



# Saint Mary Catholic School

January 2012

Dear Parents:

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a very blessed Christmas and a very relaxing break! Having sixteen days off from homework and projects was hopefully your child's favorite gift. As a parent, I always appreciated those times, too.

December was such a beautiful month for us as a school community. Our students, through their Christmas Shows that featured the nativity story of Jesus and the lovely and endearing voices of our children, shared the true meaning of Christmas with all who attended. (I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contributions of Mrs. Pam Miller, Mrs. Jeanie Stark, Sister Aloysius, Mrs. Dana Hilmoie, Mrs. Suzy Cochran, Mrs. Tina Forsythe, Mrs. Bonnie Cleary, Mrs. Carolyn Bryant, Mrs. Rae Leggett, Ms. Mary Poffenberger, Mrs. Lori Balog, and Mrs. Kimberly Mentzell.)

Now that everyone is re-charged and ready to launch into the new year, we begin the preparations for Catholic Schools Week. Most students will refer to CSW as the best week of the year. Some of the planned activities are rooted in St. Mary tradition...the Pancake Breakfast and the Talent Show. It is also a time to celebrate that our students are receiving a faith-based education that not only challenges and prepares them academically but also guides them on their faith journeys through prayer and service to others. Please make every effort to be part of the many activities we have planned for this year's Catholic Schools Week.

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2012

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:

#### FAITH. ACADEMICS. SERVICE.

Mark your calendars for Catholic Schools Week, January 28 through February 3, 2012. The theme of CSW this year is

*Catholic School: Faith. Academics. Service.*  
A schedule of activities is attached.

### TEACHERS SAY THANK YOU

As we begin our annual observance of Catholic Schools Week, **the teachers and staff** would like to **acknowledge** the efforts of our **volunteers** who have helped us in our mission to provide high-quality, faith-based education to our students. All volunteers are cordially invited to attend the "Teachers Say Thank You" Volunteer Appreciation Reception on Tuesday, January 31, from 8:15 to 9:00 A.M. The teachers are providing refreshments and students will be providing some entertainment. Please see the attached invitation.

### CAREER DAY

On Monday, January 30, students will learn about many various careers, thanks to the parents who have volunteered their time to participate in Career Day. Plans are still being finalized. If you are interested in sharing your career and have not volunteered, please call the office by Friday, January 6.

### PARENT VISITATION DAY

Parent Visitation Day is scheduled for Tuesday, January 31, from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Parents are encouraged not to bring preschoolers with them when visiting the classrooms. However, we understand for some parents the only option is to bring younger children. If this is the case, then please be respectful to the other parents, the students, and the teachers by not allowing your children to be a disruption. Preschoolers must remain with a parent at all times and not be allowed to wander around in the classroom. Children who are making noise or crying should be removed from the classroom immediately. Parent Visitation is an opportunity for parents to observe their school-age children in the classroom setting. We want to do our best

to preserve a pleasant learning environment in each of the classrooms.

## CONGRATULATIONS

### **GEOGRAPHY BEE**

SMCS middle school students participate in the National Geographic Bee. The school winner is given a seventy-five question test that must be completed in one hour. The test is sent to the National Geographic Society Headquarters in Washington, D.C., to be graded. Then each state sends one hundred students to its state capital to compete in order to select one winner to represent the state. The final fifty winners compete in Washington, D.C., in the final contest. The 2011-12 Geography Bee winner for St. Mary Catholic School is Nicholas O'Neil. Bailey Rafter placed second and Conner Caruso placed third.

### **SPELLING BEE**

We have some amazing spellers at St. Mary Catholic School! On December 15, 2011, students in the middle school participated in a spelling bee. Each grade had a winner and a runner-up who will participate in the Washington County Spelling Bee in March. Congratulations to all our participants and to those who will be representing our school at the County Bee. Our winners and runners-up are:

#### **Sixth Grade**

Katherine Alexander- First Place

Everest Shives- Second Place

#### **Seventh Grade**

Vincent Steiner- First Place

Asher Starliper- Second Place

#### **Eighth Grade**

Nathan Hammer- First Place

Taylor Blenckstone- Second Place

A big congratulations goes to Vincent Steiner who is the overall SMCS spelling bee champion! A special thank you goes to the

HSA, who provided the prizes for our winners, and Sr. Corda and Ms. Lois MacCumbee, who served as judges for the bee. Much appreciation is also extended to Mrs. Karn for organizing the event!

### **LEGO LEAGUE TEAM**

The Saint Mary School FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Lego League team concluded its season placing 8<sup>th</sup> out of sixteen teams on December 3 at the state qualifier competition in Bethesda, Maryland. The team, which was called the "Eggo My Lego," consisted of James Carden, Charlotte Caruso, Jennifer Elbin, Nader Fawaz, Colin & Rory O'Hanlon, and Farene Shahid! The team was coached by Kim Caruso, and assisted by Conner and Tyler Caruso. The students designed, built, and programmed a Lego robot to accomplish missions on a field. The team was also required to research and present a project based on the theme, *Food Factor*. The students had to identify a world problem pertaining to food safety and devise a solution for the problem. Thank you, Caruso family, for all the time and effort given to this exciting venture!

### **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

The following students have excelled academically during the First Trimester of the 2011-2012 school year at St. Mary Catholic School. Congratulations and keep up the good work!

### **HIGH ACADEMIC HONORS**

Yusra Ahmed, Conner Caruso, Ramsay Farah, Adam Fisher, Maria Giannaris, Tyler Gilks, Kaitlyn Hevey, Annemarie Hilmoie, Emma Hogan, Paige Kutzera, Erin MacMullen, Jason Marinelli, Gregory Oh, Connor O'Malley, Patrick Sacchet, Bridget Scott, Jacob Epstein, Benjamin Gilks, William Jones, Nicholas Judge, Alexandra Martin, James Spinnler, Dalton Sponaugle, Abigail Theis, Madeleine Ward, Katherine

Alexander, Nader Fawaz, Maura Hevey, Seamus Murray, Eric Oh, Jared Semler, J. Everest Shives, Isabella Snyder, and Julianna Swarner

### **ACADEMIC HONORS**

Olivia Balog, Taylor Blenckstone, Maitlin Curtin, Ian Ferguson, Claire Murray, Nicholas O'Neil, Colin Quinones, Justin Semler, John Theis, Michael Cosey, Andrew Dillard, Hakim Fessuh, Holly Kucharczyk, Rebecca Mason, Asher Starliper, Vincent Steiner, Bryan Tedeschi, John Agostinelli, Jennifer Elbin, Colin O'Hanlon, Erica Quinones, Farene Shahid, Mark Thompson, and Danielle Wells

### **Good S.A.M.s**

I want to congratulate our **Good S.A.M.s** for December: Collin Ambush, Emily Dellaposta, Emily Grossman, Nicholas Schmitt, Alice Poffenberger, Meghan Scott, Everest Shives, Vincent Steiner, Olivia Balog, and Claire Murray. **Thanks for your Service, Attitude, and Manners!**

## **HSA News**

### **PIXIE SHOP**

A big thank you is extended to Rachel O'Connor and Rhonda O'Malley for coordinating this year's Pixie Shop. Our students certainly enjoyed shopping for gifts for the special people on their lists. Many thanks to our parent elves, Sheila Collins, Beth Cosey, Cathy Ellis, Keith Engle, Stefanie Esherick, AnnMarie Fisher, Alison Ortiz, Lara Radley, Susie Reed, Penny Sardina, Teri Schmitt, Tammy Shultz, Jackie Swarner, Thi Trippett, and Mo Tedeschi for helping our students select just the right gift! Special appreciation is given to Mr. Morrell for his generous donation from the religious articles shop, all of our bakers who made our treat table very successful, and the O'Connor family for the donation of the Apple iPod Touch and the O'Malley family

for the donation of the American Girl Doll! Our profit was approximately \$1,300.

### **FAMILY BINGO NIGHT—JANUARY 14**

Come enjoy dinner and an evening of fun for the whole family. Meal includes pizza from Cafe Italia, drinks, and ice cream. Following dinner we will play 13 bingo games for great kid-friendly prizes. Doors open at 6:15 P.M. Bingo games will start promptly at 6:45 P.M. Registration forms were sent home before Christmas break. Registration deadline is January 6 and is limited to the first 50 families. We thank you in advance for your support of this event!

### **SCRIP**

SCRIP dates for this month are Monday, January 2; **Friday, January 13**; and Monday, January 30.

### **BAKE SALES**

Fourth grade will hold a bake sale on January 11 and Pre-K will hold a bake sale on January 25.

### **SOCIAL HOUR**

Middle School Social Hour will be held from 3:00 to 4:30 on January 6.

### **Phase I Raffle Ticket Fundraiser**

Congratulations to the following December winners:

(\$50) Week 1: The Sardina Family  
(\$50) Week 2: Deanna Becker  
(\$50) Week 3: Mrs. Bender's Prayer Group  
(\$100) Week 4: The Starliper Family

### **Phase II Raffle Ticket Fundraiser**

Phase II raffle ticket stubs and payment were due by December 14. If you have not returned your payment, please do so as soon as possible. A ten dollar late fee has been assessed.

## STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

### TALENT SHOW

The Student Council will be hosting a talent show during Catholic Schools Week. Students in grades four through eight are encouraged to participate. Entry forms will be available beginning Tuesday, January 10, that participants must complete and return to Mrs. Forsythe by Tuesday, January 17. Rehearsals will be January 18 and 25, from 3:00 to 4:00 P.M., in the cafeteria. Only students who are in the Talent Show are permitted to stay for the rehearsals.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE

The Student Council is hosting a "Winter Dance" on Friday, January 13, from 7:00 to 10:00 P.M. **The dress code for the evening is "nice dress."** That means no jeans. Boys must wear nice slacks and a shirt with a collar. Girls may wear either nice slacks or an appropriate dress/skirt. No dresses with spaghetti straps or dresses that are strapless may be worn without a shrug, jacket, or cover-up. No severely tight tops or see-through blouses may be worn. Dresses that are too low-cut may not be worn. **The key is modesty.** Students who arrive at the dance without the appropriate attire will not be admitted. Tickets will go on sale the week of January 9. **The cost is \$5 if purchased in advance or \$6 if bought at the door.**

### TAG DAY

Any student who wears his/her school uniform to Church (and/or to a public place such as the mall) on Saturday, January 28, or Sunday, January 29, may come out of uniform for Student Appreciation Day on Wednesday, February 1.

### ST. MARY STUDENTS MAKE CHRISTMAS BRIGHTER

For over twenty years the St. Mary Catholic School Student Council has participated in the Salvation Army Christmas Drive

programs. This year St. Mary students adopted eight needy families through the *Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family* program. By participating in the read-a-thon and by collecting generous contributions from St. Mary School families, the students raised \$3,117.00, enabling them to purchase presents and grocery gift cards for the seven families. Thanks to the effort of our students and the generosity of our school families, many families through the Salvation Army Adopt-A-Family program had a much brighter Christmas. The Student Council would like to thank Alice, Louisa, and Ms. Poffenberger, Anne and Mrs. Balog, Paige Kutzera, Alex (Class of 2009) and Jason Marinelli, Mrs. Barger, Mrs. Cochran, and Mrs. Forsythe for delivering all the gifts to the Salvation Army.

### DECEMBER TAG DAY

Students who contributed to the Salvation Army Adopt-a-Family were invited to come out of uniform on December 16. The students wore many festive Christmas hats and colors.

### JANUARY TAG DAY

The Student Council will be sponsoring a TAG DAY on January 20. A flyer is forthcoming.

## OTHER NEWSWORTHY ITEMS

### SECOND TRIMESTER INTERIMS

Interims and deficiency notices for the second marking period will be sent home with students on Tuesday, January 25. The second trimester will end on March 7.

### RE-REGISTRATION PACKETS

Information concerning re-registration for the 2012-2013 school year will be sent home the week of January 9.

### PEP RALLY

There will be a pep rally on January 6, at 2:00 P.M., to acknowledge our 2011-2012 basketball teams.

### STORY/CRAFT TIME

Our story/craft time for 3 to 5 year olds is scheduled for January 25, at 12:30 P.M. Please RSVP to Mrs. Minahan.

### MARCH FOR LIFE

As many of you may know, the D.C. March for Life is taking place on Monday, January 23, and a group of our SMCS middle school students will be participating in the event. Please look for details and a permission slip to follow this week. Parent chaperones are needed. Any questions, please contact Ms. Pamela Ward.

[pward@stmarycatholicsschool.org](mailto:pward@stmarycatholicsschool.org)

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

St. Mary Catholic School follows the announcement for Washington County Public Schools. Please listen to your local radio stations or NBC25 for possible school cancellations, late openings, or early dismissals. In the case of a two hour delay, Pre-K will not have school.

**If there is a two-hour delay due to inclement weather on February 3, the 12:30 dismissal is cancelled. Students will report to school two hours late and will be dismissed at 2:55. Pre-K will not have school. The Teacher Appreciation Luncheon will be re-scheduled.**

### STAND TRAINING

In July of 2007 the Archdiocese of Baltimore updated the procedures for volunteering in schools. "If a volunteer will have *Substantial Contact* with children, then the following must be completed before he/she begins to serve in the Archdiocese of Baltimore:

1. Application for Volunteer Service completed;
2. Names of references provided and checked;
3. VolunteerSelect Criminal Screening completed; and

4. Training received regarding child abuse and protection of children, including STAND video."

If you have a Volunteer Compliance Card from another parish and want to be a regular volunteer at St. Mary Catholic School, you must complete the Application for Service, including the reference section. **The STAND training is now available online.** A complete packet including directions for the online training is available in the school office or visit our website. On the Families Tab, select STAND.

### CALENDAR CHANGE FOR PRE-K

Pre-K will not have school on Wednesday, February 8. The teachers and principal will be attending the Maryland Pre-Kindergarten Conference in Baltimore.

### CONFIRMATION REMINDER

Eighth graders who are members of St. Mary Parish are reminded that Confirmation classes will be held on February 7, 14, 21, and 28, from 6:45 to 9:15 P.M. in Fatima Hall. (Snow date is March 6.) Attendance is mandatory.

### BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Mrs. Marisa Bowers (our Librarian) gave birth to Nicholas James on Saturday, December 10. Congratulations!

### IN YOUR PRAYERS

Please remember Mrs. Mary Borg (great-grandmother of William Jones) who passed away this past month. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

As always, I ask for your prayers to the Holy Spirit to give me the guidance and wisdom needed to serve as principal of St. Mary Catholic School.

May God Bless You!

Patricia A. McDermott