

How Far To Christmas?

How far is it to Christmas Day?

The journey's just as long
as taking time to listen
to a joyful angel song.

It's just as far as one can go
in doing a loving deed
that helps someone feel better
or that meets their special need.

For Christmas is a journey
that the heart makes every year.
It starts right with your family
and those you hold so dear.

It travels on to strangers
'round the world to everyone
with the message that God loves us
and that's why he's sent his Son!

—Peggy Ferrell



December 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																				
					1 Grilled Cheese Lunch	2 Catholic High School Entrance Exam																																																																																				
3 Sunday Mass with Family Breakfast with Santa/Santa's Secret Shop	4 Subway Lunch Santa's Secret Shop	5 Resource Information Meeting 6:00-7:00 p.m. Library	6 Chicken Tenders Lunch Beggar's Pizza Fundraiser	7	8 1:00 p.m. DISMISSAL- Bus & Extended Day Available Buona Beef Lunch 9:00 a.m. Mass-Immaculate Conception Hot Lunch Orders due by Noon Tombola Drawing	9 Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass 9:00 a.m.																																																																																				
10 Sunday Mass with Family	11 Burger King Lunch Advent Reconciliation Gr. 3-5 9:45 a.m.	12 School Christmas Band Concert 1:30 p.m. Christmas Band Concert 7:00 p.m. Grimmel Center Band Field Trip	13 Macaroni & Cheese Lunch 9:00 a.m. Mass Junior High Field Trip Pre-K Christmas Show 5:30 p.m. & Kindergarten Christmas Play 6:30 p.m.-Church	14 Junior High Math Curriculum Night 6:00-7:00 p.m. Shaw Hall	15 Kerfootz Pizza Lunch Box Tops Collection	16 Food Pantry 7:30 a.m.																																																																																				
17 Sunday Mass with Family	18 Chicken Sandwich Lunch 9:00 a.m. Mass Advent Reconciliation Gr. 6-8 9:45 a.m. Pre-K & Kdgn. Field Trip	19	20 Soup Lunch Red & Green Dress Down Day	21 11:30 a.m. DISMISSAL-No p.m. Extended Day Advent Waiting Paraliturgy- 9:30 a.m.	22 Christmas Break	23																																																																																				
24 Christmas Eve Family Mass-School Choir 4:30 p.m.	25 Christmas Day 	26	27 Winter Camp	28 Winter Camp	29 Winter Camp	30																																																																																				
31 Sunday Mass with Family New Year's Eve	Classes Resume January 8, 2018				<p>November</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			<p>January</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
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The Good News of St. Damian~December

The Christmas season is beautiful and offers many opportunities to feel excitement and joy. Advent starts December 3 through December 24. It is the beginning of the new Liturgical year and the time we wait for the birth of Jesus. As Catholics we use this waiting period to reflect on what the true meaning of the joy to come. Are we waiting for material gifts and when it is

over all that's left is an area of wrapping paper to ball up and throw away? No, our waiting is much more important, far past the joy of the decorations and presents received. We are waiting for the arrival of Jesus. It is our duty to live each day in preparation and anticipation to meet Jesus. The symbolism of Christmas reminds us of Jesus' love; the lights that shine bright are examples of the light Jesus is in our lives, evergreen trees symbolize Jesus' everlasting love for us and the simple gesture of exchanging gifts, hence, Jesus being the greatest gift God gave us. Wise men still seek Him. They seek Him in the noise of external symbols, but also in the silent moments. They seek Him in the good actions you see from your child or a kind word said in the middle of the chaos. Either way, Seek Jesus and recognize He is within you always.

Please continue to keep our church leaders in your prayers and our school families who need extra love, support and hugs this Christmas Season.



Here are some important dates to remember for the rest of this year:

Friday, December 1st, monetary donation due for Student Council shopping day. We are collecting for our Giving Tree and then student council will be shopping for families they chose from the giving tree next week. Please send your monetary donation in by this Friday.

Saturday, December 2nd, Catholic High School Entrance Exams

Sunday, December 3rd, Breakfast with Santa and Santa's Secret Shop

Tuesday, December 5th, Resource Information Night, 6-7 pm in the Library. Mrs. Bush will go over Resource Support, 504, IEP, ISPs, ICEPs and other accommodations as well as the process to receive supports.

Wednesday, December 6th, Beggars' Pizza School Fundraiser, support our "Dining Out" evening.

Tuesday, December 12th, Christmas Band Concert 7:00 pm in the Gym (Grimmel Center)

Wednesday, December 13, PreK Christmas Show 5:30 and Kindergarten Christmas Play 6:30 pm

Thursday, December 14 Junior High Trimester 2 Math Curriculum Night, 6:00-7:00 pm in the large cafeteria (Shaw Hall). Mr. Postiglione will present the 2nd trimester standards that will be covered. Resources will be available.

Monday, December 18th 9:00 am School Mass

Wednesday, December 20th Red & Green Dress Down Day, class parties in the pm

Thursday, December 21st Advent Waiting Paraliturg 9:30 am and early dismissal 11:30 am

Sunday, December 24th Christmas Eve Family Mass and School Choir 4:30 pm

Christmas Break begins December 22 and classes will resume Monday, January 8, 2018

(Happy New Year!)

We are very blessed to have so many people, faculty, staff and volunteers who make St. Damian such a wonderful place to learn. We at St. Damian School wish you and your family a blessed Christmas season. Our prayers are with you for all your needs. God Bless you and your families.

Dr. Marian Stockhausen and Staff

***ST. DAMIAN STAFF FAMILY
WISHES YOUR FAMILY A VERY
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!***



IMPORTANT new Illinois State Tax Credit and K – 12 Scholarship opportunity coming very soon!

Illinois has enacted a new tax credit entitled “Invest in Kids” or Tax Credit Scholarships (TCS) that will help children from low-income families who choose to attend private schools access to new scholarships. The scholarships offered through this program could cover up to 100 percent of tuition and eligible fees for next school year 2018-19. Below is key information about the program both for donating to receive the IL state tax credit and applying for a scholarship.

This is a **FIRST COME – FIRST SERVE opportunity** for the 75 % Tax Credit and Scholarships. A similar Tax Credit program in Iowa reached its cap in only 3 minutes after the application process opened. See the below write up to learn more.

The basic process is that starting January 2, 2018 individuals and corporations can apply to donate money to the scholarship program providing an Illinois state income tax credit of 75% of the contribution. Individuals and corporations accepted to contribute money and receive the tax credit choose a non-profit Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) to which the money is sent. The SGO awards scholarships to eligible students from low-income families who apply.

Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGO): An SGO is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is responsible for the following: Receiving donations from individuals and corporations; Receiving and processing scholarship applications from students/families; and distributing scholarships to eligible students/families in accordance with the law. **Please choose the SGO suggested by the Archdiocese of Chicago entitled *Empower*.**

Tax Credits: Individuals and corporations that donate to SGOs may receive a credit for their Illinois state taxes equal to 75 percent of donations to an SGO. For example: A taxpayer donates \$10,000 to an SGO. The taxpayer will be eligible to claim a \$7,500 tax credit when he or she files their 2018 taxes.

Tax credits are capped at \$1 million per taxpayer per year, which means a donor can contribute about \$1.33 million to receive the maximum tax credit allowed. Total tax credits are capped at \$75 million per year statewide, which equates to \$100 million in donations and scholarships. Taxpayers can rollover their tax credits up to five years.

Designating Donations: Individuals may direct donations to a particular school or subset of schools, but not to an individual student or group of students. Corporate donors cannot restrict their donations. **Please direct your donation to: *St. Damian School*.**

Donation Process: Beginning January 2, 2018, donors can indicate the amount they want to donate and reserve the corresponding tax credits through the Illinois Department of Revenue’s website. *The Department of Revenue will grant tax credits on a first-come, first-served basis.* Individuals and corporations then have 60 days to donate that indicated amount to an SGO.

Scholarship Eligibility: Application begins shortly after the new year begins. Starting with the 2018/2019 school year, K-12 students from families with limited financial resources are eligible

to receive a tax credit scholarship. To be considered for a scholarship, students must be from a household with income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (\$73,800 for family of four). Prior to April 1, 2018 priority will be given to: Students from households that are below 185 percent of the federal poverty level (\$45,510 for family of four). Students who reside in a “focus district” (low-performing public schools) Siblings of scholarship students. However, designated donations can only be given as scholarships to students attending the designated school such as St. Damian.

Visit our parish website, StDamianChurch.org or www.archchicago.org/tcs for more information.

Please plan on taking advantage of this new Illinois State Tax Credit and designate your donation to **St. Damian** through the SGO named **Empower**.



Christmas Gift Giving Guide

S.H.O.P. Cards make it easy!

SHOP ideas for anyone on your list

MOM

Bath & Body Works
SpaFinder
Sephora
Kohl's
Target

DAD

Home Depot
Menards
Lowe's
Sears
Outback Steakhouse

GRANDPARENTS

Groupon
AMC Theaters
Cheesecake Factory
Cabela's
Olive Garden

TOYS for ALL AGES

Walmart
Disney
Toys-R-Us
Best Buy
Target

TEACHERS

Panera Bread
Dunkin Donuts
Barnes & Noble
Shutterfly
Ulta
Macy's



There are many more SHOP cards available
so start SHOPPING now for the Holidays
AND EARN CREDIT FOR TUITION!

SHOP cards are available before and after Mass
and during posted scheduled School/RE hours.

You can also elect your credits be sent to the
educational organization of your choice.

Please call Dale Lux with any questions 708-342-8516.

St. Damian's Annual



Sunday, December 3, 2017

8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

(Kitchen Closes at 12:30)

Father Grimmel Center

Adults\$7.00

Seniors and Children \$5.00

3 years and underFREE

Family Rate\$25.00

(Best price for a family of 5 or more)

Tickets available only at the door on December 3, 2017

Fun Festivities

Professional photos with Santa (Additional Charge)

(Note: Dressing in all green will affect the quality of the photo due to the green backdrop)

Mail letters to Santa and Cookie Station

Craft Fair and Santa's Secret Shop in Shaw Hall

Family and School News

Looking Back...

Family and School replenished recess buckets for grades 1-5. We purchased kickballs, footballs, Frisbees, bats, soccer balls, catch scoops and a few other items to help students have fun at recess.

The Mixed Bag fundraiser was a huge success! Thank you to all for your participation! We hope you enjoy your new items!

Looking Ahead...

Sunday, December 3rd is our annual Breakfast with Santa from 8:00-1:00. Join us in the gym for breakfast, cookie decorating and professional Santa photos. Then, stop in the lunchroom to shop our craft fair for some homemade goodies! Don't forget to bring the kids to Santa's Secret Shop so they can get gifts for the family!

Fundraising...

We are currently selling **St. Damian Lancer magnets** (\$5) for your car or fridge! We are also offering two different kinds of **window decals** (\$2). If interested, you may purchase at the front office or any of our Family & School events!

We are always collecting pop tabs and Box Tops! Please keep your eyes open for Box Tops on many products you purchase. Cut them out and send them to school. We earn money for each collected.

Thank you to all our families for contributing to our fundraisers and helping us raise money for our students and our school!

ST. DAMIAN TUITION TOMBOLA IS A ROLLOVER!

Just in time for Christmas
Don't Miss Your Chance to Win 2 Months'
Tuition!



It works like this, each families name is entered in the Tombola if you paid for the month or the year, your tuition account is credited the Tombola amount of one month's tuition. Drawing will take place on Friday December 8th; pictures are taken with your child and posted on our website and Facebook page.

Your payment options are as follows: Check or Money Order No Cash

- _____ 6 months \$60.00 (Dec thru May)
- _____ 1 month \$10.00 (Dec)
- _____ Extra Chance/Chances \$10.00 each (Dec)

Family Name:

Child(ren)/Grade & Room#

~St. Damian Yearbook Reminder~

**The 2018 Yearbooks can only
be ordered on line this school year.**

Group photos were taken last week.

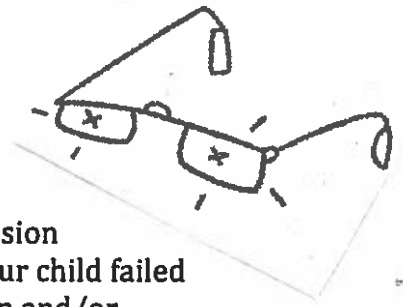
Don't miss out on the photo fun.

**Please visit ybpay.lifetouch.com to order
yours today. No orders will be accepted
after December 31st, 2017!!**





Dear parents and guardians~~~~



Illinois Department of Health has concluded our Hearing and Vision Screening. Please note...only a "screening" is conducted at school. If your child failed to pass any portion of the screening, they will require a complete vision and/or hearing exam by an optometrist/ophthalmologist and/or audiologist. You will be notified by US mail of this requirement. After this exam, please send the results you receive to the health office at school. IDPH tracks who completes the exams.

Please contact me at school if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Mrs. Haneberg R.N.

Mrs. Haneberg R.N.

St. Damian School

Eat & Earn Fundraiser Day at Beggars Pizza



Support **St. Damian School** with Beggars Pizza at the locations listed below on **Wednesday, December 6th, 2017**. You can dine in; get a delivery or carryout to help **St. Damian School** raise funds. All you have to do is turn in this voucher when you pay and Beggars Pizza will donate 20% of your bill (before taxes, gratuity, promotions, discounts, delivery fees and coupons) to **St. Damian School**.

12660 Western Ave.	Blue Island	708-385-1234
<i>Anytime Between 11:00am to 10:00pm</i>		
15600 S. Cicero Ave.	Oak Forest	708-535-9500
<i>Anytime Between 11:00am to 10:30pm</i>		
11329 W 143rd St.	Orland Park	708-364-1500
<i>Anytime Between 11:00am to 9:00pm</i>		

There are a few simple guidelines for the Eat & Earn Fundraiser Day:

- This voucher can only be used on **Wednesday, December 6th, 2017** at the locations listed above.
- You must **present and turn in the voucher** when ordering/paying to have the percentage donated to your organization.
- Make sure to make plenty of copies for your family, friends, co-workers and supporters of your organization!
- Coupons, discounts, gratuities, delivery fees, promotional discounts and taxes will not be included in the bill total.
- Vouchers valid for all order types including- Carry out, Dine In and Deliveries.
- Please refrain from soliciting our customers, for the purpose of your event, outside out stores' premises.

**Please join us for our
22st Annual
Celebration Mass
in honor of**

Our Lady of Guadalupe



**December 9, 2017
9:00am
Rosary 8:30am**

**St. Damian Church
5300 W 155th Street
Oak Forest, IL 60452**

**Bilingual liturgy,
and Authentic Mexican Pastries!**

For further info call Rita @ 708-532-4117



Dear St. Damian Families,

THANK YOU for the incredibly generous outpouring of donations for our 3rd St. Damian Shares Dinner and Community Outreach!!



Because of your generosity, we were able to offer 80 people a home - cooked meal, hospitality, a large bag of toiletry items and some warm winter clothing. Our guests were very happy and grateful.

May God bless you all with His peace and love this Advent season!

THANKS **FOR**
DONATING!

Sincerely,

Deb Stirn & Connie Swidergal

Our Lady of Guadalupe Family Mass Saturday, December 9, 2017 9:00 am in the Church

Come celebrate this great feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe and enjoy Mexican cookies and fellowship afterwards in the Narthex.

Any Jr. High students needing service hours are welcome to come help greet, set-up, clean-up, decorate, and/or serve refreshments. Set-up begins at 8:00 am, clean -up until 10:30 am. Student volunteers should be accompanied by a parent.

Adults interested in helping continue this traditional celebration into the future are needed. To volunteer in any capacity, or for information please call Rita at 532-4117.



STRAWS OF PRAYER
December 9-10, 2017

Advent is a time when individuals and families have an opportunity to prepare and await the birth of the Savior, soon to be born. One of the ways we can prepare as a community of faith, is to say a prayer. We pray for our families and loved ones, the poor and the hungry, the lonely and forgotten, our Church, our Pope, our nation and those in the military who serve and protect. **We pray that Jesus be born into their hearts.**

Traditions are inherent in family life and in Church life. St. Damian would like to begin a tradition that we are calling Straws of Prayer. On the weekend of December 9-10, there will be baskets of straw in the narthex and by the Gift Table. During the Offeratory part of the Mass, we are inviting all the children to take a piece of straw and place it in the empty manger by the altar. **Each straw will represent a prayer.**

You and your children can pray a prayer of your own or the one below.

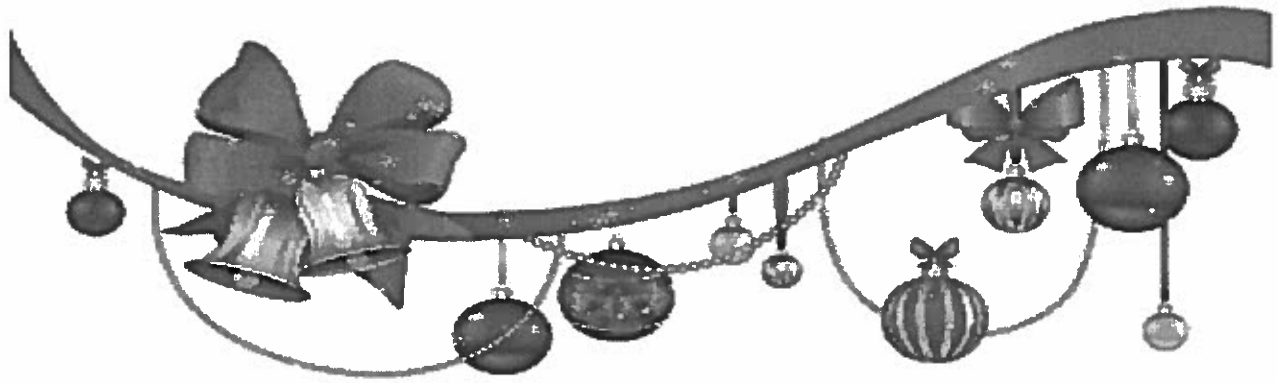
Christmas is coming,
Won't you say a prayer
For those we love and
Those who are not here?

This little manger is empty
It's true.
It's awaiting a prayer
To be said by you.

Lay a piece of straw
By the manger bed,
Having said a prayer
For others instead.

Then when Christmas Eve
Is finally here,
A bed of soft straw
Soon will appear ...

... Jesus the Savior
The Babe newly born ...
Angels and wise men,
Rejoice Christmas morn!



ST. DAMIAN CHRISTMAS CARD PRAYER BASKET

'Tis the season to be jolly ... but not for everyone.

Not everyone looks forward to Christmas. Jingle bells sound a hollow ring when there's little food on the table nor gifts under the tree. If, indeed, there is a tree.

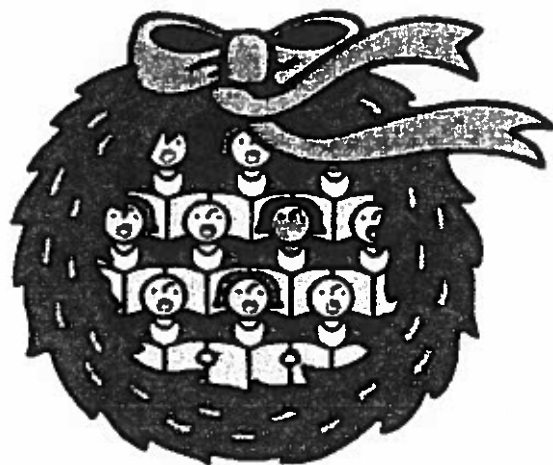
The Food Pantry and the Giving Tree ministries are preparing to offset the emptiness of individuals and families who need extra TLC during the holiday season. YOU make this happen with your monetary donations and gifts.

Now we're asking you to add a personal touch. There will be Christmas post cards in the narthex on a table by the Giving Tree. Please take one and sign it. Signing your last name is optional.

The Christmas cards will be distributed to the recipients of the Giving Tree; and if we have enough cards, we will also bring them to the Pro Labore Dei (Robbins) Food Pantry.

A basket will be found in the Narthex. **Please drop your cards off before Dec. 16.**

A blessed & Merry Christmas to you and your families



***Christmas Eve
St. Damian Family Mass with the
School Choir!***

***Come join the St. Damian school choir this
Christmas Eve at the 4:30 mass as we
celebrate the birth of Jesus.***

***Let the voices of our school choir fill your
heart with the joy of Christmas.***

MASS SCHEDULE 2017

Sunday, December 10

7:00pm Parish Reconciliation Service

Sunday, December 24

6:45am Mass

8:00am Mass

9:30am Mass

11:00am Mass

Christmas Eve - Sunday, December 24

3:00pm Vigil Mass - Musical Prelude at 2:45pm

3:05pm Vigil Mass - Shaw/O'Day Halls

4:30pm Vigil Mass - School Choir at 4:15pm

6:00pm Vigil Mass - Musical Prelude at 5:45pm

12:00pm Vigil Mass - Choral Concert at 11:30pm

Christmas Day - Monday, December 25

8:00am Mass - Musical Prelude at 7:45am

9:30am Mass - Voices of Prayer at 9:20am

11:00am Mass - Celebration Singers at 10:50am

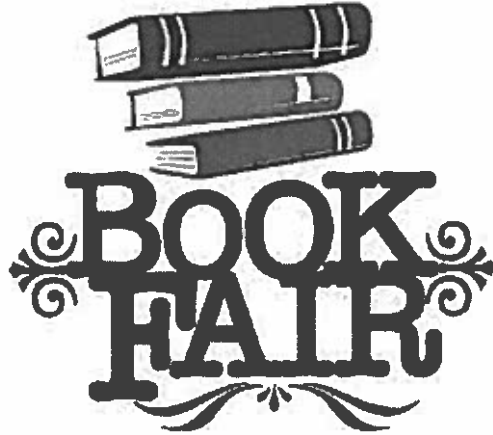
12:30pm Mass - Musical Prelude at 12:15pm

Monday, January 1

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

9:00am Mass

7:00pm Mass



Thank you to all those who came to our Book Fair and purchased many amazing books for their child to read. With so many families participating, we sold over \$4,000 dollars and earned Scholastic points to use towards classroom libraries and equipment for the school. This successful Fair earned us a Buy One Get One Free Fair in the spring. Looking forward to seeing you in May.

Mrs. Rak & Mrs. Walsh

