



ECHOES OF CARMEL

HOW TO DE-STRESS FROM MIDTERMS

CATHERINE MOREL - CLASS OF 2027

Christmas is a favorite holiday for lots of people; however, for many MCA students, midterm exams can bring nervousness and stress into this fun time of year. There are some things that students can do to avoid too much stress and enjoy their Christmas season. To begin, students can do things to make studying more fun and less stressful. This includes creating and playing games such as Kahoot and Blooket, rewriting notes with colors to make them aesthetically pleasing, and studying with a group of friends. Sometimes, a change of environment can provide a more productive study session. Many students find quiet places such as coffee shops or libraries as good study spaces while others work better outdoors in fresh air. It is important to take short breaks when studying to give oneself time to relax and refocus. Even when exams are finished, the worry about them does not automatically go away. Students can de-stress from exams by spending time with other people. Having a lunch group Christmas party or going Christmas shopping with family or friends can help students to avoid worrying about completed exams by keeping them occupied with something fun. Activities such as listening to music and watching a favorite movie or TV show can help to reduce stress as well. Students are not limited to these things; it is most important to stay involved in enjoyable activities that distract from stress. One last idea that does not have to be done at any certain time to help students is prayer. Jesus is *always* there and will grant peace to whomever goes to Him for it, so don't be afraid to ask!

HOMEROOM KRIS KRINGLE

GABRIELLE KLIBERT - CLASS OF 2027

Christmas is the perfect time for gift giving. Every year during the Christmas season at Mount Carmel Academy, each homeroom is given the choice to participate in doing a Kris Kringle together to learn more about each other and bond. Classmates can draw the name of another classmate out of a bowl or can spill a wheel, but whomever they get must remain a secret from the selected person. On December 4th and 5th, everyone who participated brought a \$1 gift to school with the name of the person she chose. On December 6th, everyone brought a \$5 gift to school. On this last day, everyone revealed herself to the gift's recipient. Here's a great idea for future Kris Kringle planning: make a slideshow of each person's list of ideas that she would like to get for a gift. This helps the shopper buying gifts know what her classmate would like!

Merry
Christmas





CHORALE'S CHRISTMAS WISH

BAYLEE SMITH - CLASS OF 2026

Do you know what you want for Christmas this year? Chorale knows what they want most! Chorale, MCA's advanced competition choir, has been selected to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City this April, but we need your help to get there. This holiday season, Chorale has organized several opportunities for you to help us get our Christmas wish including gift sales, concerts, and more!

Chorale will perform in three benefit concerts in the coming weeks. You will get to see why Chorale received our invitation when we perform some Christmas melodies and competition pieces on these dates:

Thursday, Nov. 30th at 7:00 pm at St. Dominic Church
(775 Harrison Ave, New Orleans)

Friday, Dec. 15th at 6:00 pm at John Calvin Presbyterian
(4201 Transcontinental Dr, Metairie)

Saturday, Dec. 16th at 6:00 pm at Grace Presbyterian
(6129 W Esplanade Ave, Metairie)

Donations will be accepted at all of the concerts! If you would like to learn more about our trip or make an online donation, please use this link:

<https://www.mcacubs.com/giving/make-a-gift/chorale>

On behalf of Chorale, thank you for your support, and happy holidays to all!



Photo/mcacubs.com

GIFT IDEAS

FAYE ORTOLANO - CLASS OF 2026

With the holiday season right around the corner, it's time to start shopping for Christmas gifts. Gift giving can be a daunting task because there are so many options. Here are some quick tips to help you narrow down how to find the perfect gift for friends and family.

The first tip is to engage with them and learn about their interests. It can be easier to shop for someone that you have an idea of what he or she likes and is passionate about. The second tip is to give someone a more personalized gift. This can come down to a crocheted animal or even a hand drawn card. These kind of gifts let the receiver know that you were thinking about him or her.

If you still have nowhere to start, here are a few simple items to get someone for Christmas: stationary, makeup, jewelry, handmade items (made from yarn, paper, clay, etc.), food, candles, clothing, and ornaments or small collectibles.

My last tip for you is to remember that it is the thought that counts. The gift receiver would be much more appreciative if you put effort into picking out an affordable but meaningful present instead of a generic, expensive gift. Happy shopping!





ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SEASON

SYDNE ORGERON - CLASS OF 2025

With the advent of the Christmas Season of '23 beginning to a merry start, many families and students want to experience their holiday season to the fullest. Here are some ideas to liven up your days with Christmas and seasonal cheer!

If you're looking for an authentic New Orleans experience that intertwines the Christmas spirit, look no further than the annual **Celebration in the Oaks at City Park!** Experience an impressive 2.25-mile-long Driving Tour or the acclaimed Walking Tour while gazing at the one million+ lights and amusement park rides, all open to the public during the trip. If you want to take part in a traditional Christmas experience dating back to the late 1980s while aiding one of the City Park's biggest fundraisers for its conservation, then join in on the fun anytime from November 23 to December 30. Tickets are available on the official City Park website!

If you're torn between the festive spirit of Christmas and the spooky season of Halloween, then **Fa-La-La Fright!** might be the experience for you! From 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on November 25th to December 24th, get a ghost-haunting tour across the holiday-adorned French Quarter. Another perfect family-centric experience for the Holidays is the annual **Teddy Bear Tea** at the famous Roosevelt Hotel. The annual celebration is fit for all age groups and is held from November 26th through December 27th. Another traditional New Orleans experience is **Caroling in Jackson Square**, a tradition since 1946. From 7 to 8 PM in Jackson Square on December 17th, join carolers in front of the St. Louis Cathedral to celebrate the Christmas season with books and candles provided. The gates open at 6:30 PM, so feel free to join in on the festivities early! One of the most historic and culturally significant events during the New Orleans Christmas season is the **Lighting of the Bonfires** along the levee on Christmas Eve. The best place to see the bonfires and watch them light up is on the East/West River Roads, or Highways 18 and 44. To arrive before the bonfires begin, it is best to be there by 6 p.m. The best place to go to see the most vibrant and colorful displays is in Gramercy, Louisiana, which is a 46-minute drive from New Orleans on average. The bonfires date back to the earliest Cajun settlers of the New Orleans region, and they signify the most vibrant and long-lasting aspects of the Cajun Christmas tradition.



These traditions are just some of the multitude of Christmas-related excursions and trips that one can take part in this year, and there are plenty more to check out!

Go to <https://holiday.neworleans.com/events/> to take advantage of the long list of holiday events this season!



Celebration in the Oaks. (n.d.). <https://www.viator.com/tours/New-Orleans/Celebration-in-the-Oaks-Tour/d675-3780P29>.



Teddy Bear Tea at the Roosevelt Hotel. (n.d.-a). <https://teatimemagazine.com/taking-tea-in-new-orleans/4/>.



Louisiana Bonfire Lighting. (n.d.). <https://www.behance.net/gallery/40235455/Spiritual-YAYA-Spirituality-in-New-Orleans/modules/243502135>.