Christmas concert time is very exciting at Our Lady of Mercy School!

We take great pride in staging musical theatre style performances each year and owe the success of our concerts to the dedication of our teacher-led production team, and the hard work of our students, staff and volunteers.

Behind the Scenes:

September:
Yes! preparation starts as early as September! Our production team carefully reviews many different scripts and their soundtracks in order to choose an exciting show for both student performers and audience members. Sometimes we also add musical numbers or pieces of dialogue to make the selection work for our school.

October:
Students in Grade 7 are auditioned and cast as lead characters. The production team chooses a song and character for each class. The costuming process also starts! We take advantage of the Halloween season to source everything from superhero capes to ladybug skirts and wings.

November:
Grade 7 actors begin rehearsing after school 3-4 times per week, while during the day in music class, each grade begins working hard on learning lyrics and choreography for their individual songs, as well as the opening and closing numbers. The whole school also practices as a group during assemblies. Meanwhile, our team of teachers and volunteers work painstakingly to create sets and costume pieces that can not be bought in stores.

December:
More than 230 students are taught how to enter and exit the gym, line up on risers and sing in unison for the opening and closing numbers! Individual classes also perfect their routines on the risers and learn the importance of performance etiquette and showmanship. Professional lighting and sound equipment arrive, and Grade 7 students are taught how to run both with teacher support. Finally, after running through the show from start to finish over many days, (while still maintaining academic activities in the classroom through careful scheduling), the audience arrives, and the students get to proudly display their hard work and dedication at three separate performances.

The "Why":

We view the unique opportunity that performing in the concert provides as an integral part of our students' learning, and hope that OLM families value our yearly productions in the same way. In keeping with the Ministry of Education's Core Competencies, concert performance fosters:

Communication: "*[Students] understand that communication can influence, entertain, teach, inspire, and help us make sense of the world and our experiences. They recognize the role the audience plays in constructing meaning, and they make strategic choices to help convey their messages and create their intended impact.*"

Thinking: "*Students apply critical, metacognitive, and reflective thinking in given situations, and relate this thinking to other experiences, using this process to identify ways to improve or adapt their approach to learning. They reflect on and assess their experiences, thinking, learning processes, work, and progress in relation to their purposes.*

Personal and Social: ***"****Students acknowledge their strengths and abilities, and they intentionally consider these as assets, helping them in all aspects of their lives. Students understand that their relationships and cultural contexts help to shape who they are. This includes culture in its broadest sense…including how one identifies in terms of religious or spiritual beliefs."*

Expectations and Protocol:

Students are expected to take part in all three performances, (Tuesday matinee, Tuesday evening, Wednesday evening), unless they are ill.

If your child is going to be away during November and/or December, it will be left to the discretion of the concert coordination team and administration to decide whether they will be able to participate in the concert performances.

We appreciate families' willingness to practice with their children while they are away. At the same time, elements such as spacing on the risers, uniformity in performance with the other students, and fitting of costume pieces require regular attendance at school.

It goes without saying that students are welcome to come and support their classmates at one or both of the evening concerts without the need for a ticket if their absence means that they are unable to take part as performers.

Thank you for your continued support,

OLM Staff