



Important Notes from Mrs. Luzzo December 6, 2024

Don't forget to ROAR!

Happy Friday and Happy St. Nick's Day, HTCS families! It's hard to believe we just returned from the Thanksgiving break and we are now in full on Christmas mode! There is a lot happening at HTCS over the next few weeks. Please see below for important information about school events and happenings.

#iGiveCatholic Campaign - Thank you to those who donated to our annual #iGiveCatholic campaign! While the official giving day is over, and we technically reached our goal thanks to a very generous donor, we are still able to accept additional donations until **December 10**. If you want to donate through FACTS, please contact Mrs. Luzzo at kluzzo@charlestandicoese.org, otherwise feel free to send in a check or drop one off at the front office. Every tax deductible donation, large or small, is very much appreciated!

Urgent - If you have not already done so, please take a few minutes to complete the **Catholic Identity Program Effectiveness: Parent Survey**. **As of now, we do not have enough responses from our families to retain our accreditation.** Your feedback is invaluable so we've extended the deadline to **Monday, 12/9**. Please click the link to complete the brief survey: <https://eprovesurveys.advanc-ed.org/surveys/#/action/262535/p883>. Thank you!

Advent Confession - Catholic students, faculty, and staff who are eligible will have an opportunity to go to Confession during the Advent season on **Monday, 12/16**. Please practice the procedures with your child so he/she feels comfortable taking advantage of this beautiful sacrament.

Annual Christmas Show - Information was sent home about attire for our annual Christmas show being held in the multipurpose room (mpr) at **6 PM** on **Thursday, 12/19**. Students should wear black bottoms and white shirts. Families are asked to bring a plate of shareable (hand held) dessert that represents their family and/or culture. For example, a plate of biscotti, brownies, or cookies. They do not need to be individually wrapped. We just wanted to have some treats for families to enjoy after the show.

Christmas Attire - Students may wear their favorite Christmas attire on **Friday, 12/20**. Please be sure shoes are safe for play as students will be enjoying a PTO sponsored Christmas party that day.

Half Day and No School - In recognition of the Christmas and New Year holidays, the school will close at **noon** on **Friday, 12/20**, and will reopen on **Monday, 1/6**. There is no aftercare on Friday, 12/20 and all students must be picked up at noon that day.

Not Your Average Joe - This year's production, *Not Your Average Joe*, will take place on **Friday, 1/31**, at **6 PM** and **Saturday, 2/1**, at **1 PM**. Tickets are \$20/adult and \$10/child 10 and under. Tickets are selling fast! Friday's opening night is 50% sold out and Saturday's matinee is 75% sold out. Contact Ms. Nicole (nnealey@charlestdiocese.org) to purchase your tickets.

Catholic Faith Formation - Five things to know and share about St. Nicholas - St. Nicholas, whose feast day is celebrated on December 6, is known to possibly be the real-life inspiration for the beloved Christmas character of Santa Claus. Not a lot is known about the historical Nicholas, who was bishop of Myra, a Greek city in modern-day Turkey, during the fourth century A.D. But there are many stories and legends that explain his reputation as a just and upright man, charitable gift-giver, and miracle-worker. Here are five things to know and share about St. Nicholas:

1. There is a legend behind why St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children. Many people know that St. Nicholas is the patron saint of children, but they may not know why he has that title. There is a grisly legend that says that during a famine in Myra, three young boys were lured into a butcher's shop, where they were killed and then brined in a wooden barrel with the intention of being sold as "ham." The good bishop worked a miracle, bringing the pickled children back to life and saving them from a gruesome fate. This story became the subject of many portrayals of Nicholas in art, especially during the Middle Ages. Some people believe depictions of Bishop Nicholas with the three boys led to his reputation as a protector of children. The legend of the brining may explain how he also became, oddly, the patron saint of brewers and coopers (people who make wooden casks, barrels, vats, troughs, and similar containers from timber).

2. He is one of the foremost saints in the Russian Orthodox Church. St. Nicholas is a unifying figure among Catholics and Orthodox Christians since both churches venerate him. He is incredibly important in the Russian Orthodox Church, where he is known as St. Nicholas the Wonderworker for the many miracles attributed to him both during and after his life. To the Orthodox, Nicholas is principally honored for his qualities as a holy bishop and a good shepherd of his people. Also, in their weekly liturgical cycle, which dedicates different days of the week to Jesus Christ and other saints, only three are specifically named: Mary, the Mother of God, John the Forerunner (known to Catholics as St. John the Baptist), and St. Nicholas. Nicholas did not leave behind any theological writings, but when he was made a bishop, he is credited with saying that "this dignity and this office demand different usage, in order that one should live no longer for oneself but for others."

3. Was he really jolly ol' St. Nicholas? Because of his popularity among Orthodox Christians, St. Nicholas is a favorite subject in iconography. But don't be surprised if, among the hundreds of icons depicting him, you don't see any merry dimples or a "round little belly." He does have a white beard, though.

4. He is the patron saint of unmarried people, fishermen, pawnbrokers, and the falsely accused. One of the most popular legends about Nicholas is that the saint, who is said to have come from a wealthy

family, secretly helped a poor man with three daughters. The father could not provide proper dowries for the girls to marry, and without husbands to support them, they might have been forced to turn to prostitution. After learning about the situation, Nicholas secretly slipped a bag of gold coins through the family's window while they were sleeping. He later left a second bag of coins, and likewise, another bag for the third daughter, at which point, the legend says, the father, who had waited up all night, "caught" Nicholas red-handed in his gift-giving. But Nicholas made him promise to keep the secret. The story is likely the explanation for why the modern Christmas character of Santa Claus brings his gifts for children under the cover of night. In artworks referencing this legend, the three bags of coins are often depicted as three golden balls. Images of gold balls were also used to mark the shops of pawnbrokers, which is probably how Nicholas came to be their patron saint, too. One of many miracles attributed to St. Nicholas happened at sea as he traveled aboard a boat to the Holy Land. Nicholas is a patron saint of sailors and travelers because he calmed the stormy waters that threatened their lives. His patronage of the falsely accused can be attributed to an early story about his rescue of three innocent men moments before their execution. It is said that St. Nicholas, then bishop of Myra, boldly pushed away the executioner's sword, released the men from their chains, and angrily reprimanded a juror who had taken a bribe to find them guilty.

5. He has two feast days. Most people know that Nicholas' feast day is celebrated on December 6, the day he died in the year 343, but for East Slavs, as well as the people of Bari, Italy, May 9 is also an important day to celebrate the saint. That date is the anniversary of the day that St. Nicholas' relics were moved from Myra, in present-day Turkey, to Bari, not long after the Great Schism of Catholics and Orthodox in 1054 A.D. Accounts differ over whether the transmission of the relics was theft or an attempt by Christian sailors to preserve the saint's remains from destruction by the Turks. But whatever the real reason, the relics can still be venerated today in the Basilica of St. Nicholas in Bari. Pope Francis has visited Bari, in Italy's southern region of Puglia, two times during his papacy. During both the 2018 and 2020 visits, he stopped in the basilica's crypt to venerate St. Nicholas' relics. The pontifical basilica is an important place of ecumenism, since the Catholic Church welcomes many Eastern Catholics and Orthodox Christians to the pilgrimage site. In the crypt, where St. Nicholas is buried, there is also an altar for the celebration of Orthodox and Eastern Catholic liturgies. For Christians who follow the Julian calendar, as the Eastern Orthodox do, St. Nicholas' principal feast day falls on Dec. 19. An Orthodox Divine Liturgy is usually celebrated at the Basilica of St. Nicholas that morning. On Dec. 6, Catholics in Bari celebrate the beloved saint with Mass, concerts, and a procession of the saint's statue through the city's streets. [5 things to know and share about St. Nicholas | Catholic News Agency](#)

MISSION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School, a ministry of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, offers to early childhood and elementary school students of diverse ethnic, economic, and religious backgrounds a superior academic program based on Gospel values. Within a family atmosphere, the school strives to develop the spiritual, academic, personal, creative, and physical growth of each student.*

VISION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School students will be fully prepared to transition to middle school possessing critical thinking skills, an ability to work independently as well as collaboratively, and an awareness of what it means to actively live the Gospel values.*