



# ST. JOSEPH BY-THE-SEA HIGH SCHOOL

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December, 2021

Dear Parents:

What a shock we got in Church on this first Sunday of Advent! The rest of the world is full of holiday cheer and the Gospel reading at Mass contains some pretty ominous words from our Lord, *Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come.*

In the life of the Church, Christmas starts on Christmas Day and this period between Thanksgiving and Christmas is Advent, a penitential season in which we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ, both in time 2,000 years ago and at the end of the world. St. Augustine counsels, *Let us not resist the first advent, and the second will not terrify us.*

The students will be home with you to celebrate Christmas and they will be with us in school during Advent. It is in that spirit that we are observing Advent in its Catholic sense here at Sea. That is, we are providing a schedule for homerooms, clubs, and teams to attend our daily 7:30 A.M. mass in the Chapel. That schedule is posted on the website and on the December calendar. Likewise, as always, we have Adoration during the lunch periods every Friday and we will have special confessions preceding our Christmas Mass on the last day before vacation.

I wanted you as parents to know what we are doing during this time so that you can encourage your children to fully participate in these activities. Unfortunately, in so many different places, Christ is not part of Christmas. Our music, our decorations, and our celebrations are often little more than a secular celebration of winter and nativity scenes on our front lawns are rare. While the government-sponsored school system censors Christmas, here at Sea, we are free to celebrate Christmas and so we shall!

As hardworking parents, I know you did not send your son or daughter to a Catholic school to receive a secular education. Catholic education only works when everyone is on the same page and hopefully, while the rest of the world is wishing each other happy holidays, our students will have a deeper appreciation for the birth of our Lord – the reason for the season!

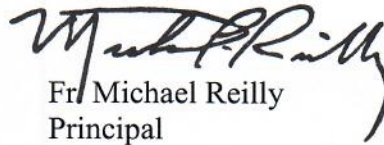
Since we have Virtual Days when it snows, we no longer have to worry about saving up snow days for bad weather. That allows us to use our snow days to extend the Christmas vacation to two full weeks and so the students will be off starting Monday, December 20 and will return on Monday, January 3. I call these extra vacation days the *Virtual Day Dividend*.

This year, in addition to our Christmas Concert, we will be holding a Family Christmas Party on Saturday December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM featuring the music of our talented Band and Choir. We're also going to do a live Nativity. Nucci's by-the-Sea will be catering a buffet dinner, complete with soda, coffee and dessert all for only \$35/person. So bring your family for a great night out together. The traditional Christmas concert will take place on Friday December 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.

So I hope that you will have the opportunity to attend our Christmas Concert this year to enjoy the hard work of our talented Band and Choir – they've been practicing for these concerts since September.

May God bless you and yours this Christmas!

Faithfully In Christ,



Fr Michael Reilly  
Principal