



# SAINT MARK CATHOLIC ACADEMY

A Guiding Light in Sheepshead Bay

November 20, 2024

Dear Families:

What's your favorite Thanksgiving food? Is it the turkey itself? A lot of people love the side dishes: the mashed potatoes, the stuffing, the macaroni and cheese. Maybe you're one of those people who enjoys the jiggly cranberry sauce that slides out of the can, and of course, there's the desserts!

But...do any of you ask to pass the popcorn at the Thanksgiving table?

Well, according to the University of Vermont, "Popcorn was part of the first Thanksgiving feast eaten by the Pilgrims and Native Americans in Massachusetts."

To tell you the truth, I wouldn't mind having popcorn around the table at Thanksgiving...it's one of my favorite snacks! For me, one of the best parts about going to the movies is the big tub of popcorn! When I go to Disney World, one of the first snacks I buy when I get there is, you guessed it, popcorn.

Like most people, I bet you make popcorn in your microwave. Recently, I've started making popcorn the old-fashioned way...on the stove. I pour a little bit of oil in the bottom of the pan, then add the corn kernels, put the lid on, and watch the popcorn pop. There's nothing better than eating hot, fresh popcorn right from the pot!

Even if popcorn isn't your favorite Thanksgiving foods. There's something special about home-cooked foods on Thanksgiving, right? Some of the best memories I have of Thanksgiving are the fun times with family in the kitchen before the actual meal. Dinner on Thanksgiving is extra special when each person brings something to the table, and everyone has those family members who make their specialty! My nanny used to make the best apple pie! My mother-in-law makes great stuffing, and I'm pretty good at mashed potatoes, although I may have to switch to popcorn!

Today, our pre-k and kindergarten students and their families gathered in the cafeteria to work on a special Thanksgiving project together. They decorated and designed their own chef hats to wear on Thanksgiving. How appropriate! Everyone is a chef on Thanksgiving. From the littlest children to the oldest grandparents, everyone brings something to the table!

I'd like to share with you a poem that I read to our families this morning before they got to work on their projects. It's called "The Turkey Shot Out of the Oven" by Jack Prelutsky. Maybe you can read it your Thanksgiving tables this year!

*The turkey shot out of the oven  
and rocketed into the air,  
it knocked every plate off the table  
and partly demolished a chair.*

*It ricocheted into a corner  
and burst with a deafening boom,  
then splattered all over the kitchen,  
completely obscuring the room.*

*It stuck to the walls and the windows,  
it totally coated the floor,  
there was turkey attached to the ceiling,  
where there'd never been turkey before.*

*It blanketed every appliance,  
it smeared every saucer and bowl,  
there wasn't a way I could stop it,  
that turkey was out of control.*

*I scraped and I scrubbed with displeasure,  
and thought with chagrin as I mopped,  
that I'd never again stuff a turkey  
with popcorn that hadn't been popped.*

Sincerely,

Mr. Mark Wilson  
Principal

**Continuing the tradition of faith, service, and education.**

2602 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11235 | (718) 332-9304 | [smcaonthebay.org](http://smcaonthebay.org)



## **IMPORTANT CHANGE TO YEARLY CALENDAR**

November 20, 2024

Dear Families:

Recently, Saint Mark Catholic Academy went through re-accreditation. Accreditation is a form of quality control, ensuring that schools satisfy certain standards. A team from Cognia, a company that handles the accreditation process, visited SMCA last month. They highlighted and commended our strengths and also recommended areas that are in need of improvement.

One of the specific topics that the Cognia team emphasized was for our school to “identify and implement ways to increase staff interactions.” In other words, there is a need for our teachers to have common time, so they can communicate and plan together.

In order to facilitate this, we are making an adjustment to our yearly calendar: **Beginning in January 2025, there will be one day per month when students in kindergarten and grades 1 through 8 will be dismissed at 2pm; these will be known as Common Staff Time (CST) days. (3K and Pre-K dismissal times remain unchanged.)**

The following days will be Common Staff Time days, and students in kindergarten and grades 1-8 will be dismissed at 2pm:

**Friday, January 10**

**Friday, February 14**

**Friday, March 14**

**Friday, April 11**

**Friday, May 9**

By making this change, our staff will have time to evaluate curricula, analyze student data, and review other aspects of our school, all in effort to further improve our academic program and facilitate continued growth for our students. We anticipate that CST days will be a part of our regular schedule and continue in the 2025-26 school year.

**Please note...**

- **Our after-school program WILL BE in session on CST days.**
- **There will be NO BUS service on CST days, so please plan accordingly.**
- **All students will have lunch and recess at their usual times.**

It is our hope that announcing this change now will provide our families with enough time to adjust their personal schedules. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Mr. Mark Wilson  
Principal

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# SAINT MARK CATHOLIC ACADEMY • 2024-2025 Preliminary Calendar

Please remember that this is a preliminary calendar; it is tentative and subject to change. Families will still receive monthly calendars that will highlight specific events throughout the school year.

## SEPTEMBER 2024

- 4 Wednesday Kindergarten through Grade 8: 7:50am to 12pm  
3K and PreK: Orientation at 1pm
- 5 Thursday Kindergarten through Grade 8: 7:50am to 3pm  
3K and PreK: Dismissal at 1pm
- 6 Friday Kindergarten through Grade 8: 7:50am to 3pm  
3K and PreK: Dismissal at 1pm

20 Friday NO SCHOOL K-8: Professional Day (3K and PreK in Session)

## OCTOBER 2024

- 14 Monday SCHOOL CLOSED: Columbus Day
- 17 Thursday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences (Full Day of School)
- 18 Friday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences  
Early Dismissal for All Students  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am to 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

## NOVEMBER 2024

- 5 Tuesday SCHOOL CLOSED: Professional Day for All Classes
- 11 Monday SCHOOL CLOSED: Veterans Day
- 27 Wednesday Early Dismissal for Kindergarten through Grade 8  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am - 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

28 Thursday SCHOOL CLOSED: Thanksgiving  
29 Friday SCHOOL CLOSED: Thanksgiving Recess

## DECEMBER 2024

- 13 Friday Report Card Distribution  
Early Dismissal for Kindergarten through Grade 8  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am - 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

CHRISTMAS RECESS: Monday, December 23, 2024 through Sunday, January 5, 2025

## JANUARY 2025

- 6 Monday Classes Resume for All Grades
- 10 Friday CST Day (2pm Dismissal for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8)
- 20 Monday SCHOOL CLOSED: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 23 Thursday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences (Full Day of School)
- 24 Friday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences  
Early Dismissal for All Students  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am to 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

## FEBRUARY 2025

7 Friday NO SCHOOL K-8: Professional Day (3K and PreK in Session)

MID-WINTER RECESS: Monday, February 17 through Sunday, February 23

- 14 Friday CST Day (2pm Dismissal for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8)
- 24 Monday Classes Resume for All Grades

## MARCH 2025

14 Friday CST Day (2pm Dismissal for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8)

21 Friday Report Card Distribution  
Early Dismissal for Kindergarten through Grade 8  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am - 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

## APRIL 2025

11 Friday CST Day (2pm Dismissal for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8)

EASTER RECESS: Thursday, April 17 through Sunday, April 27

28 Monday Classes Resume for All Grades

## MAY 2025

- 1 Thursday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences (Full Day of School)
- 2 Friday Progress Report Distribution and Parent Conferences  
Early Dismissal for All Students  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am to 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm
- 9 Friday CST Day (2pm Dismissal for Kindergarten and Grades 1-8)

26 Monday SCHOOL CLOSED: Memorial Day

30 Friday Early Dismissal for Kindergarten through Grade 8  
Kindergarten and Grades 1-8: 7:50am to 12pm  
3K for All and Pre-K for All: 7:30am to 12:30pm

## JUNE 2025

13 Friday Eighth Grade Graduation Ceremony at 5:30pm

19 Thursday SCHOOL CLOSED: Juneteenth

23 Monday Early Dismissal for Grades 1 through 7  
7:50am to 12pm

TENTATIVE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL



# December 2024 Saint Mark Catholic Academy

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent 	Second Trimester Begins  Toys for Tots Dress Down Days Begin Each day you bring in a toy, you can dress down.				First Friday Mass 8:30am  Pizza/Dress Down Day (PREPAID)	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Light the Bay 					Report Cards Distributed (Conferences by appointment only)  EARLY DISMISSAL DAY  NO BUS SERVICE	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent 	Christmas Spirit Week Day #1	In-School Christmas Sale  Christmas Spirit Week Day #2	Christmas Spirit Week Day #3  Christmas Show Grades 1-8 6:15pm in Gym	Christmas Spirit Week Day #4  Early Childhood Winter Extravaganza 3K, Pre-K, and K 10am in the Gym	Christmas Spirit Week Day #5  8:30am Christmas Mass School-wide Christmas Breakfast in Gym  NO AFTERSCHOOL	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent 	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS DAY 	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS
29	30	31	1	2	3	
SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: NEW YEAR'S DAY 	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL CLOSED: CHRISTMAS RECESS	SCHOOL RESUMES ON JANUARY 6