



ST. MARY SCHOOL

PARENT NOTES

January 22, 2018

Catholic Schools Week

Sun., Jan. 28: Opening Mass

All school sing at 11:00 Mass; students should be in the choir loft by 10:50. Students will perform the ministries at this Mass. Open House will follow Mass. Please invite anyone with an interest in our school. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase all we offer. **Students should wear school uniforms to Mass & the open house to represent St. Mary's.**

Mon, Jan. 29: Team Day—wear a shirt of a favorite sports team. (See guidelines.)

-Gr. 3 leads Morning Prayer-8:25
 -Gr. 6 goes to Wendy's for Classroom in the Community
 -Bowling & pizza for Grades K, 3, & 4 - 1:15-2:30
 -Students will learn about recycling through activities with DebLeVault

Tues, Jan. 30: Wacky Tacky Day

-No uniforms if kids dress in colorful, mismatched garb (See guidelines)

-Gr. 1 leads Morning Prayer-8:25
 -Bowling & pizza for Grades 1, 2, 5 & 6- 1:15-2:30

Wed., Jan. 31: Swim Day!

-Jeans Day for kids! Wear jeans with uniform or St. Mary's shirt or sweatshirt!

-Gr. 4 leads Morning Prayer-8:25
 -Early lunch and recess schedule beginning at 10:45
 -Leave for YMCA beginning at noon for an afternoon of swimming! Return by 2:40.

Thur, Feb. 1: Grandparents' Day

-Gr. 2 leads Morning Prayer-8:25
 -Invite grandparents to 9:00 Mass. Students sit with grandparents or other family members. Guests then visit classrooms & attend a reception featuring the 5th/6th Gr. Band & a video presentation in the cafeteria at 10:30. School dismisses at 11:30. No bus service at dismissal.

Fri., Feb. 2: Pajama Day

-Student may leave uniforms at home today if they want to wear their PJ's all day. (See guidelines)
 -Gr. 5 leads Morning Prayer-8:25

--Local fire fighters, police, and sheriff's deputies will join us for lunch.

-Movie & popcorn in the gym at 1:30
 -Relay for Life Raffle

Tuition Statements for 2017 Taxes

Documentation of 2017 tuition and Before/After Care payments will be sent to all families by the end of the week. You will need these statements in order to claim a child care deduction and the \$500 (limit) tuition tax credit allowed in Illinois. As soon as I receive statements from Smart Tuition, I'll send everything home backpack mail.

Children's Mass

Thurs., Jan. 25 at 9:00

Grade 5 will lead the ministries. No nursing home Mass this week.

Parents & guests are welcome to join the students for lunch during Catholic Schools Week. Please try to attend on the day suggested in the schedule below so that we can seat all guests. Can't work it out on the day your were scheduled? You are welcome to come either Monday or Tuesday. If that can't happen, come anytime after Catholic Schools Week. We're always glad to have you here! **Let us know in advance, no later than 8:45 on the day you are coming.** Adult lunches are \$3.50. You may pay in advance or in the cafeteria. **No outside food, please, unless packed from home.**

Catholic Schools Week Parent Lunch Schedule

Lunch times are

11:25 for K-1

11:50 for 2 & 3

12:15 for 4 & 5

-Mon., Jan. 29 - K, 3, & 4

-Tue., Jan. 30 - 1, 2, 5 & 6.

-Wed., Jan. 31 -Not a good day for guests. Lunch hour is shortened by YMCA trip

-Thurs., Feb. 1 - 11:30 dismissal-no lunch served

-Fri., Feb. 2—Fire fighters, police & sheriff's deputies are coming.

Booster Club Meeting

Monday, Feb. 5, at 7:00 in the cafeteria, finalizing details for Spring Fling, on April 21.

Confirmation kids will babysit school age kids in the gym.

Guidelines for clothing on Wacky Tacky Day

Students may wear a mismatched, clashing, crazy outfit. They must wear athletic shoes and socks, but socks don't have to be uniform. No sleeveless shirts or tank tops unless layered over a shirt with sleeves. Clothing should be properly fitting, not torn, and an appropriate length—hems must be past the fingertips. **No shorts please.** Hats are ok, but will be removed during class time as determined by the teacher.

Pj Day guidelines

Pajama Day is an optional activity that is great fun! If your child wants to participate, they must wear pj's that have full long pants and a top with short or long sleeves. They'll need to be warm. Flannel pants and a t-shirt are great if you don't have a matching set! Sweats do not count as pajamas. Students must wear regular school shoes and socks. If pj's are loose, a tank or t-shirt underneath would be perfect. Students who participate should come to school in their pj's. They'll wear them all day.

Swimming Guidelines:

Girls will be required to wear one-piece suits, two piece suites with long tops that cover the tummy, or a t-shirt over a two-piece. Because of chlorine in the pool, the YMCA allows swim shirts or white cotton t-shirts.

Only coast guard approved life jackets may be used as personal floatation devices. Students wearing life jackets are not permitted on the Big Blue Slide. Students wishing to swim on the deep side of the pool must pass a swim test. Goggles are optional.

Please pack swimwear and a towel in a bag (not the bookbag) your child can take to the YMCA. A comb or brush is optional.

Everything went very well last year, so we look forward to a fun day!

Team Shirt Day guidelines

Students may replace their uniform shirt with one representing a team they like—youth, local, college, or professional. T-shirts, jerseys, sweatshirts, warm ups, and shooter shirts are all acceptable, including the t-shirts students may have from St. Mary's Field Day. Sleeveless or tanks may be worn if layered over another shirt with sleeves. The rest of their clothing is school uniform. Only the shirt may be switched out. Guess which team Mrs. Robertson will choose???

Yearbook Orders Due February 15

Cost is \$9.00. If you have school related pictures that we could use in the yearbook, please send or email them to the office by **Jan. 29**. The pictures will NOT be returned, so send a copy if it's one you wish to keep. We don't receive extra yearbooks so order on time!

Coming Events

- ***Jeans Day for Students**—Fri., Jan. 26
- ***Catholic Schools Week**—Jan. 28 thru Feb. 2
- ***Early Dismissal**—Feb. 1, 11:30, No bus at dismissal
- ***Booster Club Meeting**—Feb. 5 at 7:00 p.m.
- ***1st Penance**—Feb. 12, 7:00 p.m.
- ***No p.m. bus service**—Thur., Feb. 16—public schools dismiss at 1:00
- ***No p.m. bus service**—Tues., Mar. 13—public schools dismiss at 1:00
- ***Spring Fling**—April 21!

Jeans Day is this Friday, January 26, and again on Wed., Jan. 31 (the day we go swimming.)

Students may wear jeans w/ uniform shirt or St. Mary's school or athletic shirt. Jeans Day is optional. Students not participating must wear regular school uniform. Long sleeve uniform shirt under a t-shirt for warmth is ok. Jeans must be blue and have no holes.

Raffles!!! During Catholic Schools Week we'll sell raffle tickets for chances at some great prizes. Students will get to preview the prizes this Friday. Tickets will go on sale in the classrooms on Monday, Jan. 29, and will be available through Friday morning, Feb. 2. Winners will be drawn that Friday afternoon. Chances are 50 cents each. All proceeds go to the teachers' Relay for Life team.



Don't forget to return permission slips for bowling and swimming. Please fill in your child's shoe size for bowling. We need these by Wednesday. Thanks!

St. Mary's Preschool Open House

Sunday, January 28

Anytime between noon and 1:30

This is an opportunity for families to tour the classrooms, meet the teachers and discuss program options and availability for the 2018-19 school year.

- *Low student to teacher ration
- *Qualified, enthusiastic, experienced teachers
- *Full day and half day options
- *Affordable tuition
- *Activities to accommodate all learning styles
- *Art, Music, P.E.
- *Social & Emotional development
- *Strong focus on early literacy development using proven programs: Zoo Phonics and Drawing Children into Reading
- *Kindergarten readiness program—5 days/week
- *Open to all denominations
- *Preschoolers must be 3 or 4 by Sept. 1, 2018

Please share this information with anyone who has a potential preschooler. Children are welcome, too!

Family Night Bingo!!

Booster Club will host a family Bingo night on Sunday, Feb. 11, at 5:30 p.m. in the cafeteria.

A \$5 donation per family is requested. This will be used to order pizza. Families are asked to bring a dessert or cookies to share. Water & lemonade will be provided.

Please RSVP by sending family name and \$5 to the school office by Feb. 9.

Kroger Cards Our rebate from the final quarter of 2017 will be \$548.65. That's up about \$45 over the same time last year, but the rebate from the final quarter of 2015 was \$1108.46. If the bottom of your receipt doesn't say St. Mary's, you need to register!

Tuition Scholarships for next year

The Invest in Kids Act (8/31/17) allows income tax credits for authorized contributions to Scholarship Granting Organizations. These SGO's then provide scholarships for eligible Illinois students to attend private or parochial schools in Illinois.

3 Things to Know:

- 1) St. Mary's (and all Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Springfield) is an eligible school.
- 2) Families can begin applying 1/31/18 at empowerillinois.org. To be considered K-12 students must come from a household with income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (\$73,800 for a family of four.) St. Mary's families who meet these requirements must apply to Empower Illinois before being considered for our own CAPE tuition assistance awards.
- 3) Donations are divided among 5 regions in the state. The amount of funding each region receives is based on population and the total funds donated statewide. So far our region 5 has received \$32,000 in contributions. That won't go far.

I'll keep you informed as things are changing almost daily in this program!



Listen for Kindergarten saying the Pledge of Allegiance on WTIM 96.1 FM or 870 AM Mon - Fri next week between 6:55—7:00 a.m. and throughout the day.

7th & 8th grade at St. Mary's

Thank you to all who responded to the interest survey sent out in November. There were many kind words shared and important issues raised. These have been attached for your review.

The survey was sent to parents of our current 3rd—6th graders which raised the question, "Why not ask everyone, including parishioners?" My reasoning: If we don't have the numbers and interest in the immediate future, then there is no point in further discussion. I have also attached a chart showing interest level among these current families. It is low for the next two years.

The chief concern of the Parish Finance Committee is cost. To hire one additional full-time teacher would cost a minimum of \$40,000 for salary and benefits. This would be an annual expense and would double if two grade levels were added. Textbooks and equipment for an additional classroom would run from \$6000 to as much as \$10,000 initially.

Another piece of this puzzle: Our enrollment by grade decreases as students get older. This is true of all Catholic schools in our diocese and other private schools. The larger enrollment numbers are in the younger grades. I've also attached those numbers for the last 10 years. You will see that St. Mary's has grown, but the each class loses students as they move through the school.

I'll bring this up for discussion at the Feb. 5 Booster Club Meeting.