



Saint Mary School News

January 2009

248.545.2140

628 S. Lafayette Ave.

Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

Celebration Corner

We want to celebrate our Athletic Director, Athletic Board, the coaches, volunteers, athletes and their parents who make our sports program a huge success. This is a great opportunity for our students to grow physically, socially and emotionally.

Thank you to our students and staff as well as the Daisy Troop who worked so hard to prepare food and bags for our guests at the Warming Center.

Thank you also to Mrs. Kendell, Mrs. Sawicki, Mrs. Snyder and Mr. Suchyta for sharing their testimony of volunteerism at Mass on the weekend of January 17th and 18th. We are very thankful for all our volunteers who make this a great faith/school family.

We want to extend a special thank you to Mr. Sobeck for helping to move the snow to make more room in the parking lots. This was a job well done!

Thank You

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Principally Speaking...by Greg Carnacchi

This past Monday St. Mary Catholic School honored Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by learning more about his life and accomplishments. As our new president Barack Obama suggested, this day would honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. if we were involved in service to others. So, with the help of their teachers, the school children did community service projects that supported the work at the Warming Center hosted by St. Mary Parish.

During the week of January 25th-31st we are celebrating Catholic Schools Week and the many special happenings that take place because we are a Catholic School. We have many activities planned for the week and a separate page that came home will help inform you of the planned events. One very special event is the visit of our Very Important Person

(VIP) to celebrate Mass with the students and afterwards visit their class on Friday morning. This is a great time to reflect on the role of Catholic Schools, especially the positive impact it has on our children.

I just wanted to remind our St. Mary families that this year's school Auction, "A Night at the Races", is fast approaching on Saturday, May 2, 2009. We are very excited that the location at the American Polish Cultural Center will be the same this year with a full dinner, much as we did last year. While the auction is a great night of fun with family and friends, it is also a vital part of our annual operating budget. The funds generated cover the shortfall between tuition and the actual cost of providing a quality education at St. Mary Catholic School. A little effort will make a big difference...if each family brings in 2 do-

nations this month then we will have met our planning goals. There is a need for many auction donations to make it successful so please ask your friends and family for donations. This is so important if we are to meet and possibly exceed our goal of \$60,000. There is no harm in the asking! The deadline for donation pledges is March 6th and for booklet ads is March 20th. This will allow the booklet committee to prepare a quality book in a timely fashion. One final reminder: each family who elects the service rate of tuition commits to purchasing two tickets to the auction for a total of \$130. There is no ad requirement this year. This is also a great opportunity for you to get your service hours. The sign-up sheets will be in the school for your convenience. Thank you so much for your support. You help to make the difference.

Registration Packets were sent home with every family this week. The School Office will begin taking registrations for the 2009-2010 school year on Monday, February 2nd. Register early to guarantee room for your child for next year.

Preschool—Mrs. Hancasky, Mrs. Dylenski, Mrs. Bala

Brrrr! The preschoolers have been staying warm this month by exploring colors and by showing the teachers all they know as we prepare for preschool parent/teacher conferences. We performed many science experiments disguised as art activities, in which the children mixed primary colors using different media. We never get tired of hearing the excitement and wonder of “I made green!” Our Tots explored some nursery rhymes, the Juniors wrote class “list poems” about colors and the Seniors climbed the Chicka Chicka Boom Boom tree as they focused on the alphabet. After our conference week, we will learn about winter, using books like *The Mitten*, by Jan Brett and *The Snowy Day*, by Ezra Jack Keats to anchor our theme. We will also add some new routines to the second half of the year; our Junior's will be “signing in” each day and reading the “hello message” and the Seniors will begin focusing on the “letter of the week”.

Have a wonderful month!

Kindergarten—Mrs. Withee

Welcome back and happy 2009. We started our year off by learning all about the wonders of winter and ice. We also are learning about Martin Luther King, Jr. and the many things he did to help make this world a better place. We all wrote our own “dreams” of making the world nicer. January continues with the study of polar animals and concludes with exploring God's gifts: Our Five Senses. We will also predict if the ground hog will see his shadow. Could we possibly have an early spring? We certainly hope so.

First Grade—Ms. Farrell

The first graders made trail mix and decorated lunch bags to feed and bring cheer to the homeless at the St. Mary warming center. This was our service project for Dr. King's birthday. We also spent the day learning about the life of Dr. King. We made books

and did a writing project as well as many other activities.

Thank you to all who generously donated items for the trail mix!

Second Grade—Mrs. Stanko

BRRRR!!! It's cold outside, but inside second grade we are warming up by learning cursive, doing addition with regrouping and doing magnet experiments. We've warmed up our hearts by learning new prayers, welcoming a new student, Vayden Brady, discussing our vocations, and doing good deeds for the warming center. The weather outside might be frightful, but inside St. Mary's it's delightful!!

Third Grade—Mrs. Smith

I hope everyone has had a wonderful holiday season. The third graders are beginning to learn their multiplication facts. We are all very excited about this event and everyone is off to a great start.

In Religion we have been discussing how God keeps His promises, how He trusts us and how we show that we trust God. We will also be discussing the Ten Commandments and making our own class picture book on these.

In Writing we have written some winter poems. They are hanging outside our classroom. Please feel free to stop by and read them.

I would like to thank everyone who donated sandwich items for making sandwiches for the warming center. The third graders worked with the eighth graders on our sandwiches and we had a nice time doing something for others.

Fourth Grade—Mrs. McNish

Happy New Year! Fourth grade has had a busy new year. We are currently working on finishing Expository Writing. We've been learning to write directions and recipes. We're ending our unit on American Values and Symbols. Map Skills is next on our list. Verbs have been filling our Vocabulary books and Grammar les-

sons. Lastly, we are gearing up to learn the Ten Commandments in Religion.

Many Blessings!

Fifth Grade—Mrs. Sak

Fractions, fractions, fractions, have kept the fifth graders busy over the last few weeks. They've been learning about equivalent, improper, mixed numbers and how to simplify fractions. Adding and subtracting fractions with like and unlike denominators has kept fifth graders on their toes. Next, we'll tackle multiplying and dividing fractions.

In Religion we learned about different vocations in the Catholic Church. The fifth grade wrote newspaper articles imagining themselves in the future following their vocation and changing the world. They're going to be a great asset to the Catholic Church.

Sixth Grade—Ms. Kassab

The middle school has not only survived the cold but midterms as well. As we move along through the year we are excited to start brainstorming our Science projects for the Learning Fair on March 25th. Information and rubrics will be sent home with the middle school students very soon.

We are also excited to start a new middle school club dedicated to promoting life. Our first meeting will be during Catholic Schools Week on Wednesday, January 28th during lunch. Please pray that God will guide their work and inspire others. God Bless!

Recess Reminder

With the snow and cold weather, please make sure that your children come properly prepared to go outside for recess. They do go outside for 20 minutes unless the temperature is so cold that it presents a danger to the children. Children should have coats, snow pants, boots, gloves and hats.

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Martin

Things have been warming up in this spell of cold weather! The 5th-8th grade classes participated in a spelling bee using the Scripps National Spelling Bee word list and we were able to determine two students per grade level who will now compete in a vicariate-wide spelling bee. The vicariate bee will take place in February at Our Lady of LaSalette School. The students who will participate at the bee are as follows:

5th Grade: Christopher
Nicholas
6th Grade: Tyler
Sophie
7th Grade: Isobel
Chris
8th Grade: Danielle
Nicholas

In addition to choosing the top two spellers per grade, we ran several additional rounds to find the top school speller. Nicholas Pollack won the competition, but not without a fierce battle with Christopher Bala! Nick is now eligible to compete at Oakland University in the Scripps National Spelling Bee regional bee next month! Congratulations Nick!

Other activities have centered around using descriptive language in our writing. We've been studying adjectives, poetry, prefixes and words from Greek origins. Be sure to check out some of the projects that are the result of these endeavors!

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Peterson

We are in the middle of reading some fantastic books in Literature class. To go along with History, we are reading *Trouble Don't Last*. It is about a slave's experience with the underground railroad. The sixth grade is reading *Giver*, *Walk 2 Moons* and *Bud, Not Buddy* in book clubs. In English we are beginning to write a persuasive essay.

Eighth Grade—Mrs. Irwin

Middle School is back in full swing. The students are getting readjusted to

the schedule and schoolwork.

For our community service project for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day we worked with the third graders and made sandwiches. On the 20th they watched history being made as President Obama was sworn into office. They will then begin their study of the Civil War. In Religion they are busy preparing for Confirmation.

Sixth and seventh grade continue their study of Latin America. They are learning the location of countries and using the Internet to be assessed on their knowledge of the location of the countries. The sixth grade continues their study of the Old Testament. Seventh graders are learning about the prophets and their roles as prophets.

Middle School is busy and the eighth graders are doing their best to stay focused as they make their decisions on the high schools they will attend. Our trip is fast approaching and they are excited about seeing Washington D.C.

Library—Mrs. Carnacchi

I'd like to highlight a wonderful LOCAL opportunity that will take place this Sunday, January 25th. Best-selling and award-winning author Greg Mortenson will be appearing at the Berkley High School Auditorium from 1:00-4:00 p.m. through a joint effort by the Berkley School District and BookBeat.

In 1993, Mortenson went to Pakistan to attempt to climb K2, the world's second highest mountain. He never completed the climb. As he was descending from his failed attempt he became exhausted and disoriented and wandered away from his group into the most desolate reaches of northern Pakistan. Alone, without food, water or shelter he stumbled into an impoverished Pakistani village where he was nursed back to health. While recovering he observed the village's 84 children sitting outdoors, scratching their lessons in the dirt with sticks. The village was so poor that it could not afford the \$1 a

day salary to hire a teacher. When he left the village, he promised that he would return to build them a school. From that promise grew one of the most incredible humanitarian campaigns of our time. In an early effort to raise money he wrote letters to 580 celebrities, businessmen and other prominent Americans. His only reply was a \$100 check from NBC's Tom Brokaw. Selling everything he owned, he still only raised \$2400. But his efforts changed when a group of elementary school children in River Falls, Wisconsin, donated \$623.40 in pennies. This inspired adults to take action. The first school he built in Pakistan was completed in 1996 and since then he's established 78 schools. In pursuit of his goal, Mortenson has survived an armed kidnapping, repeated death threats and separations from his wife and children.

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time is a New York Times best-seller and is the story of Greg Mortenson's dangerous and difficult quest to build schools in the wildest parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. He has since established the Central Asia Institute which focuses on community education, especially for girls. Mortenson is also the founder of "Pennies for Peace" which continues to help build schools by teaching children in the United States and other countries the rewards of sharing and working together to bring hope and educational opportunities to children in Pakistan and Afghanistan. A penny in the U.S. is virtually worthless, but in these countries a penny buys a pencil and opens the door to literacy.

Next month students at St. Mary will take part in "Pennies for Peace" as a month long "kindness" project. Further information will come home later this month. If you would like to hear about Greg Mortenson's experiences first-hand, feel free to attend the event THIS SUNDAY at Berkley High School from 1:00-4:00 p.m. There is no charge and his books will be available if you wish to make a purchase.

Art—Ms. Tomlinson

Hello to everyone from the Art Room. First, I need to thank all of you for your wonderful contributions. Your meat trays, butter tubs, etc. are so valuable to our program. A very special thank you to Mrs. Callan for her very generous monetary Christmas gift. We were blessed once again by this thoughtful “supporter of the arts”. I would also like to thank the scissor fairy and the fabric fairy for the wonderful donations left outside my door. Kindergarten and first grade have been snipping away at hand painted papers a la Matisse. Second and third grade continue to enjoy working with Mrs. Carnacchi as we discover the “ink and wash” technique. Fourth grade has finished their pinch pots and Mrs. Belf will be firing them soon. Thank you Mrs. Belf. Check out the fifth-eighth grade landscapes upstairs in the hall. A sure cure for the winter blues. Thank you again and God bless.

Scrip

Help Wanted

Leslie and Barb are looking for someone who is interested in helping us to expand the Scrip program to the parishioners. This is a service hour opportunity. We need this person to coordinate the delivery and pick-up of parishioner orders at masses. Our idea is that there would be a crew of others who would do the actual pick-up and delivery at masses (also a service hour opportunity). Barb and Leslie will still place the orders and fill the orders when the scrip arrives; the coordinator will be the link between us and the crew that covers the masses. This is an excellent opportunity for those that find it hard to block out hours at a time to work service hours. If you are interested please contact Leslie Carnacchi at 248.545.2140 ext. 229 or Barb Pietron at 248.548.7348.

The proceeds from Scrip are already up from last year, and if we expand the program to the parishioners, maybe we will prove that Scrip can make enough money to drop one of the

lottery ticket raffles!

Wanted—Fish Fry Volunteers

The following are service hour opportunities that are available at St. Mary Fish Fry's:



Morning Prep (8:30a.m.-10:00 a.m.)

You will be setting up tables and chairs in the dining room, setting the tables and light food preparation.

Fish Fry Dinners (4:45p.m.-7:00p.m.)

You will be doing anything from cooking, bussing tables, serving food and drinks to light kitchen cleaning.

Clean Up (6:45p.m.-9:00p.m.)

You will be doing anything from taking down tables and chairs, mopping floors, washing and putting away dishes to taking out the garbage.

The Fish Fry's will be held on 2/27, 3/6, 3/13, 3/20 and 3/27.

Sign-up sheets are posted in the school hallway. Please contact Pam Callan at 248.545.5007 if you have any questions.

St. Mary Creative Club News

On Wednesday, January 14th, our Future City team participated in the annual regional Future City tournament held at Rock Financial Showplace in Novi by the Engineering Society of Detroit. The team won \$50.00 for their city inventory, which is to be used for a group party. Congratulations to this year's team members for the effort they put into their city. The members will receive their medals and junior society certificates at February's school wide assembly. Pictures of the tournament event can be seen at the Engineering Society of Detroit's website.

The next groups to go to competition will be the Destination Imagination teams. The regional tournament will be held on March 7th at Utica High School. The teams are working very hard on their projects for this event.

On another note, I need to talk about funding. SMCC receives its funding for the national and regional fees through the profits of St. Mary's Market Day Program. This year the Market Day sales are down and we are asking you to support SMCC and the Market Day program by participating in the sales. To date the fees for SMCC have amounted to a little over \$1,200. Please help us by ordering, so we can continue to provide these important activities.

As an FYI for the parents and members, the Detroit Society of Engineers does a cable program for young people each year. They are recording this year's first episode on January 31st at the Engineering Society building. Also, Lawrence Tech participates in an alternate Lego Robotics competition, which they call Robofest. Warm-up Competition will be held on February 28th at Lawrence Tech University. At this event these robots will be using many sensors and First Lego members might get an opportunity to view alternative approaches to problems. If anyone is interested in either event, please contact Mrs. Schulz for details.

Geography Bee

There has been a buzz in the air, as the students in fourth-eighth grade participated in the annual Geography Bee. During the week of January 5th-9th, each class held their grade level bees.



The winners for each grade are as follows: Nick (8th), Zane (7th), Tyler (6th), Marshall Neu (5th) and Ellie (4th). These finalists went on to participate in the school wide bee held on January 13th. Nick was our winner after several rounds. Nick will now be tested to see if he qualifies for the National Bee that will be held in Washington D.C. on May 20th. We want to congratulate Nick on his win and send him our prayers and best wishes.

Choosing the Right Backpack

Backpacks are a popular and practical way for children and teenagers to carry school-books and supplies. They are designed to distribute the weight of the load among some of the body's strongest muscles.



However, backpacks that are too heavy or are worn incorrectly can cause problems for children and teenagers. Improperly used backpacks may injure muscles and joints. This can lead to severe back, neck and shoulder pain, as well as posture problems. Share these guidelines to help your family use backpacks safely.

Choose the right backpack. Look for the following:

- Wide, padded shoulder straps—Narrow straps can dig into shoulders. This can cause pain and restrict circulation.
- Two shoulder straps—Backpacks with one shoulder strap that runs across the body cannot distribute weight evenly.
- Padded back—A padded back protects against sharp edges on objects inside the pack and increases comfort.
- Waist strap—A waist strap can distribute the weight of a heavy load more evenly.
- Lightweight backpack—The backpack itself should not add much weight to the load.
- Rolling backpack—This type of backpack may be a good choice for students who must tote a heavy load. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs.. Also, they may be difficult to roll in snow.

To prevent injury when using a backpack, do the following:

- Always use both shoulder straps. Slung a backpack over one

shoulder can strain muscles. Wearing a backpack on one shoulder may increase curvature of the spine.

- Tighten the straps so that the pack is close to the body. The straps should hold the pack two inches above the waist.
- Pack light. The backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the student's total body weight.
- Organize the backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back.
- Stop often at school lockers, if possible. Do not carry all of the books needed for the day.
- Bend using both knees, when you bend down. Do not bend over at the waist when wearing or lifting a heavy backpack.

Auction 2009

Got Hours?

If you need Service Hours, volunteering for the Auction may be for you. We have opportunities from a few hours to several hours. Currently we are seeking a "check-out" volunteer to work before, during and after the auction. If you are good with computers and learn software quickly, please consider this job. We will train you.

If you would like to be on an e-mail list for auction service hour opportunities, send an e-mail to cheryl@sawickifamily.com and type in the Subject Line: "Auction Service Hours Notification". We will notify you by e-mail of upcoming jobs and you can sign up on a first-come, first-served basis.

We Need Cool Stuff

What do you like to bid on at auctions? Toys, travel, jewelry, sports events, a night on the town? Whatever it is, you can bet others like to bid on those types of items too—and the things you like are the things we need at the auction! Can you donate

or get someone to donate that item? Can you teach knitting, golfing, cooking or painting? What skills do you have for which people will pay money? Please consider packaging up your talent as "lessons" for the auction. What would your friends or family be willing to donate? The Auction's success is dependent upon donations from our St. Mary Family. Please think, ponder and pray about what you can give...or who you can ask to give! Donations are due by March 6th.

The (Auction) Envelope Please

The Auction Packet went home a few weeks ago...and here are the Cliffs Notes:

Auction Date:

- Saturday, May 2, 2009: A Night at the Races

Required by St. Mary's Service Families (excluding parents of only preschoolers):

- Purchase 2 Auction Tickets

Optional (But we really hope you'll do these too!):

- Ask for donations—items, cash (Due March 6th)
- Buy a business ad yourself, or sell an ad (Due March 20th)
- Sponsor the event (See the sponsorship benefits and pledge form in the auction packet)
- Get your service hours

You are encouraged to contact any of the Auction Chairs listed below with any comments or questions.

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