

MR. KELLY'S FRIDAY NEWSLETTER December 9, 2023



For me, a meaningful Advent leads to a true Christmas celebration. It would be regrettable to allow these weeks to pass by, neglecting to seize the rich spiritual opportunities. The Christmas anticipation we once experienced as children can be duplicated and enhanced, from an adult perspective, when we grasp the beautiful symbolism and impact of this liturgical season.

Advent is a time of hopeful waiting. I love the phrase: *“Jesus, come and take birth in my heart”*. It confirms the purpose of the season ~ a re-commitment to keeping Jesus at the very center of our life. Advent preparation requires the very opposite of commercialized holiday preparation. An essential part of Advent preparation requires peaceful patience. Patiently waiting for the Lord by listening to His gentle voice; waiting in the darkness of our lives, with hope, to learn what Jesus wants from us.

Mary, pregnant with Jesus, offers us a powerful example of Advent patience....waiting (literally!) for the coming of Christ. There is not one single spoken word of Saint Joseph recorded in the Scriptures. In essence, through his silence, Joseph offers us another Advent lesson.....to be silent and listen to the inner voice of God.

Advent does not really prepare for Jesus' birth; that occurred 2000 years ago. In reality, Advent helps prepare us for His return. Our faith confirms that, indeed, He **will** come again. So, the real question is not: *“Are we ready for Christmas?”* The most important questions are: Are we prepared for His return? Will we recognize Him when we see Him face to face? Will our lives have been a lifetime of preparation for that glorious moment when we meet our loving Savior?

Advent is a gift. Accept it gracefully and use it well.

God bless,
Mr. Kelly



A Busy Weekend Ahead ... Please Join Us!

- **Saturday, December 9th ~ QCA Holiday Craft Fair/Kids Winter Wonderland** – Please come by the school tomorrow, Saturday, December 10th between 10:00-4:00. We have over 20 vendors selling their beautiful gifts in the CAFÉ throughout the day. Kids will enjoy lots of fun activities in the GYM – bouncy houses, face-painting, Christmas characters, games, food and more!
- **Sunday, December 10 ~ Breakfast with Santa at Saint Mary’s Church after the 10:00 Mass.** All children through grade 5 are most welcome to join the fun at Father Lou’s “Breakfast with Santa” event. See the flier for more details!

A HUGE THANK YOU:

Words cannot begin to capture the sincere gratitude we have to our two tireless FSA (Family School Association) leaders, **Kristen Breen and Catherine Quinn**. Once again, they have taken on the Herculean task of putting our Santa Workshop together for the kids to enjoy a shopping spree for their Christmas presents. They were at school into after midnight setting up for the event. We are so indebted to them for their love and dedication to our school and to the fun-filled enrichment programs for our children. As always, we are seeking more VOLUNTEERS to support Mrs. Breen and Mrs. Quinn in organizing these amazing events and activities. Thank you to all have stepped up in the past and those who will step up in the future!



Looking Ahead:

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| Monday, December 11 | Basketball Game (grades 5/6)
6:00 pm at QCA – Join us for our first game of the season! |
| Friday, December 15 | Penance Services – <i>Students Only</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 11:00 for students in grades 3-5- 1:00 for students in grades 6-8 |
| Monday, December 18 | Christmas Concerts – ALL ARE WELCOME !! <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 9:00 ~ Early Childhood Performances in Gym- 10:15 ~ Choral Performances in Church – grades K-5 |
| Tuesday, December 19 | Band Performances ~ <i>during dismissal time</i> |

- 1:55 in the Gym ~ Join us for some fun Christmas Music and goodies during pick-up!

Wednesday, December 20 11:30 Dismissal ☺
2:30 – Extended Day Ends

Wednesday, December 20

Christmas Assembly: 9:00 am in the GYM

ALL QCA FAMILIES & FRIENDS are most WELCOME to join us! We would love to have a full house of guests as we celebrate the Christmas Season with our QCA Choir, Middle School Nativity and All-School Sing-A-Long. Please join the festivities at 9:00 am on December 20th



A MESSAGE from MRS. SEARS, School Counselor

Greetings QCA Families:

Two quotes I have in my office which I strongly believe in - "Anything that is human is mentionable and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we talk about our feelings they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary." (Fred Rogers) and "When people want to help you, it does not mean that you are a failure. It means that you are worthy of support." (Lyvonne Briggs) Mental health is important at all times during the year, but the holidays can bring on additional stressors. Here is an attached reminder for us all and two resources below that may help if you or someone you know needs them.

The Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH) has curated mental health education resources for students and families on its website. Understanding and maintaining your mental health is a lifelong process that is essential to health and well-being. The webpage includes videos, articles, activities, apps, and more to empower students K-12 to take charge of their own mental health. Resources are organized by grade level (K-4, 5-8, 9-12). Network of Care Massachusetts is an online tool that helps users find information about resources in their communities for people of all ages with mental health and substance use needs. <https://www.mamh.org/education/mhed-resources>

Network of Care Massachusetts is designed to serve individuals at risk for or living with mental health and/or substance use conditions, their families and friends, care coordinators, district and school staff,

and other staff at provider organizations and state agencies. The Culturally Responsive Behavioral Health Resource Hub contains information on online support groups, local and national organizations, therapist directories, culturally responsive clinics and programs, and wellness resources for Black, Latinx, Asian, and people of color. Finding a provider, support group, or community space where individuals feel safe and supported is extremely important to mental health and well-being. <https://massachusetts.networkofcare.org/mh/>

If you have specific concerns or need additional resources, please email me at stephanie.sears@quincycatholicacademy.org

CALENDAR DRIVE – JANURY 2024

Information about our 2024 January Calendar Raffle is being sent home today. As part of our fundraising efforts, this calendar is one of our fundraisers for the academic year. We are asking each family *that has chosen to do fundraising*, to sell 15 calendars to help reach our goal.

However, if there are other families who may want to contribute to the wonderful Drive, calendars are available in the school office. All support is appreciated.

Designed as a Christmas card, this calendar raffle makes a great gift to give that special someone, whether it's a family member, mail carrier, or neighbor. Calendars are \$15 each, and participants have 31 chances to win, totaling \$3,000! This fundraiser plays an important role to QCA's success -- your participation is tremendously appreciated! If you have any questions or need calendars, please call our main office at 617-328-3830.

GIFT CARD ORDERS:

Thank you to all who participated in our Gift Card Fundraiser! We are no longer accepting Gift Card Order forms, as they would not be processed in time for Christmas. Thanks again for your support!

Attachments:

National Stress-Free Holiday Memo

JANUARY 2024 Lunch Menu

Holiday Craft Fair/Winter Wonderland for Kids

Breakfast with Santa at Saint Mary's