



Saint Mary School News

E-mail: st.maryro@comcast.net
Web-site: www.st-mary.org
Fax Machine: 248.545.2303

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248.545.2140
628 S. Lafayette Ave.
Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

Celebration Corner

We want to celebrate the PTG co-chairs, Jackie Berry and Tonya White, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Long and their families for all the work that made the indoor school picnic a huge success. The food was great, there was lots of conversation and the kids had fun. The rain did not dampen our spirits. Thank you and may God bless you all.

Attention All Middle School Parents

High School Information Night

Who: Sixth - Eighth Graders and Their Parents

When: Thursday, October 9th, 2008

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Where: St. Mary School - Fellowship Center

Why: So students and parents can see a variety of high schools, ask questions, and get information.

Hope to see you at this very informative event.

Principally Speaking...by Greg Carnacchi

We begin the 2008-2009 school year at St. Mary Catholic School with a new spiritual theme, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding". This theme has a great meaning for us all as we experience a very difficult economy in our state. God has blessed us with about 265 students PK-8 this year and our dedicated staff continues to work very hard to provide them with learning experiences that foster their spiritual, academic, social and physical growth. We are thankful for the spiritual leadership and support of our new pastor, Fr. Ken and we need to remember in our prayers the families that are struggling with the tough issues of our times.

Welcome also to our new physical education teacher, Mr. Brandon Brewart and our computer teacher Ms. Jaime DeRiemaecker. They are both shared-time teachers through Clawson Schools. We look forward to a great year as they share their expertise with the children of St. Mary Catholic School.

As stated in our Strategic Plan we have a standards based curriculum at St. Mary Catholic School, which means the curriculum is driven by standards and objectives rather than a textbook. This approach to curriculum ensures that what we think all students

should learn is clearly defined. There are no gaps that can occur as when different texts with different copyrights are used. The curriculum selected was based on national standards written by experts in each of the content areas of Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies and compiled by Scantron. The standards also were aligned with the IOWA Test which measures achievement and cognitive abilities of the students in every school in the Archdiocese of Detroit. St. Mary has a five-year cycle where the curriculum of each content area is mapped and aligned. This process is achieved by teachers recording when each objective is taught. Those results are compiled quarterly for the entire school. We hold curriculum meetings that allow teachers to analyze grades as well as helping to determine the best approach to working toward student mastery in each content area. This curriculum mapping also helps us to select resources for each content area. Those resources must contain at least 85% of the objectives we teach for us to consider their use. This certainly demonstrates the hard work of the teachers at St. Mary Catholic School to ensure the learning of your children. This year we are about the work of

examining the Science curriculum and the support resources.

I would just like to remind you that the IOWA Test will be administered October 6th through October 17th. It is extremely important for your child to get a good night's rest, eat a healthy breakfast and bring a snack that is high in protein. The medical experts say that the protein helps sustain energy throughout the day that is necessary to do their best on the test. Your support of your child during this testing is greatly appreciated.

Our annual outdoor education experience will take place October 23rd and 24th for our fourth through sixth grades. This is part of our Science and Math curriculum and a wonderful hands-on experience for the students. We are in need of a few male parents to help by sleeping over at the outdoor center to supervise the evening/night time. If you are interested in helping please contact the school at 248.545.2140.

There are a couple of School Committee positions open. If you are interested in serving as a member of this advisory group please pick up an application from the school office, fill it out and return it as soon as possible. For more information call the office at 248.545.2140.

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

What a great start of the school year for our preschoolers! We have been busy with lots of “getting to know you” activities while we adjust to new faces and new routines. We will spend some time on apple activities...reading books, taste-testing and making graphs of our favorites, and painting apples and trees. We will then learn about the friends in our class and how to be a good friend. We will make class books, and practice our pleases and thank yous, and write in our journals.

We are looking forward to October when we will learn about fire safety, Fall fun, and Halloween. We are also excited to get our “Motor Moms and Dads” program up and running. This is a gross motor program that builds strong brains by building strong bodies—so important for all children, especially preschoolers. Parent volunteers will work with children on a gross motor “circuit” designed to strengthen proper brain and body development. We can’t wait! Big thanks to the many parents who have volunteered and to all of our preschool families from last year who helped to raise the money to purchase the program and equipment!

Kindergarten—Mrs. Withee

Kindergarten is off to a wonderful start. We have spent the first couple of weeks getting to know one another and learning the classroom routine. We like to line up alphabetically and always walk on the silver line. We love Spanish, Computer, Art, Gym and Music classes, and going to the Library. We are learning to read Morning Message everyday and we enjoy being “sight word” detectives. We can’t wait for our next theme entitled “Apples and Autumn”.

First Grade—Ms. Farrell

Welcome Back!

The first graders are learning their new routine—center time, days of the special classes, lunch, recess, etc.

Soon it will seem completely routine.

Three new things the first graders are enjoying:

1. No naps!
2. The days we have extra recess.
3. Having a classroom right beside the water fountain.

We welcome four new classmates to St. Mary—Alexa, Joseph, Patricia and Trent. Soon, these new classmates will be old friends!

Second Grade—Mrs. Stanko

Welcome Back! We were so excited to start school again in second grade that we began the year with dancing! We re-arranged the room and have new class fish. The new uniforms look great and we feel great wearing them. Our class is off and running in our new books, using our new supplies and learning new things. We look forward to lots of new things this year, but are really glad that we can always depend on God to get us through.

Third Grade—Mrs. Smith

Hi! I would like to take a second to welcome everyone back. It is great to be starting another year here at St. Mary. I would also like to thank everyone who took an item off of our classroom wish list and donated the item to our room. The students and I greatly appreciate your generosity.

The third graders are off to a wonderful start. We have been hard at work getting back into the groove of school. The third graders have spent several weeks exploring plants. We have dissected a plant, looked at its different parts and explored several different kinds of seeds. In Math we have been working on our place value and learning how to write and understand numbers up to a hundred thousand. We are also working hard at improving our writing skills. The third graders are making sure that they write in complete sentences, that their paragraphs include a topic sentence and that they stick to a particular topic

when they are composing paragraphs.

I am looking forward to an exciting and challenging year. I know that we in third grade are well on our way to making this a very successful school year.

Fourth Grade—Mrs. McNish

Welcome back to a new year! We’ve started out on a good note. This month we are reviewing a lot of our third grade concepts. Science brings lifecycles of living things. In Social Studies we’ve been learning about the creation of our government. Learning the many ways God reveals Himself is our main Religion topic. We just wanted to extend a big thanks to all our great families and the great support they’ve given us as we start our new year.

Fifth Grade—Mrs. Sak

Fractions, decimals and exponents greeted the fifth graders when they came back to school this year. They’ve been busy reviewing all their Math.

In Science they’ve been researching an animal that they will observe and study. On October 14th the fifth graders will bring in their animals and give a presentation.

Latitude and longitude and other map skills have kept fifth graders busy in Social Studies. They created a potato island and used it to study contour maps.

We are off to a great start.

Sixth Grade—Ms. Kassab

Welcome back to a school year that I believe will be filled with much learning and excitement! The middle school students will experience the joys of Math and Science throughout the school year. My hope is through interactive activities, group learning, projects and more the middle school students will begin to appreciate the wonders of Math and Science. May God bless you, our school and the year ahead.

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Martin

Welcome back everyone! I am so excited to be back in school this year, and I cannot wait to get started in on writing and reading in the middle school. We're working in a workshop format, and students will be producing many pieces of writing, discussing their reading and novels with each other in letter format through their reading response journals, and incorporating vocabulary words in their writing. We're using a cool website called www.freerice.com to learn new words while we feed the world, too. Give it a try!

Our focus this month has been to read and write narratives. Students wrote about a memorable summer event using vivid imagery, action language and complete detail. What interesting experiences they've all had!

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Peterson

Welcome Back! I hope that everyone is enjoying the beginning of the school year. It has been a very productive last few weeks. Sixth grade is putting themselves in survival mode while reading *Hatchet*. They are also working on the writing process with personal narratives. Eighth grade has been focusing on reading strategies and how they can be helpful both in and out of school.

Happy Reading!

Eighth Grade—Mrs. Irwin

Wow! Another year is underway. Everyone is adjusting to their new routines and getting up in the morning. That is the hardest thing for me. It has been a great start to a new school year.

Please support us here at school by having students follow the dress code—including the dreaded haircuts. It takes a lot of time and energy when children are out of uniform and they have to go to the office for a violation. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Remember to check for your child's black folder on Monday. Also ask if

there are any notes. The older they get the more they forget to inform you of exciting things coming up or going on in the school.

Please feel free to call or drop me an email if you have any questions or concerns. The first progress report will arrive in your hands on September 19th.

We will be holding an eighth grade parent/student meeting in September and everyone needs to attend. It is an important meeting about the eighth grade trip. Where we go, if we go and who will be going. Please make sure someone is there with your child to represent your interests and concerns. Watch for the information to come home with your child.

Library—Mrs. Carnacchi

It's been nice to welcome back all of our students and meet our new families. Here in the Library we are getting back into our routines. Students in third and fifth grade have a forty minute Library class each Monday while kindergarten, first, second and fourth grade meet each Friday for the same length of time. Middle schoolers in sixth-eighth grade come to the Library on an "as needed" basis. Please help your child remember to return their library book(s) each week since new books may not be borrowed until those from the previous week are returned. In the months to come, I will be sharing with you certain areas of study that each class will be working on.

We are SO BLESSED here at St. Mary to be able to start off this school year with a TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITY! I have been pinching myself to make sure that it's not just a wonderful dream. Many of you have heard me speak of "Book Beat", an independently owned bookstore located at Greenfield and Lincoln (in Oak Park). Colleen, the owner, has been so helpful and generous to St. Mary by helping us increase our Library collection and offering us discounted prices on everything we purchase, whether it be books for the Middle School Book Club or special

titles when we have our Author visits in the Spring. Together with publishing house Simon & Schuster, Colleen is bringing CALDECOTT WINNING ILLUSTRATOR, DAVID SMALL TO OUR SCHOOL ON OCTOBER 6TH!!

David Small won the Caldecott medal in 2001 for *So You Want to Be President* and has illustrated many more books too



numerous to mention. David's newest book is entitled *That Book Woman* which tells the story of the Pack Horse Librarians who traveled the back woods of Appalachia during the Depression era bringing books and the magic of reading to children. Both David and the author of this book, Heather Henson, will be speaking to grades 1-8 on the afternoon of Monday, October 6th. THIS ILLUSTRATOR AND AUTHOR VISIT IS 100% FREE OF CHARGE TO US!! Because this is such a once-in-a-lifetime experience, we have also invited some students from Shrine to join us and they are excited to share in this opportunity.

David Small's books will be available for purchase at a discount from Book Beat. An order form will be coming home soon and David and Heather will personally autograph each book purchased. Please watch for this form coming home with your student. Books make great Christmas and birthday gifts for all ages! A sampling of David's books will be available in the school office for you to review before you order.

The chance for our students to see and hear from a Caldecott winning illustrator is an awesome gift. If you are a book lover and love to lose yourself in a great bookstore, please give Book Beat in Oak Park a try. You won't be disappointed in the selection or the great service. Please join us on the afternoon of October 6th for what I'm sure will be an exciting presentation.

Texas Hold'em Fundraiser

Saint Mary Catholic School will be hosting a Texas Hold'em Fundraiser at Sunnybrook Lanes in Sterling Heights on October 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th. This is a great fundraiser for our school, but we do need help with this. Volunteering for this event will count towards your required service hours. If you are interested in volunteering and getting your service hours, your help would be greatly appreciated.

The following are the dates and hours that we need help:

Thursday, October 9th

5:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Four People

9:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m.

Four People

Friday, October 10th

5:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Four People

9:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m.

Four People

Saturday, October 11th

12:00 noon-5:00 p.m.

Four People

5:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.

Four People

10:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m.

Four People

Sunday, October 12th

1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Four People

5:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.

Four People

5:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.

Four People

Please contact Jeff or Lisa Erfourth if you are interested in helping out. Thank you for your support.

Jeff Erfourth 248.219.4393

Lisa Erfourth 248.808.9405

Athletics—Mr. Anderson

Welcome to a new school year and another year of Fighting Irish Athletics. The Athletic Department is now in its process of preparing for the approaching sports seasons. Keep up to date with all the happenings by checking out the Fighting Irish bulletin board in "White Hall" of the school or by visiting www.stmaryathletics.org—kept fresh by our fantastic webmaster, Rick Berry. Our St. Mary Athletics Handbook will be available at the October CYO Sign Up Night and should help all understand the structure of the program, how it interfaces with academics and the expectations of all involved in St. Mary sports.

Our coaches meeting will take place Tuesday, September 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Center. This will give Athletic Board members and our wonderful coaching staff a chance to review policy and procedure and share with each other the finer points of successful coaching.

Our "CYO Sign Up Night" will take place October 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Center. This evening is a chance for parents and students to register for the winter sports teams which include CYO basketball, bowling and cheerleading, instructional basketball and intramural basketball. It is also a chance to meet our coaches. More details to come as we near the date. Our annual Fall Cookie Dough Sale will officially kick-off October 14th. We hope to have involvement from all our families whether their child participates in athletics or not. We feel a successful Athletic Department benefits the entire school.

Here's wishing all a satisfying, enriching and healthy sports season.

SMCC—S.O.S.

St. Mary Creative Club is beginning a new school year and competition season. We are looking at nine teams (Future City, Destination Imagination and First Lego League) this year. This means, nine coaches and nine assistant coaches (if possible). As of

now we have a shortage of coaches for Destination Imagination teams and Junior First League teams.

What does it take to be a coach? You must be over 18 years of age and love working with children. Destination Imagination organization provides a one time training session for new coaches and Junior First Lego League receives training from the SMCC coordinator (Patricia Schulz). Your primary function as a coach is to see that all members of your team are working weekly on tasks related to the competition during the pre-competition period. You also are required to escort your team on the day of the competition (a Saturday in late February or early March—date to be determined). Finally, to have fun as your team addresses their unique solution to their challenge.

So, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, you can help provide an opportunity for our children to grow academically. We can't move forward without the team coaches and we will be unable to enter the various teams into competition. So, your support is critical. Note to high school students and past members: we would like to welcome you as student helpers for a team. Our tentative schedule will have the First League Lego teams meeting on Tuesday after school, Junior First Lego League teams meeting Wednesday after school and Destination Imagination teams and Future City team meetings Thursdays after school.

If you can help, or have any questions, please contact Mrs. Schulz at 248.545.2140 ext. 224.

8th Grade Store is Opening

The store will be open on Wednesdays, and the first day will be Wednesday, October 1, 2008. Send money only on that day. Children will go to the store during school. An eighth grader will escort them to the store and back to class.

Prices range from .25¢ to \$2.00.

Music—Mr. Pyrek

Attention instrumentalists! We will be having a “petting zoo” and rental night hosted by McCourt’s Music on Monday, September 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in Room 100 of the school. We invite all fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth graders interested in the band program to attend.

Scrip—Mrs. Carnacchi and Mrs. Pietron

The St. Mary Scrip program is up and running. There have been two important changes that we hope will encourage more participation in this fundraiser. First, you have an additional day to turn in your order...Scrip orders will now be due every **Tuesday morning** by 8:30 a.m. and your Scrip order will be ready for pick-up on Fridays. Secondly, you may now shop online (www.shopwithscrip.com) and use your debit card when you sign up for “Presto-Pay”. No more need to send in your order form and check!

Just a brief refresher for our new families. “Scrip” is a term that means “substitute money” or what most of us would call “gift cards”. When you take part in our Scrip program, you purchase gift cards from a variety of retailers including grocery stores, gas station, fast-food restaurants, clothing stores, etc. and use these gift cards or (Scrip) to pay for your purchases at these retailers. When you order Scrip, you pay face value but Great Lakes Scrip sells it to us for a discount. As an example, if you purchase a \$20 Scrip card for Max and Erma’s Restaurant, St. Mary earns 11%. The discounts we receive depend on the retailer but can go anywhere from 1.5% to 25%!! Many school fundraisers ask you to buy items you may not use or want like wrapping paper, candy, etc. The greatest thing about the Scrip program is that you only purchase Scrip for retailers that you already use. All it takes is a little “pre-planning” on your part.

Order forms for Scrip will go home every Friday and are due back to school on Tuesday mornings by 8:30 a.m. If you prefer to order online, reg-

istration is quick and easy. You will be asked for our St. Mary enrollment code which is **B1A5A9132L59**. If you order online but opt not to use the “Presto-Pay” option, you will still need to send to school a copy of your order and your cash or check. With “Presto-Pay” you simply order, pay with your debit card, and we take care of the rest. There will be a poster in the hallway near the office that gives further explanation on how to take part in the Scrip program or you may call either of us (our phone numbers are listed at the top of the Scrip order form) if you have any questions. We are also available at

stmaryscrip@hotmail.com. We hope many of you will take part in this easy, “no need to sell anything” fundraiser for St. Mary.

Service Hours

There have been questions about what activities apply to your **service hours**. Any work on fundraisers that help generate funds for the school to aid in balancing the *general budget* qualify. Therefore work on the Golf Outing, Texas Hold'em Fundraiser, Fish Fry's, the Auction and the Scrip program qualify for service hours. The chairs of the fundraisers will send home a list of opportunities or they may be posted in the school, which will provide the means to achieve your service hours. Fundraisers for the PTG or CYO help those organizations and the work they do but do not generate income that helps balance the general budget. I hope this helps clear up some of the questions.

Auction 2009

Less Fundraising with Entertainment Books

Yes, you read that right. The Auction Committee will be doing *fewer* fundraisers this year to cover auction expenses. The main fundraiser will be the sale of Entertainment Books, which are coupon books filled with \$17,400 in savings from restaurants and retail stores, including \$1,100 in Royal Oak.

Our goal is to sell an average of two books per student. The books sell for \$20 (\$5 cheaper than if you buy online). Each student will receive an information packet with one initial Entertainment book to sell. You are not required to sell the book, but we hope you will sell as many as you can by September 30th. We'll also be selling the Entertainment Books after weekend Masses at St. Mary and St. James. You can find out more about the coupon books at www.entertainment.com.

Start Earning Service Hours Now

Don't wait until the last minute to knock off your 12 or 17 required service hours. Right now you can volunteer to sell Entertainment Books after Masses or offer to be a Committee Chairperson for the Auction and start clocking hours (yes, we're already planning for next spring's Auction). In particular, we are looking for volunteers to help with managing finances, overall volunteer coordination and compiling data in excel. No experience necessary! We'll teach you everything you need to know! Contact any of the Auction Chairpersons listed below to find out more.

Find Out About Service Hours with E-mail

Would you like to be on an e-mail list for auction service hour opportunities? As opportunities come up, we will notify you by e-mail and you can sign up on a first-come, first-served basis. If so, please send an e-mail to Cheryl Sawicki at cheryl@sawickifamily.com and type “Auction Service Hours Notification” in the subject line.

Christine Kenny
kennys99@sbcglobal.net

248.414.9009

Cheryl Sawicki
cheryl@sawickifamily.com

248.542-1588

Anne Snyder
jamsnyder@comcast.net

248.584.0175