



CARDINAL WEEKLY

News for the Week of November 21, 2024



Thanksgiving Feast

An annual tradition for St. John's faculty and staff is the Thanksgiving Feast. During this time, faculty and staff enjoy a Thanksgiving-style lunch as they slow down to connect in fellowship with one another. Thanks to Melissa "Mimi" Bonhall for her hard work in coordinating and hosting this beautiful gathering, and to her helpers! An additional thank you to our volunteers for coming in to supervise lunch so teachers could enjoy this time.

All School

Thanksgiving Break is Next Week: NO SCHOOL

School will be closed on Monday, November 25 through Friday, November 29 for Thanksgiving break. We look forward to seeing you back on campus on Monday, December 2.

Did You Know? Your Child's Grade Level Could Win Free Dress and a Pizza Party!

Help us reach our Gratitude and Giving Week goal of **40% Parent Participation** in the Cardinal Fund by TOMORROW! We are currently at **26% participation**, and we need to hit our goal by tomorrow to earn a FREE DRESS DAY for all students. Throughout this week, we shared our gratitude for the SJES community as we sought support for the **Cardinal Fund** - St. John's **most important** annual philanthropic effort of the year. Tuition alone doesn't cover the cost of a St. John's education, and every dollar makes an impact. [**Click here**](#) to help us reach our goal!

Bonus opportunity! The first grade level to reach 100% participation in the Cardinal Fund will win an additional free dress day for their class, along with a pizza party! Questions? Please reach out to the [**Advancement Team**](#).

Christmas Card Artwork Winners!

Congratulations to our Christmas Card artwork winners for this year's SJES Christmas card!

- Lin Zhang, Pre-K & Avaleigh Gagnon, Kindergarten
- Milagro Abrams, 3rd Grade
- Shivani Muthu, 5th Grade
- Ayla Zand, 5th Grade
- Connor Parlet, 6th Grade

Take a Stroll Down Candy Cane Lane

Our favorite Cardinal tradition is heading to campus when we return from break, on December 2 - 6. **Candy Cane Lane** is a special holiday event that allows Pre-K through 8th grade students the opportunity to “surprise” friends and family with holiday gifts of their choice, while also learning how to shop and budget. Pre-K and Kindergarten students will have assistance from their school PALS/Buddies while they shop. **Please return [**Shopping Wish Lists**](#) and checks (if paying by check) to your teachers/advisors by tomorrow,**

November 22. No cash will be accepted. Questions? Please reach out to [Brittany Huffman](#) or visit our [Candy Cane Lane](#) webpage.

St. John's Children's Choir at Segerstrom

Congratulations to our [St. John's Children's Choir](#) who sang at [Segerstrom Concert Hall](#) last night along with the Santa Margarita Catholic High School choirs, dancers, and orchestra in a special holiday event honoring the late percussion instructor, Nick Kraus. Under the direction of [Ms. Naulls, nine of our students](#) from Elementary and Middle Division sang a rousing 2-part rendition of the spiritual, "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel." Special thanks to Mr. Bourke, Mrs. McLennan, and Mrs. Acosta for chaperoning. What a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate our gratitude during this holiday season with song and the support of our St. John's community!

Save 15% On All Tommy Hilfiger Uniforms

Don't miss this opportunity to save on uniforms for next year! Make sure that you never miss a THSU sale and sign up for promotional emails [here](#).

- PROMO CODE REQUIRED: **NOVEMBER15**
- Offer ends 11/24/24 at 11:59PM CT.
- The Promotion Code is required during checkout. Enter it in the Promo Code box of the shopping cart to apply the discount. The offer is not valid on any previous orders, not valid with other offers, and has no cash value. Excludes custom sized items.

[Click here](#) to shop online and enter **school code: STJO56**

You're Invited! RSVP to Wine Wall by Saturday, November 30

Earlier this month, you received an invitation via Paperless Post to Wine Wall, St. John's annual holiday party. This event will take place on **Saturday, December 7 from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** We hope you will join us for this fun evening of fellowship as we kick off Cardinella. Enjoy the festivities while wearing your coziest attire, generously hosted at the Keil Family home. This will be an adult only evening – so line up your sitters! **Please RSVP by Saturday, November 30.** Didn't receive the invitation? Please contact the [Advancement Team](#).

NEW Youth Jacket Arrivals in the Student Store

NEW, NEW, NEW this week in the **Student Store**! We have received Champion windbreaker 3/4 zip **jackets** and full-zip sweatshirts just in time for cooler weather. Shop in-store before school tomorrow or **online**.

Get Your Spirit Lunch Orders In!

The next Spirit Lunch will take place on Friday, December 13. We are excited to have TK Burgers back on campus! **Orders must be placed in advance, online by Monday, December 2 at Noon.** **Click here** to place your order. There will be no Choice Lunch served on this day. Additionally, K-8 parents are invited to attend Spirit Lunch at their child(ren)'s designated lunch time.

LAST CALL: Yearbook Dedication Pages

Looking for a way to tell your son or daughter “I am proud of you”? Purchase a dedication page in the yearbook! Dedication pages are now on sale for the 2024-2025 school yearbook. There are four different sizes to choose from (1/8, 1/4, 1/2, and full page). **Click here** to view the flyer for instructions and pricing. The **first price increase will take place on December 1**, so purchase yours today for the lowest price! Questions? Contact **Beth Sarachman**.

Let's Go Caroling!

Kindergarten through 8th Grade students are invited to go caroling in the community this Holiday Season! If interested, please reach out to **Ms. Naulls**. Upcoming dates are:

- Saturday, December 7 at 4:30 p.m. at Santa's Tree Lighting, Mercantile Way in Ladera Ranch
- Saturday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Santa's Village, Mission Viejo Library
- Friday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m. at Rancho Mission Viejo Holiday Event
- Saturday, December 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at RSM Lake

Save the Date: Christmas Concerts are Just Around the Corner!

Mark your calendars! Here are the upcoming dates for our annual Christmas performances for each division:

- Early Childhood Division: Friday, December 20 at 11:15 a.m.
- Elementary Division: Thursday, December 19 at 6:00 p.m.

- Middle Division: Tuesday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Dennis Used Uniform Sales End January 31, 2025

As we begin our final transition to our new uniform provider, **Tommy Hilfiger School Uniforms**, we would like to make you aware of a few dates and allow you time to prepare.

Dennis used uniforms will be available for sale in the **Student Store** until January 31, 2025. Beginning February 1, 2025, only Tommy Hilfiger *used* uniforms will be available. If you think that your student may need a Dennis used uniform item to get you through the remainder of the school year, be sure to purchase it before January 31. Students are permitted to wear Dennis uniforms throughout the 2024-2025 school year. For more information, **click here** for a copy of the email that was sent earlier this week.

International Festival – Parent Volunteer Interest Form

This year, SJES PTF will be hosting the annual International Fair on Wednesday, January 29 from 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. in the SJES courtyard. This event allows our community to represent and share their cultures with others, while discovering and learning about cultures which may be new to them. If you are interested in volunteering to help create this fun and educational fellowship event, please **click here** and fill out the three-question survey.

Financial Aid for the 2025-2026 School Year: PLEASE NOTE NEW REQUIREMENT

Financial Aid applications for the 2025-2026 school year are now open on FACTS. Please note that we will be requiring 2024 tax returns as a part of the application process this year – this is a change from prior years. The deadline for applications for Financial Aid for 2025-26 is February 14, 2025. Any applications received after this date will be reviewed subject to available funds, as awards will be made in the order in which applications are received. For more information, **click here**.

Important Upcoming Dates

Early Childhood Division

Friday, November 22

- Candy Cane Lane Shopping **Wish Lists** Due (Pre-K students only)

Monday, November 25 - Friday, November 29

- Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL

Saturday, November 30

- RSVP to Wine Wall Invitation

Monday, December 2

- Spirit Lunch orders close at Noon. **Click here** to purchase.

Monday, December 2 - Friday, December 6

- Candy Cane Lane (Pre-K students only)

Saturday, December 7

- Wine Wall: 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Elementary Division

Friday, November 22

- Candy Cane Lane Shopping **Wish Lists** Due
- Fall Sports **Registration** Due

Monday, November 25 - Friday, November 29

- Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL

Saturday, November 30

- *RSVP to Wine Wall Invitation*

Monday, December 2

- *Spirit Lunch orders close at Noon. [Click here](#) to purchase.*

Monday, December 2 - Friday, December 6

- *Candy Cane Lane*

Saturday, December 7

- *Wine Wall: 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.*
- *Christmas Caroling: 4:30 p.m. Santa's Tree Lighting, Mercantile Way, Ladera Ranch*
- *Christmas Caroling: 6:30 p.m., Santa's Village at Mission Viejo Library*

Friday, December 13

- *Christmas Caroling: 6:00 p.m. at Rancho Mission Viejo Holiday Event*

Middle Division

Friday, November 22

- *Candy Cane Lane Shopping [Wish Lists](#) Due*
- *Fall Sports [Registration](#) Due*

Monday, November 25 - Friday, November 29

- *Thanksgiving Break: NO SCHOOL*

Saturday, November 30

- *RSVP to Wine Wall Invitation*

Monday, December 2

- *Spirit Lunch orders close at Noon. [Click here](#) to purchase.*

Monday, December 2 - Friday, December 6

- *Candy Cane Lane*

Saturday, December 7

- *Wine Wall: 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.*
- *Christmas Caroling: 4:30 p.m. Santa's Tree Lighting, Mercantile Way, Ladera Ranch*
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Early Childhood Division



Turkeys Take Over the Early Childhood!

Our Pre-K students have been learning all about turkeys! Did you know that only male turkeys can gobble and only wild turkeys can fly? Pre-K has been busy learning all of these fun facts by painting turkeys, learning the turkey "Hokey Pokey" (practicing the concept of right and left), and by making little turkey snacks for this month's Build-A-Snack.

Happy Thanksgiving from our Pre-K students!

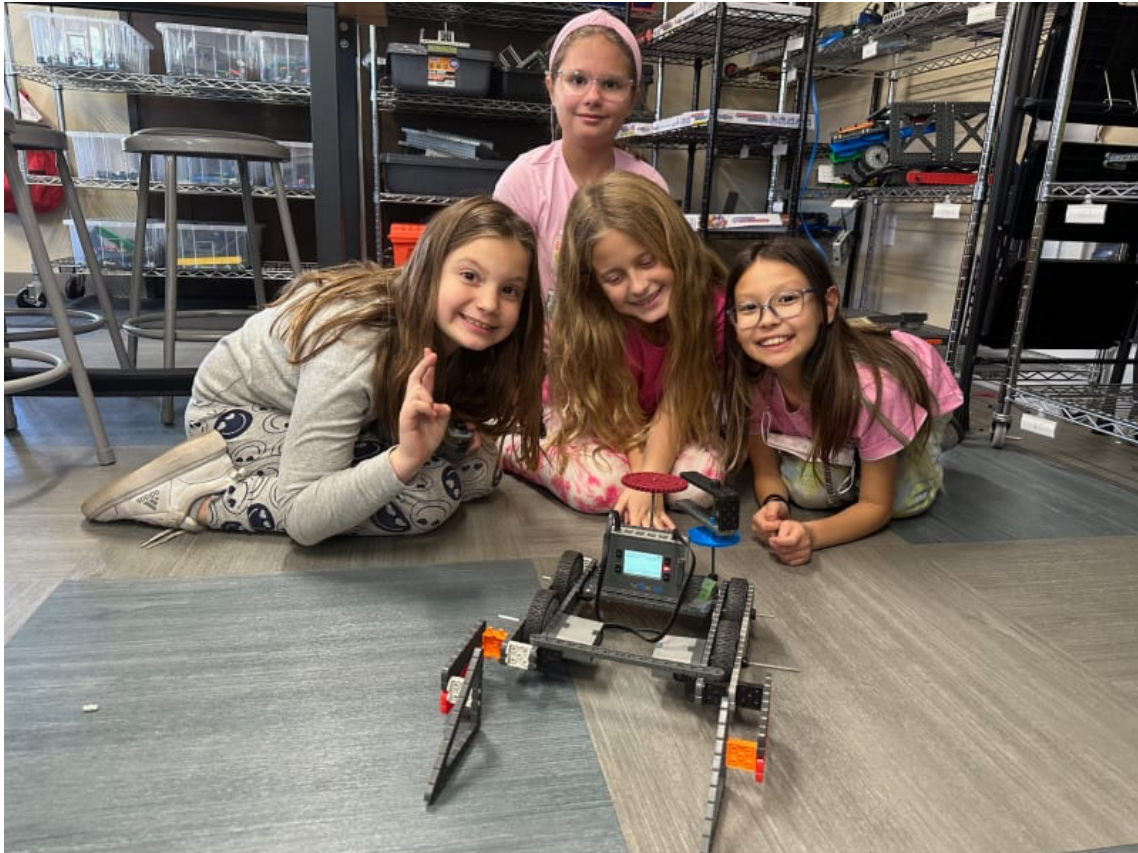
Early Childhood Service-Learning Project

Early Childhood students decorated placemats which the 8th graders delivered on November 19 when they traveled to Camp Pendleton to participate in Operation Rack Pack, welcoming home Marines who have been deployed overseas. These placemats will brighten their tables for Thanksgiving dinner. [Click here](#) to see some of our Cardinals participating in the project!

NO SCHOOL Next Week

There will be no school on Monday, November 25 through Friday, November 29. We hope you enjoy this time with your families during this season of gratitude.

Elementary Division



Elementary Division Robot Presentations

Fourth grade girls tested their self-designed, self-built VEX robots, in preparation for a Team Robot competition. The goal is to control a soft ball and push it to the opponent's side. Using interactive design, they refine their robots after each match to learn from each experience and continue improving.

Dear St. John's Families,

With the holidays upon us, and our focus on the Cardinal Character trait of gratitude, we can't help but feel thankful for our St. John's community of students, staff, and parents. This school – this family – is truly a special place. We are so fortunate to work alongside experienced and knowledgeable teachers, engaged and motivated students, and of course you: our incredibly supportive families!

From the moment students walk onto campus in the morning, it is evident that, they too, are thankful for being able to call St. John's home. After all, the joy, laughter, and love experienced by each Cardinal is one of the reasons that makes St. John's such an incredible place to spend each day. Thank you for entrusting us with your children. For that, we are truly grateful.

As we approach this Thanksgiving Season, we wish you and your family a blessed holiday. We all have so much to be thankful for, and we appreciate all that you do.

With gratitude,

Ryan Bourke and **Danielle McLennan**

Elementary Christmas Concert is December 19

We're pleased to invite you to our K–5 Christmas concert on **Thursday, December 19 at 6:00 p.m.** This event is a wonderful opportunity for our Elementary Division students to share their talents and what they have been learning in our music program with the entire school community. We are looking forward to a memorable and festive evening! **[Click here](#)** for details.

Engaging Reading Tool in Upper Elementary

During Parent Teacher Conferences last week, your teachers provided you with a **[flyer](#)** about an engaging reading tool for Upper Elementary students. Grades 3, 4, and 5 are using **[Microsoft Reading Progress & Reading Coach](#)**, integrated into Microsoft suite of apps, to enhance reading skills, track progress, and inspire a love for reading. Reading Progress helps teachers monitor and support students' reading development, while Reading Coach offers personalized, independent practice using AI. Parents are encouraged to have their children use Reading Coach at home for at least 20 minutes daily. This initiative is part of a private pilot with other schools from around the country,

aiming to share successes and challenges to improve the tools. Teachers will provide more information at upcoming conferences.

Middle Division



Gratitude Tree

In the spirit of Thanksgiving and Gratitude Week, the 7th-grade Mandarin class created a vibrant Gratitude Tree, blending the spirit of the season with their lesson on colors. To make it more special, we invited the new 5th graders to add smaller leaves of gratitude, written in Pinyin, to the tree. Happy Thanksgiving!

感恩节快乐！

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With the holidays upon us, and our focus on the Cardinal Character trait of gratitude, we can't help but feel thankful for our St. John's community of students, staff, and parents. This school – this family – is truly a special place. We are so fortunate to work alongside experienced and knowledgeable teachers, engaged and motivated students, and of course you: our incredibly supportive families!

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As we approach this Thanksgiving Season, we wish you and your family a blessed holiday. We all have so much to be thankful for, and we appreciate all that you do.

With gratitude,

Ryan Bourke and **Danielle McLennan**

Congratulations to Our Middle Division Student of the Week WINNERS!

Click on each of their names below to learn a little more about them.

8th Grade: **Kyler Mendoza**

7th Grade: **Clifton Black**

6th Grade: **Jerry Ye**

Mark Your Calendars: Middle Division Christmas Concert is December 17

We are so excited to welcome Middle Division families to our Christmas concert on Tuesday, December 17. Mr. Roberts (Band), Ms. Naulls (Choir), Ms. Stebbins (Dance), and Mr. Tiatia-Garaud (Drama) are so proud to showcase what the students have been working on in their respective classes. The event is divided into two separate shows, occurring on the same night but at different times:

- If your child is in *Band or Choir*, your portion of the show will begin at 6:00 p.m.

- If your child is in *Dance or Drama*, your portion of the show will begin at 7:00 p.m. More information will be communicated by your child's Performing Arts teachers. We look forward to seeing everyone for a wonderful evening put on by our Middle Division Performing Arts students.

Church

Thanksgiving Worship at St. John's Church NEXT Wednesday

Join us for a special Holy Eucharist service in celebration of Thanksgiving next week! This joyful gathering will take place on **Wednesday, November 27 at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's Church**, and will be a time to reflect on gratitude and share in the blessings of community and faith. After the service, stay for a delicious pizza dinner where we'll enjoy fellowship and give thanks together. All are welcome—bring your family, friends, and anyone who would like to celebrate. We look forward to seeing you there!

Save the Date! Christmas Pageant at St. John's Church

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, December 22, at 5:00 p.m.**, and get ready to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with joy and laughter! Our annual Christmas Pageant is a heartwarming and adorable retelling of the birth of Jesus, brought to life by the children of St. John's. ***All children are welcome to join the fun on stage the night of!*** This beloved tradition is sure to fill your heart with the spirit of the season. Bring your family, invite your friends, and join us for an evening of faith, fun, and festive cheer. We can't wait to see you there!