – time to be announced  
Students may dress down in Christmas colors – jeans, tennis shoes,  
appropriate tops.  
**Dismissal is at the regular time.**
17. Dec. 23-Jan 3 - Christmas Vacation