

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS Regional Secondary School

541 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, BC V7M 1M5

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Vice Principal: Mr. J. Galat
Vice Principal: Mr. T. Horton

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STA School Activities - on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY

4	School Re-Opens
14	Parent Association Meeting
15	Ski Club
22	Spirit Day
25-28	School Exams
29	No classes for students

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VOLUME 28, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 2020



Photo courtesy of Mr. Tim Horton

As we enter into this season of Advent, let us take the time to think about what the birth of Jesus means in our lives. I reflect on the trust and patience Mary showed with God in giving birth to our Saviour. Her faith suggests patience in all things, especially patience with yourself. This patience is never more necessary as COVID-19 exposures increase within our community. We at STA must continue our vigilance by continuing to follow our school's health and safety plans, in service to our school and greater community. In response to enhance the safety at our school, we have accepted the generous offer from a philanthropic donor, through Charitable Impact, to treat the touch surfaces at STA. This antimicrobial surface protection was administered by ZeroBlast on at the end of November and will enhance our fight against the coronavirus and other infectious microbes. This treatment will not reduce our cleaning protocols we have in place, rather, it enhances them.

Although, this Advent season will be different, it will be a time where we should take the time to think of where we want to go and figure out how to get there.

John Campbell, Principal

JANUARY EXAM SCHEDULE

The January 2021 Exam Schedule is posted to the STA Website, under the Student Portal, use the link: http://www.aquinas.org/application/files/3116/0797/7885/2021-01_January_Exam_Schedule_Rev_4.pdf

DATE	GRADE 8	GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
Monday, Jan 25 AM	Science 8	French 9 Interviews On-line	English 10	English 11 Honours En 11	English 12
Monday, Jan 25 PM			Religion 10	Religion 11	Religion 12
Tuesday, Jan 26 AM	English 8		Socials 10		Chemistry 12 Human Geo 12 Physical Geo 12 French 12 Interviews On-line
Tuesday, Jan 26 PM		Religion 9	French 10 Interviews On-line		History 12 French 12 Interviews On-line
Wednesday, Jan 27 AM	French 8 Interviews On-line	English 9	Science 10	Physics 11 Biology 11	Physics 12 AP Calc 12 FO Math 12
Wednesday, Jan 27 PM			French 10 Interviews On-line	French 11 Interviews On-line	Psychology 12
Thursday, Jan 28 AM	Math 8 AW Math 8	Math 9	PC Math 10 AW Math 10	Chemistry 11 FO Math 11 AW Math 11	Comp Cult 12 Biology 12
Thursday, Jan 28 PM				French 11 Interviews On-line	Law 12
Friday, Jan 29	NO CLASSES FOR ALL STUDENTS				Numeracy 10 catch up exams only for grade 12 students who have not yet written

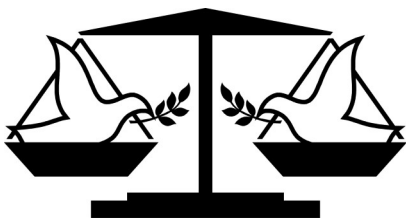
January 2021 Exam Schedule

DIGNITY WEEK



December 7-11,

Life & Justice students at STA organized their first Dignity Week, a week during which each day was dedicated to a different theme related to the dignity of the human person.



These themes were:

Day 1 - Mental health

Day 2 - Peer pressure & bullying

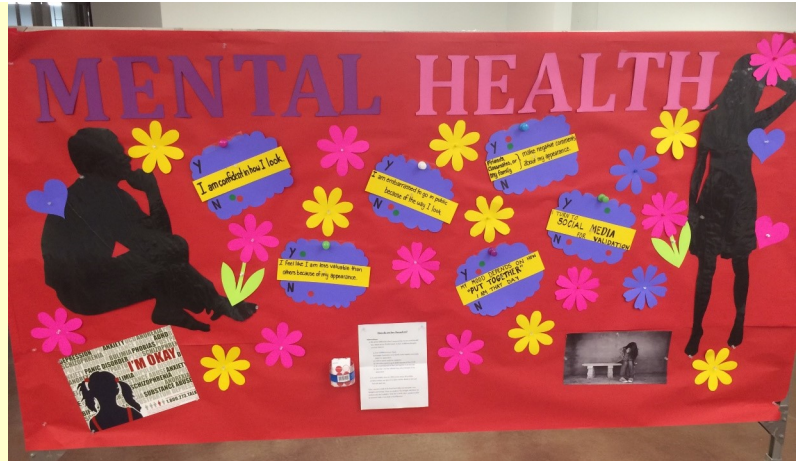
Day 3 - Gender identity

Day 4 - Euthanasia

Day 5 - Voice for the voiceless

Some highlights of the week include the on-going "Random Acts of Kindness", in which students submitted short videos to the @lifeandjustice instagram page of them doing some act of kindness. Life & Justice students also filled the school with positive messages on sticky notes, and prepared displays for each day of the week. The week culminated in the Day 5 silent protest, in which 80 students signed up to remain silent for the day in solidarity with the voiceless - victims of abortion, human trafficking, pornography and domestic abuse.

Overall, an inspiring week!



DIGNITY WEEK DECEMBER 7-11



STA students view displays and have an opportunity to discuss topics of importance in our society today during Dignity Week.



Campus Ministry

FOREST OF MIRACLES - update

Thank you to all individuals who donated to the STA sponsored tree in Dundarave Festival's Forest of Miracles in support of the Lookout Foundation.

Through your generosity we raised \$250. The proceeds provide permanent, rent-geared-to-income homes for homeless members of our community.



STUDENT COUNCIL

STA students were in the festive spirit during the last four days of school in December with themed Christmas days.

Monday: red and green

Tuesday: favorite movie characters

Wednesday: ugly sweater day

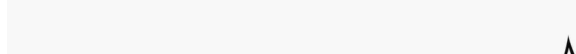
Thursday “Wear your Spirit Wear”

And a good time was had by all.

Photos courtesy of Mr. Tim Horton



“After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.”

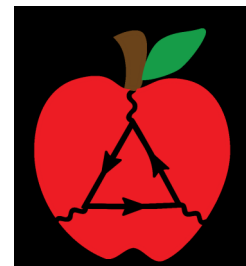
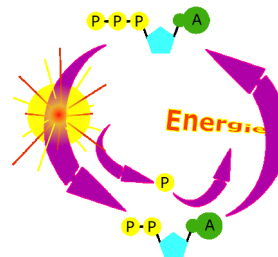
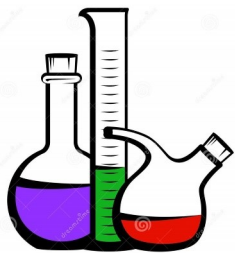
A black silhouette illustration on a light background. It depicts three figures, likely the Three Kings, riding camels and following a bright, four-pointed star (the Star of Bethlehem) in the sky. The figures are dressed in traditional robes and head coverings. The camels are shown in profile, moving from left to right. The star is positioned in the upper right corner of the illustration.

Matthew 2, 9-12



Science Department

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL'S NINETEENTH ANNUAL GRADE 8 SCIENCE FAIR (PART ONE!)



On Friday, December 4th the STA Science Department held the first of its two Nineteenth Annual Science Fairs. (A second science fair will be held in the spring for our term two grade 8 science students.) Our term one grade 8 students spent almost three months working on their projects, and at last it was time to share them with the world! Due to the pandemic, we weren't able to invite parents into the school to be judges as we usually do. Instead, ten of our wonderful grade 12 students

stepped up to the plate and did an excellent job of assessing our young scientists' projects.

The STA Science Department would like to thank our small group of grade 8 students for making the day run so smoothly; they did an excellent job of being where they were supposed to be, when they were supposed to be there. We would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our judges who volunteered their day to judge backboards, read lab reports and interview our grade 8 students.

Finally, thank you to *Mr. Horton* for documenting the day in pictures and to *Ms. Hughes, Mr. McCaffrey* and their crew for setting up the auxiliary gym for the science fair.

The following is a list of our three overall award winners, as well as the top four projects in each of the four categories at our Science Fair. If the Greater Vancouver Regional Science Fair is able to happen, we will advance our three overall winners to compete at the city level this spring (likely virtually).



First Place: *Billy Park* – Where Have You BEAN?
 Second Place: *Justin Carotenuto* – Bacteria vs. Hand Sanitizer: The Battle for the Ages!
 Third Place: *Ramy Shehata* – The One Best Mask

CHEMISTRY	ENGINEERING SCIENCES/SCIENTIFIC APPLICATIONS	LIFE SCIENCES	PHYSICS
<i>Min Jun Kwak</i> Goodbye Gasoline, Hello Ethanol	<i>Justin Carotenuto</i> Bacteria vs. Hand Sanitizer: The Battle for the Ages!	<i>Billy Park</i> Where Have You BEAN?	<i>Eric Wenzel</i> Simple Magnetic DC Motor

CLEAN TECH COMPETITION 2021

THEME: PRESERVING PLANET EARTH

Any 15-18 year old student researcher working on a sustainable technology-focused project is encouraged to enter for FREE into this year's event! This year's categories are:

LOW COST

When it comes to innovation, sometimes the best solutions are ones that require lower technological sophistication. However Low Cost does not mean low effort; a tin can with some carbon filter is not something the competition is looking for. It is in this spirit that they challenge you to find an innovative design that can be replicated around the world regardless of economic situation.



HIGH TECH

While a low tech solution has broader applications in many ways, cutting edge technology is what really expands our capabilities as a civilization in the end. Projects entered into the High Tech category are looking to push the envelope of what is possible with our current capabilities. Teams working on this type of research are utilizing the most advanced technology we have available, or creating entirely new processes to expand our current abilities.



COMPETITION INFORMATION

If you are or know a student looking to address this international issue with innovative engineering and a revolutionary design, this is the competition for you! Contestants research a specific solution to this problem, register for free online in teams of 1-3, and then submit a 5-15 page paper to be judged by an international team of engineers, university instructors and industry professionals! Finalist teams will present their research and constructed prototypes at the Finals in early August, as they vie for the \$10,000 per category grand prize! For more information: <https://www.cstl.org/cleantech/>

STEAM HORIZON AWARDS

STEAM Horizon Awards
(five prizes, \$25 000 each)

Have you been formally recognized (science fair win, published app, patented invention) or less-formally recognized (founded a local coding club, developed a course for kids, created a local art installation) in

the field of STEAM? If you have, you should consider applying for a STEAM Horizon Award.

Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada, 16 to 18 years of age, have an academic average of 80% or higher, and be attending a Canadian university or college in a STEAM

field in the fall of 2021. Application deadline: January 15th, 2021 For more information, go to:

www.steamhorizonawards.ca



Library News

With another candle lit on the Advent wreath, and decorated trees and classrooms throughout the school, it has truly felt a lot like Christmas! Even amidst the excitement of the pending holiday and Christmas celebrations, students have done well to stay focused on the tasks at hand and we've been witness to that in the library as various classes have worked on resource based assignments.

Mrs. Pilar and *Mr. Appleton's* Science 9 classes began their Research Grant Proposal assignments with library based research. After an overview of APA Style citing, students received a refresher on how to use our online databases and STA library catalogue to find appropriate resources. *Mr. Slivinski's* SS 9 class visited as well as they continue their Nationalism assignments.

At this time, we wish to remind students that while books taken out recently can be kept for reading over the holidays, those signed out two weeks or more ago should be

returned and/or renewed. We'd like to keep our books circulating to as many students as possible so adhering to due dates helps! If you find any forgotten STA library books lying around the house over the holidays, be sure to return them as soon as possible.

Wishing you all a very Merry and restful Christmas!

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

How to Do It Now Because It's Not Going Away: An expert guide to getting stuff done

by *Leslie Josel*

A straight-talking guide filled with real-life solutions to help students get done what they need to get done. Now. Packed with easily digestible tips, as well as stories from real students, this book teaches readers to stay on top of homework, develop time management skills, create easy-to-follow routines, balance distractions and motivation, establish smart study habits, and get unstuck and started.

I am Alfonso Jones

by *Tony Medina*

From the Library Journal: "This graphic novel tells the story of *Alfonso Jones*, a bright, energetic teen excitedly anticipating a starring role in his school's performance of *Hamlet* and the homecoming of his wrongfully imprisoned, recently exonerated father. When *Alfonso* crosses paths with an off-duty police officer who mistakes a clothes hanger for a gun, the officer opens fire, taking *Alfonso's* life. What follows is a powerful examination of grief, rage, and the responsibility that the living owe the dead, as *Alfonso* finds himself ferried through the afterlife on a ghostly train peopled with past victims of wrongful shooting deaths, and his friends, family, and community attempt to make sense of his tragic demise. This ground breaking and timely story should be read by all, especially those interested in the Black Lives Matter movement and the complicated relationship between the police and those they serve."

Learning Resource Centre

Dear Parents,

Although I have not met all your sons/daughters, I have met many of them, as most students in the school interact with the Learning Assistance Department in some way. One group of students I have particularly appreciated of late are our Grade 11 and 12 peer tutors. Recently, under the direction of *Miss Goodsell*, several Senior students have been volunteering their time and working with some of our Juniors on a variety of subjects. The result has been some quality, focused study time from 3 to 4 pm for any students who come by. When school resumes in January, and exams approach, I encourage all students to make use of the LRC homework club.



Michael Field - St. Thomas Aquinas
Learning Assistance Coordinator
 604-987-4431
mfield@aquinas.org



BariSTA CAFÉ CLUB PROJECTS



The BariSTA Cafe club students put together 40 care packages for the residents at the Lookout Shelter. Packages included toothbrushes and toothpaste, treats, note pads, pens, hand sanitizer, gloves, socks, a handmade Christmas ornament and a card. The sentiment read:

Hello friend,

I may not know you, but I do know that you deserve happiness this holiday season. I hope this card can be a reminder that someone cares.

Sincerely,



Under the guidance of *Mrs. Magee* and *Mrs. Esmail*, The BariSTA Cafe students were busy this fall sewing throw pillows for Christmas. Patterns included Our Lady of Guadalupe and a charming whimsical Nativity scene. Selling at \$35 each, the pillows sold out in less than 24 hours.

Great work done by the young ladies!



MUSIC DEPARTMENT



After recording music for the school's virtual Remembrance Day Service on November 10, our ensembles continued with preparations for recording their musical selections for our virtual Christmas Concert. While we are very disappointed not to be able to host our annual Christmas Concert and Art Exhibition this year due to current restrictions, we are pleased to be able to present a virtual concert online which you and your families can enjoy at home at your leisure.

Our Grade 8 Beginning Band has made significant progress thanks to playing every day. They recorded two selections on Monday,

December 7. Our Grade 10 Ensemble recorded two selections on Tuesday December 1. Both groups are directed by *Mr. Woitowitsch*.

Our Grade 9 Choir, Men's Choir and Chamber Choir recorded several selections on December 7 under the direction of *Mrs. Rebane*.

Our Junior Jazz Ensemble under the direction of *Mr. Woitowitsch* and our Senior Jazz Ensemble directed by *Mr. Horton* recorded several selections on December 7.

We would like to thank *Ms. Susana Valente*, a recording engineer with the CBC, for recording our ensembles, and *Mr. Steve Grout* (one of our

teachers on call) for filming the groups and assisting us with post-production. The performances may be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmNOHo5I_h7f-cfKD2dnwbg or go to www.aquinas.org and click on *YouTube* icon at top of page.

Our ensembles will participate in the annual Kiwanis Festivals this year, which will be virtual. We are also hoping to participate in this year's Con Brio Whistler Music Festival which is moving "from the mountains to the clouds".

We wish all of our musicians and their families a Blessed and Happy Christmas.

Photos courtesy of Mr. Tim Horton



🎵 JUNIOR JAZZ ENSEMBLE 🎵



ART DEPARTMENT



The Grade 10 art class has been working on nativity scenes in clay in celebration of Advent. The students used a combination of sculptural techniques, slab construction and coil building to create the nativity scenes. Surface details were hand painted using underglaze to add visual interest to the scenes.

The images above are by (left to right) *Sierra Larson*, *Ashley McLeary* and *Setareh Sharghi Yazdi*

The Grade 8 art students, working in groups, decorated the large art room windows in celebration of Christmas and the Advent season. The large silhouetted nativity scenes create a wonderful festive display enjoyed by all who pass through the science wing hallways.



MS. MacCUISH SOCIAL STUDIES 10 CLASS

In grade 10 Social, we wrote letters to the government regarding issues important to the students. Students had to demonstrate their understanding of different roles and functions of the government, their persuasive writing skills as well as the ability to draw a conclusion to a societal problem. Here is a fine example of what concerns youth of today.

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1A 0A6

Dear Jonathan Wilkinson,

My name is Stephanie Kostamo, and I am a grade 10 student at St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School in North Vancouver. In my Social Studies class, we are currently learning about environmental sustainability and issues that contribute towards global warming, and I have chosen to write to you today regarding an environmental issue that greatly impacts Vancouver and Canada as a whole: plastic pollution.

As the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, you have the most influence on how Canada responds to the climate crisis, and as a member of the federal government, you have the power to propose bills and pass legislatures that will either positively or negatively impact Canada. Your position on the highest level of government as well as your role as a Cabinet Minister makes you accountable for the environmental state of Canada, therefore addressing you on this topic will provide the most impact.

Furthermore, you are the Member of Parliament for the riding of North Vancouver, the community which my school is in, and the decisions made by the federal court greatly affect how I live my life on a day to day basis. Since Vancouver is near the ocean, coastal pollution is a priority, and the large amounts of pollution impact the health of fish and biodiversity in the ocean, which in then negatively affects the communities and people living nearby. The largest source of pollution in the ocean is plastic pollution, and although Canada has done a phenomenal job regarding regulating carbon through a carbon tax, the issue of plastic overuse and pollution has been greatly overlooked. Therefore, I propose that the federal government of Canada passes legislation that requires a tax on every single use of plastic that large corporations use to package products. As a member of a majority government, it will be far easier to pass legislation regarding plastic packaging since the Liberal party will vote in favour of the legislation.

Placing a tax on plastic packaging will not only greatly decrease plastic pollution in the ocean due to reduced usage, but it will also put pressure on large companies such as Walmart and Amazon to incorporate more sustainable packaging. Over 10% of all supplied plastic ends up in the ocean, but imposing a plastic tax will decrease mass production, and less single use plastic will pollute waters, increasing the overall health of surviving ecosystems. Since plastic is often used as a cheap and efficient way of packaging, a plastic tax adds more expenses for a company based on the amount of plastic they consume, discouraging further production of the material. In my opinion, although plastic is an effective means of packaging and a useful material, Canada overuses plastic to an extreme extent, and it is the fault of the government for not creating more preventative measures against plastic pollution.

I implore that the government passes legislation that requires companies to pay a \$15.00 tax on every plastic item a company uses to package products, with an increase of \$5.00 every year that passes until Canadian

companies experience a 50% reduction in the use of plastics. This includes all plastic bags, water bottles, and other easily disposed products. Encouraging sustainability in a company is a necessary part of reducing carbon and fossil fuel emissions, and as the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, it is your responsibility to make sure that corporations take a more environmentally friendly approach to production. It is in Canada's best interest that a plastic tax is imposed, and this must be addressed immediately.

Thank you very much for your time, and should you want to discuss the matter further, feel free to email me at :

Best wishes,

Stephanie Kostamo, Grade 10 Student
St. Thomas Aquinas High School
North Vancouver, British Columbia
V7M 1M5

English Department

More reflections from *Mr. Mendoza's* English 8 class, this one by *Sienna Alsop*.

Glistening white in the sun. The white color is a blinding contrast compared to the dull gray days of fall. Like a bed enticing you for a rest. The shiny white color looks fluffy and warm, but once you touch it, it's freezing cold. It falls from the sky like angels, as they land one by one making a blanket over every rooftop. The air is frosty, but no one even cares. It's coldness brings joy and happiness. It envelopes you in a cold and frosty wonderland. I wait anxiously every year for the rain and misery to end. For the first snowfall, the first little snowflake of joy.

I have loved snow ever since I was young, when I was about 2 years old I started going to Whistler. I spent hours in the snow. I learned to ski and I went weekend after weekend. I eventually got a cabin there, and I went so often it was like a second home to me. I still

always go through the long, 2 hour dreaded car ride to arrive at the destination; but it is always worth it. Some winters it just doesn't snow in Vancouver, or only a thin layer. Having a beautiful mountain full of snow makes the winters more enjoyable. The snow can be so thick some years that you can barely open the door, and the car doors get iced shut. The thick snow and perfect winter weather makes it look like something from a Christmas movie or a Christmas card. Snowflakes, frozen trees, and a thick coat of snow. It's the perfect cozy winter out of a dream.

Although I love the snow, I know that there are some people that fly miles away to a tropical island to get away from it. The snowy weather can get cold, but snow is something very few other countries get to experience. An experiment said that more travel bloggers like

to be in the snow than the sun. The reason being is that they could enjoy all the winters activities, and they said it made everyday feel like Christmas. Whenever I'm in the snow I always feel so happy and free. I feel like all my worries are gone. In the snow you don't have to focus or worry about things like what you look like, or if you are doing it right. There are so many activities for all ages to enjoy like snowboarding, skiing, snowshoeing, and sledding. That is why I love the snow and you should too.



ENGLISH STUDIES 12 REINDEER GAMES CHAMPIONS!!

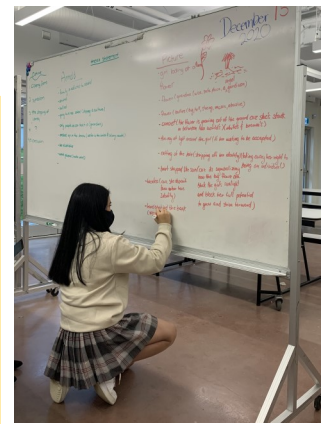


Congratulations to (l-r) *Geraldine Del Monte, Anna Tiernay, Maria Pedrero Pastrana, and Rory Goodwin* from *Mr. Prescott's* English Studies 12 class for battling through some tough Christmas competition and capturing the Reindeer Games 2020 championship and a Golden Toblerone Bar!

This very dedicated class celebrated their efforts this term by enjoying a thoroughly entertaining Christmas celebration on the last day of school. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everyone.

Geraldine Del Monte, pictured right, started an assessment in her English Studies 12 class with *Mr. Prescott*. Then she came to the incredible LRC under the watchful eye of *Mrs. Botteselle* (and others) to workshop her essay before sitting down to pound out her final copy. And this beautiful demonstration of team work and learning is taking place all day, everyday at STA.

Why? To bring out the very best in all of the students. Students are committed, persevering, and learning. Staff and departments are working together, connecting, and learning. This is STA at its best.



Student News

NOVEMBER HONOUR ROLL

Congratulations to STA grade 9 student *Brooklynn Delainey* who achieved "Honour Roll" for the November reporting period.

Well done *Brooklynn*!

TABLE TENNIS TIME

Mr. Prescott's PHE 8 classes headed up to the North Shore Table Tennis club for some outstanding instruction and game time. Students picked up the game quickly and thoroughly enjoyed the competition. Pictured below are *Sofia Alladina* and *Sasha Wein* demonstrating their skills.

Check out our school tables on the ground floor. Paddles available from *Mr. C*.



Community News

STA SPIRIT WEAR

STA SCHOOL STORE

The STA Spirit Store is now open on the **2nd floor, next to the cafeteria**. Currently, the store is only open to students but parents can place orders via the school office or inquire about inventory at spirit-wear@aquinas.org

Store hours for students are:

Mon/Wed – both lunch hours

Check out the items available:

<http://www.aquinas.org/index.php/school-store>

Used Uniforms at great prices!

School sweater, kilt or pants \$20/Aquinas hoodie or sweatpants \$20/Dress shirt, gym t-shirt or gym shorts \$10
STA Team Athletic Wear from previous years. Inventory and prices available at the store.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE INFORMATION

For information about school closures due to inclement weather, power failure or other emergencies, observe the following:

Assume that the school will be open. If in doubt, monitor the school website (www.aquinas.org) or:

TELEVISION : GLOBAL TV

RADIO : CKNW AM 980 & CKWX AM 1130

PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL

School telephone lines need to be kept open for urgent calls.



New bike racks have been installed at the rear of the school. They are under cover and on camera.



NEW BIKE RACKS FOR CHRISTMAS



The office staff would like to thank all school families and students for their generosity this Christmas. Our arms were overflowing with gifts as we left the school on December 18.

We send you all our heartfelt wishes for a Merry Christmas and a New Year filled with good health, joy, peace and happiness.

Angela, Christina, Linda, Lisa & Sandie

STA PARENT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Next meeting is on
Thursday, January 14
9:15 am
via Zoom

Join Zoom meeting at:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2396177748?pwd=ZjhadGhUWlJpcXRnQ1NXMkRlSjRsdz09>



Meeting ID: **239 617 7748**
Passcode: **stapa**
*All parents and guardians
are invited to attend.
Parent association can be
contacted by email at:*

Sta.pa@aquinas.org

STA Talks!



STA Alumni Board & Parent Association

present

Helping You Understand More about Your Child's Mental Health and Well-Being

Monday, January 12, 2021

7:00 pm

PARENTS ONLY

Nathalie Sagar, Registered School Psychologist with *Desiree DaSilva & Natalie Nunez* - Registered School Counsellors St. Thomas Aquinas Regional Secondary School

Parents will learn some of the common mental health difficulties in adolescents, including:

- Signs and symptoms that your teen may need help.
- Local resources you and your child can access if you need support.
- Tips for talking about – and supporting - your teen's mental health.

Outside of this work, Nathalie's research interests include examining the experiences of children with a bipolar parent, in hopes of contributing to a literature base that can improve the way that we communicate with children about hereditary mental health issues.

Link to the webinar will be sent out by email on the day of the event.

STA Newsletter Subscriptions

Please notify the office (604-987-4431 or office@aquinas.org)
if you move or change your e-mail address.