

St. Mary's School Newsletter

Vancouver, BC | September 2026



Administration: Ms. Brenda Krivuzoff - Principal
Mrs. Maryann Vukasovic - Vice-Principal
Mr. Mark Mogatas - Vice-Principal

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents and Guardians,

A warm welcome to all our new families, and welcome back to our returning families! I hope you have enjoyed a restful and renewing summer with family and friends. This June and July, I had the opportunity to volunteer as Host Ambassador for six FIFA World Cup matches. It was a privilege to welcome and assist visitors from around the world in the city I am proud to call home. I felt immense pride in Canada and deep appreciation for the thousands of volunteers, organizers, and law enforcement personnel who made the tournament a success in both Vancouver and Toronto. One of the greatest gifts of the experience was the opportunity to form new friendships with people from many different countries and cultures. It was a powerful reminder that sport has the unique ability to bring people together, and I truly experienced how it, in many cases, united the world.

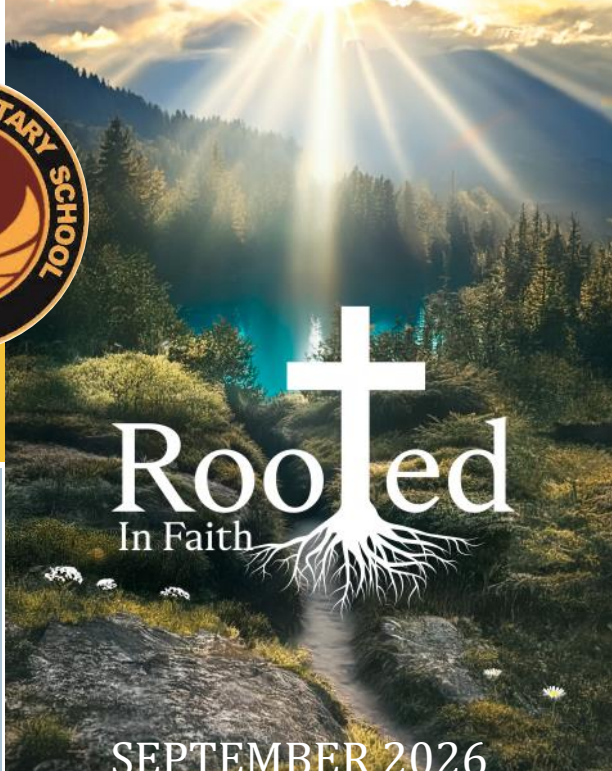
As we embark on a new school year, I am reminded of the importance of our faith community and the sense of belonging that makes our school so special. My recent experience has deepened my appreciation for the connections we share and the excitement that comes with new beginnings.

This year, we encourage our students to be brave, to embrace learning, and to remember that mistakes are a natural—and valuable—part of the journey. Each step forward, whether smooth or challenging, helps us grow together as a community. Let's create an environment where every student feels welcomed and valued and where we support one another in discovering, learning, and becoming our best selves.

Here's to a year filled with courage, connection, and the joy of being part of this wonderful community.

Yours sincerely,

Brenda Krivuzoff
Principal



SEPTEMBER 2026

VIRTUE: HOPE

- 7 Labour Day Holiday
- 8 School Re-opens 8:50-12:00,
Opening Prayer 9:15 (church)
Kindergarten Gradual entry begins
Grade 7 to Camp Zajac (8-11)
@10:30
- 9-14 Student Network (Ambassadors
chosen)
- 11 Band Instrument Rental Evening
with Long & McQuade 3-5 (gym)
- 15 Meet the Teacher 6:30-8 (church/
school) mandatory meeting
- 17 Kindergarten Community
Connections 1:00-2:00 (front
entrance)
- 17-18 Grade 4 Cheakamus
- 21 Kindergarten First Full Day
- 23 **School Mass 9:15**
- 24 Grade 6 Vaccine Clinic 9:15
Walkathon Kickoff Assembly 2:15
- 25 Back to School Family BBQ 5:00
- 27 School Choir sings at 5:00pm Mass
- 28 **Truth and Reconciliation Prayer
Service (Gr. 7) Time 2:15 Church
Orange Shirt Day Out-of-Uniform**
- 28-Nov. 6 Grade 4 & 7 FSA
- 29 St. Mary's Invitational Cross-
Country
Meet 10-2 South Memorial Park
- 30 **National Day for Truth and
Reconciliation: School Closure**



VIRTUE IN PRACTICE 2026-27

Year of Hope

This year, St. Mary's will continue with "*Virtues in Practice*", a program for children in Kindergarten through Grade Seven to grow closer to Jesus by imitating His life and virtues. The whole school will focus on the same virtue each month. The overall theme for the year is "*Hope: trusting in God's loving plan.*"

The virtue of hope enables us to suffer with joy in this life, knowing that the Lord will use even our difficulties for our good. We know that hoping in wealth, power or anything in this world is foolish since all of these will fail us at some point. God alone will never fail us and heaven is the only world that will never pass away. Hope gives us the strength and direction we need to continually orient our steps toward God, recognizing that life is a journey toward eternal life with Him.

The goal of Catholic Education is heaven, but knowledge alone will not get us there! "*Virtues in Practice*" will help our students to live out their faith in their everyday lives. *St. Mary, Pray for Us!*

Year of

Hope

STUDY

"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast."
—Hebrews 6:19

"Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful."
—Hebrews 10:23

HOPE is trusting in God's loving plan.
Through the theological virtue of hope our hearts are set on the goal of heaven.

THE YEAR OF HOPE offers an opportunity to focus on study skills and vocations. We know that God designed each of us with gifts and talents to suit His plan for our lives, and that He expects us to do our part to increase the talents He has given us so that we are ready to answer His call.

Children's Liturgy of the Word Volunteers Needed!

St. Mary's Parish is seeking parent volunteers for the **9:30 AM and 11:15 AM Sunday Masses**. Serve as a **Presider** (sharing the Sunday Gospel with children) or **Assistant Presider** (helping guide the children during the session). Volunteer hours will be credited to the Parent Volunteer Portal.

Interested? Email saintmarylwc@gmail.com and the LWC Coordinator will contact you.
Help nurture the faith of our youngest parishioners!

OUR THEME:

Rooted in Faith

Our theme for this year, Rooted in Faith, marks the beginning of a three-year theological framework: Rooted, Renewed, and Sent. This year's focus, **Rooted in Faith**, calls us to deepen our relationship with God the Father, our Creator. It invites us to reflect on the gift of creation, our identity as beloved children of God, our sense of belonging within His family, and our call to live as faithful disciples.

May this theme inspire and challenge each of us to grow in our communion with God, to be strengthened in the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, and to foster a deeper spirit of community, belonging, and service within our school and parish communities.



STAFF RETREAT

On August 31, our staff came together for the annual Staff Retreat. Guest speaker Jean-Paul de Fleuriot from Faith Room guided us in exploring this year's school theme: Rooted in Faith. We prayed, participated in engaging activities, and deepened our sense of community by sharing our faith with one another. Fr. Joseph celebrated Mass with us, making the day especially meaningful. The retreat provided a wonderful opportunity to reconnect after the summer and prepare to warmly welcome our students in September.



Staff Retreat 2026



Retreat Team 2026



Jean-Paul de Fleuriot



STAFF RETREAT



Fr. Joseph joins us to celebrate Mass

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planed by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green." - Jeremiah 17:7-8

Teachers received a Rooted in Faith Class Activity to use with their students. Each class will observe a rooted plant as it grows, drawing parallels between the need for strong roots in plants and the importance of being rooted in our faith. Through this activity, students will reflect on how they can grow together through prayer, kindness, love, and trust in God. Classes will transfer the smaller plant into a larger pot.



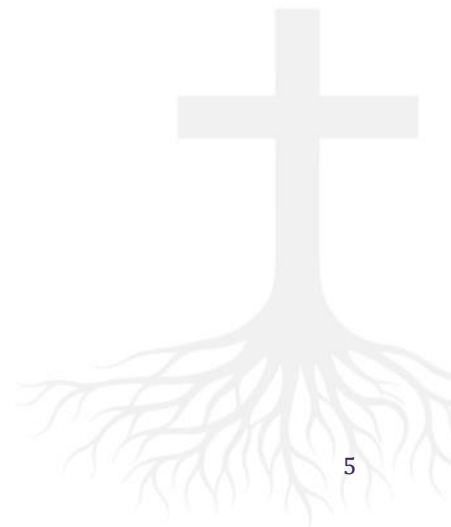
STUDENT NETWORK

Congratulations to our Student Mentors for the 2026–2027 school year! We are delighted to recognize Amelia Rogers, Victoria Atelevich, Mischa Castro, Michael Mendoza, and Trisha Espiritu as this year's student mentors. We know they will be wonderful role models who lead with faith, kindness, and enthusiasm.

In a week's time, two Student Ambassadors from each Grade 1–7 class will be elected to join the student mentors to complete the team. Together, our Student Network plays an important role in building a vibrant and faith-filled school community. They help lead school-wide prayer, celebrate birthdays, foster school spirit, and contribute to creating a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment for all.

Our Student Network also proudly serves our school by leading assemblies, organizing fundraising initiatives for local and international charities, and sharing their gifts and talents during special community events throughout the year. Their leadership inspires others and reflects our commitment to living out our faith through service.

Congratulations to our Student Mentors! We look forward to seeing the positive impact you will make in our school community and wish you every success as you grow in leadership and service this year.





VIBES

Opening Prayer Celebration

We begin each year by gathering as a faith community to celebrate our school opening. Parents were invited to join us today at 9:15 a.m. in St. Mary's Church for a special 30-minute celebration for students in Grades 1-7.

Together, we welcomed our new and returning students and staff, introduced this year's CISVA school theme, Rooted in Faith, commissioned our teachers, offered our prayers and intentions for the school year ahead, and received a special blessing from Fr. Joseph.

Following the prayer celebration, our Grade 7 students departed directly for Outdoor School.

Meet the Teacher Night

We are excited to welcome families to our annual Meet the Teacher Night on Tuesday, September 15, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Church.

The evening will begin with a 30-minute general meeting, where we will introduce our staff, Parish Education Committee members, and share important school information for the year ahead.

Following the general meeting, at the school, classroom teachers will present two identical 30-minute classroom sessions beginning at 7:00 p.m. Parents may attend either session to learn about classroom routines, expectations, communication, curriculum highlights, homework, field trips, and other important information.

As this meeting provides essential information for the school year, attendance by at least one parent or guardian is mandatory. Grade 1M parents will be sent the meeting packet.

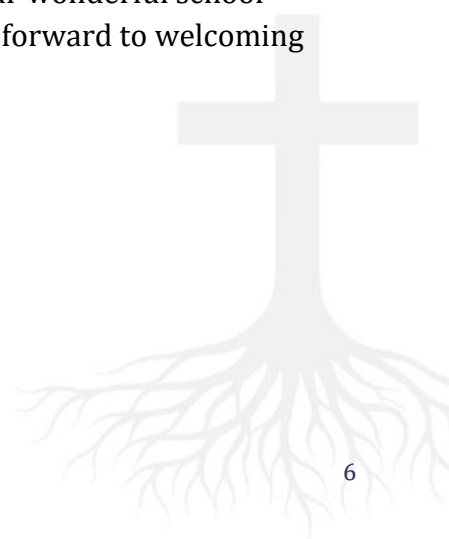
Please note that child care will not be provided, so we kindly ask families to make arrangements for their children as they are not to attend.



Kindergarten Community Connections

We warmly invite our Kindergarten families to our Kindergarten Community Connections social on Thursday, September 17, at 1:00 p.m., during the second-last day of our gradual entry program.

Join us for refreshments and an opportunity to meet fellow Kindergarten parents, connect with school staff, and begin building friendships within our wonderful school community. We look forward to welcoming you!





VIBES

Welcome Back BBQ

Our annual **Welcome Back BBQ** is a wonderful opportunity for families to reconnect after the summer and celebrate the beginning of a new school year together. Join us following the school day on **Friday, September 25 starting at 5:00pm**, for an afternoon of great food, fellowship, and community spirit. More details, including ticket information, food ordering and volunteer opportunities, will be shared in early September.



The SAINTS' Locker

The **SAINTS' Locker** Back-to-School Store has now closed! We will send the orders home from the school when they arrive.



Parish Education Committee

We are pleased to warmly welcome our new and returning members of the Parish Education Committee for the upcoming school year. We are especially excited to welcome four new members who are looking forward to connecting with our school community and supporting our shared mission.

We are sincerely grateful to each member for generously offering your time, talents, and commitment in service to our school. Your willingness to serve helps strengthen the partnership between our parish, school, and families and contributes greatly to the continued success of our community.

Please join us in welcoming our Parish Education Committee members:

Richelle Tapia - Chairperson/CISVA Delegate

Joy Ravina - Vice-Chairperson

Liza Garcia - Secretary

Haydee Crisostomo - Treasurer

Vanessa Catam - Parent Participation

Katrina Asaua - Parent Participation

Michelle Blundell - Fundraising

We wish each of you every blessing as you begin your term and look forward to working together in the year ahead. The Parish Education Committee will be introduced during the general meeting at our Meet the Teacher Night on Tuesday, September 15, starting at 6:30 p.m. in the church. We encourage all families to attend and take the opportunity to meet the members who have generously committed to serving our school community.



SAINTS BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

We have launched the new software for our Before and After School Club program using MyKidsReports.

Please follow the steps below if you plan to use the club occasionally or regularly.

1. Click on the invitation [link](#)

(<https://app.mykidreports.com/enroll/bf094e4e543dcdfab4dee28ee5fd183ac530776d5ee0050e>)

2. Complete the enrollment form.

3. Await confirmation (Please check your spam folder and add asc@stmary.bc.ca your contacts).

4. Create an account from your browser and set a password.

5. Read the guidelines. Print or save them to your computer for reference. **You must go through this step.**

6. **Save and submit your registration online.**

7. Await approval from the club.

8. When approved, log in to "View/Request Drop-In Care".

9. Request your required availability.

10. Select the days on the calendar indicating "Before", "After" or select both.

Note: The calendar can be viewed 16 weeks in advance. Your selected dates will be auto-approved.

11. Download the MyKidsReports app via Google Play or The Apple App Store, and use your account settings to log in.

12. Cancellation and Multiple child features are now active.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. We are excited for the year ahead.

Send us an email if you have any questions to asc@stmary.bc.ca

Before and After School Club Team

SAINTS POWER LUNCH WITH FANTUAN

We are pleased to introduce our new Hot Lunch partner for the 2026-2027 school year, Fantuan Delivery. To ensure a smooth transition and a successful launch, we ask all parents and staff to participate in a brief system test today.

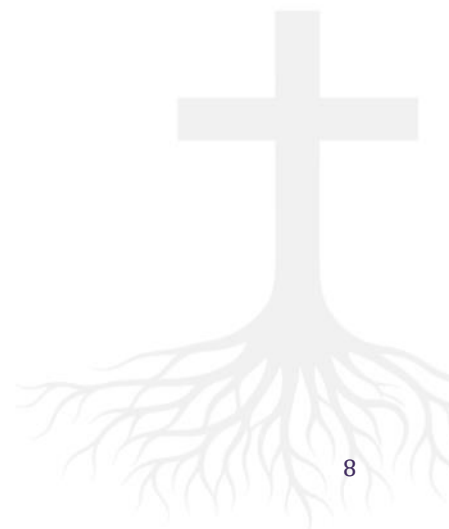
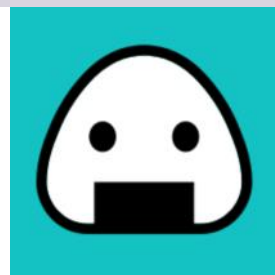
Please complete your account onboarding and place a **\$0 test order by Thursday, September 10th**. Participating in this test helps us verify that division information is correct and ensures everyone is comfortable with the new platform.

As a thank you for your assistance, Fantuan will provide a cute gift for the children once the test order is completed.

Access the Test Link: <https://f.fantuan.ca/2zLSb>

- **Guide:** Please refer to the attached "Fantuan Hot Lunch Guide" for full step-by-step instructions.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us get this program off to a great start!



SAINTS FUNDRAISING

Vertical Raise Fundraiser

A heartfelt thank you to all of our parents and families who shared our Vertical Raise fundraising campaign with friends and family this past June. Your support and generosity made a tremendous difference. We are especially grateful to Will from Vertical Raise and Ryan Raguro for their dedication and hard work in leading this successful campaign. Together, we raised an outstanding **\$7,160.29** in support of our new school bus.

Every dollar brings us one step closer to paying off our new bus and ensuring safe transportation for our students for years to come. Thank you for being such a generous and supportive school



Walkathon

Our first major school event for the year is our annual Walkathon! It will be taking place on **Friday, October 9th**. Walkathon is a special event for our community where our students and staff walk to Central Park in Burnaby to fundraise for our school. Our students collect pledges from friends, family members, and parents' coworkers.

Our fundraising goal this year is at least **\$40,000**, which will go towards our new bus. Our current bus is aging and a replacement will keep our 80+ field trips possible and affordable. Your support funds these rich learning experiences. This year is the final push as we will be welcoming a new bus this Fall!



ONE LAST LOOK AT 2025-26

Donuts for Dads

Thank you to all the dads and special father figures who joined us for our Donuts for Dads morning! Families enjoyed coffee, donuts, and the opportunity to share a few smiles while putting together with their children and friends. It was a fun way to start to the day.



Parish Fair



St. Mary's Parish Fair brought together our parish and school communities for a joyful day of faith, fellowship, and celebration.

Pictured are Fr. Joseph with Parish Fair organizer Teresa Lung, along with performers from the vibrant Hung Gar Lion Dance, which delighted attendees and celebrated the rich cultural traditions within our parish community.



A group of St. Mary's Grade 7 students entertained the Parish Fair crowd with a traditional Filipino tinikling dance and lively hip-hop performances that were enjoyed by all.

Candle Lighting Ceremony

Passing the Light of Leadership.....a long-standing tradition at the end of the year from Grade 7 students to Grade 6.



ONE LAST LOOK AT 2025-26

A Sweet Goodbye



Kindergarteners gifted a song and card to their Grade 7 buddies. A few tears were shed.



Sending Forth with Blessings

End of Year Blessing for Families Leaving.

St. Mary's Reads' Champions

St. Mary's Reads Top Group..... a dedicated group of readers who debated their book with passion and enthusiasm. Thank you to Mr. Mogatas and Ms. Simmons for a great year of reading and debate! *Aradhya, Filippa, Viyona, Aadhya*





ONE LAST LOOK AT 2025-26

Honouring Our Track & Field Athletes

Congratulations to all our Track & Field athletes and coaches, and who won ribbons and medals at the CISVA Track & Field Championships. Mr. Gabriele helped present the awards.



Boys 4x100 relay Tristan, Dave, Rashad, Andre



Mixed 4x100m relay Shayne, Eoin, Khiara, Makayla



Girls 4x100m relay Cat, Amelia, Emma, Trisha



Girls 4x100m relay Sophia C., Maegan, Rhian, Amelia

