



Saint Mary Catholic School

November 2009

Dear Parents:

We are all blessed with different gifts that enable our school community to help our students to grow spiritually and academically. Listening, communicating, sharing, leading, motivating, and supporting are just a few of the many gifts that we encounter in others each day. Through our Values Code, service projects, and daily prayers, we are hopefully instilling in our students the importance of developing their own gifts and recognizing the gifts of others.

November seems like the appropriate time to consider the gifts that each of the saints had to offer. The lives of these holy people were not always easy, but yet they offered their gifts to the glory of God. Let us spend time with our children appreciating the true heroes of the Church.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Father Collin Poston has been named Pastor of St. Mary Parish! Bishop Rozanski will visit the Parish on December 27 to preside over Father Collin's Installation Mass. Mass is at 11:00 A.M., followed by a reception. Our school community is very fortunate that the tradition of having a Pastor who views Catholic education as a mission of the Church shall continue!

THE BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

The Blue Ribbon Committee held ten listening sessions throughout the Archdiocese on the future of Catholic

schools. These sessions were attended by over 600 people. According to the committee, many suggestions and concerns were shared by parents, teachers, administrators, and other supporters of Catholic education. The Blue Ribbon Committee recognizes that many interested individuals may not have been able to attend the listening sessions but still want the opportunity to share their recommendations. The attached flyer details how comments can be submitted. The comment period will end on November 15, 2009.

Archbishop O'Brien and the Blue Ribbon Committee are asking all of us to pray the following prayer as their work continues throughout the school year.

PRAYER FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

*Loving God,
We thank you for the mission given us
by Jesus to go and make disciples of all
nations.
Guide us throughout this year as we
study and reflect on the mission of
Catholic schools.
Bless our school communities and all
who support them.
Show us your will to strengthen and
enrich these schools that we may give
greater glory to you.
We ask all these things through your
son, Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy
Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

FIRST FRIDAY MASS

Our November school liturgy will be celebrated at 10:30 A.M. on Friday, November 6. Please join us! We will be in the company of the SAINTS.

TEACHER PAGES

Please utilize the teacher web pages for news and assignments! Go to quick links on our website, click on "teacher pages," and click on a teacher's name to open his or her web page! Our special area teachers are especially anxious for you to be made aware of all the exciting learning experiences that are taking place in their classrooms.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Much appreciation is extended to all the parents and teachers who participated in our parent-teacher conference day. The partnership between parents and teachers is essential for our students to become the best that they can be. Parents are encouraged to contact their children's teachers throughout the year to help maintain the partnership.

FIRST TRIMESTER ENDS

The first trimester of the 2009-2010 school year will end on Friday, November 13, 2009. Progress Reports will be sent home with students on Tuesday, November 24. Parent Access will close on Friday, November 13. Parent Access will re-open after the T-1 Progress Reports have been sent home and teachers have had an opportunity to enter T-2 grades.

12:30 DISMISSAL DAYS

School will be dismissed at **12:30 P.M.** on November 13 and 25.

LAST CALL FOR BONANZA TICKETS

If you have not purchased a ticket to the SMCS Bonanza on November 7, please consider either purchasing a ticket or selling a ticket to a friend or relative. We still need to sell approximately ninety more tickets in order to truly

make this event a success. Many of our favorite priests, including Father Collin, Father James, Father Limmer, Father Steve Hook, and Father Kevin Mueller are offering great silent auction items. Buy a ticket and show your support. You do not need to be present to win, but the evening promises to be full of fun and fellowship!

RUMMAGE SALE

The Rummage Sale was a great success, earning \$5,902.15! We really want to thank Mary Grove for her organizational skills, her time, and her dedication which benefit Saint Mary Catholic School. All the volunteers who made donations, assisted with sales, worked in the kitchen, monitored our hallways, or helped with set-up and clean-up should be commended. This event not only earns money for our school but provides the community with a great service. If you were unable to help with October's sale, please mark your calendars for our spring rummage sale on May 6, 2010, and become one of the rummage sale enthusiasts. **We truly need parent support in order to continue to make this event a success!**

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

Christmas ornaments crafted by no one other than **Sister Margaret Mary** will soon be available for sale. Sister Margaret has been spending time at the Mother House making the ornaments to benefit Tuition Assistance. Order forms are forthcoming.

CONGRATULATIONS

Good S.A.M.s

I want to congratulate our Good S.A.M.s for October: Christopher Radley, Jack

Minahan, Morgan McMahon, Andrew Stine, Frederick Farah, Zara Ahmed, Emma Shearer, Bryce Shirley, Jason Marinelli, Colin Sappenfield, Lauren Rappaport, Ellen Joliet, and Anthony Bracken. Thanks for your **S**ervice, **A**ttitude, and **M**anners!

SUMMER READING CLUB

Congratulations to the following SMCS students for participating in the Washington County Free Library summer reading program: Donny Borum, Michael Cosey, Brandon Kijowski, Matthew O'Neil, Emma Ortiz, Maddie Ortiz, Alice Poffenberger, Elise Schmitt, and Nick Schmitt. Reading is such a gift!

HSA News

BAKE SALES

Grade 5 will have a bake sale on November 4 and Grade 8 will hold a bake sale on November 18.

SOCIAL HOUR

Middle School Social Hour will be held from 3:00 to 4:30 on November 6 and 20.

SCRIP

Last year, St. Mary families saved over \$25,000 in tuition by participating in SCRIP. SCRIP dates for this month are November 2, 16, and 30.

THANKSGIVING LUNCH

Our Thanksgiving Lunch is scheduled for Thursday, November 12. All are welcome to join in this special day as we come together as a community and give thanks for all our blessings. The deadline for reservations is November

4. Thank you, Mrs. Dorsey, for chairing this delicious event.

Lunch Shift Schedule by last name:

11:00 A to F

11:45 G to Q

12:30 R to Z

SCHOOL DIRECTORIES

A big thank you is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Dellaposta and Mrs. Elbin for printing the directories. What an absolutely convenient way to contact St. Mary families!

Phase I Raffle Ticket Fundraiser

Many thanks is extended to Mrs. Jackie Swarner for coordinating this fundraiser and to our priests and sisters for faithfully picking the winning ticket each week. Congratulations to the following October winners:

(\$50) Week 1: Keitha Sponaugle

(\$50) Week 2: Tina Castell

(\$50) Week 3: Shirley Graff

(\$100)Week 4: Dolores Hearn

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

OCTOBER TAG DAY

The October TAG DAY raised \$250 in donations for *The Contemporary School of the Arts and Gallery, Inc.*, on Franklin Street. The student council appreciates the generosity of our families.

MORE GENEROSITY

The support for our extra October TAG Day was wonderful. \$260 was raised to benefit *Breast Cancer Awareness*. It was great to see so much PINK!

CANNED FOOD DRIVE

During November, our student council hopes to collect and donate 1,000 cans

of food to the Hagerstown Food Bank. Homeroom representatives will collect canned goods between November 11 and 19. Students who donate 3 canned goods will be able to come out of uniform on Friday, November 20. The theme for the TAG DAY will be announced later.

READ-A-THON

On Tuesday, November 10, St. Mary Catholic School faculty and students will read for 100 minutes in order to earn money to purchase Christmas gifts for needy families. Through total school participation in this READ-A-THON, this worthy endeavor will enable our students to earn money that will be used to make this Christmas a happier time for families whom each grade adopts through the Salvation Army Angel program. Students will be receiving more information directly from their homeroom teachers. For now, just help your child gather enough good books to read for 100 minutes!

OTHER NEWSWORTHY ITEMS

SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHORUS TO PERFORM WITH

THE MARYLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Our SMCS Chorus has been invited to perform with the Maryland Symphony Orchestra for their *Home for the Holidays Christmas Concerts* on Saturday, December 19, at 7:00 P.M. and on Sunday, December 20, at 3:00 P.M. Reserve your tickets by calling (301)797-4000.

H1N1 UPDATE

- The H1N1 nasal spray vaccine will be administered in school by the health department on November 2 to students in K-5 whose parents returned the completed consent form.
- Paper cup dispensers have been installed on at least one water fountain on each floor.
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands and use the hand sanitizer that is available in each room.
- Many thanks to those parents who keep their children home until they are fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- I know as a parent you worry about your child having to miss days of school, but please rest assured that teachers will work with students who are absent.
- We are truly blessed to have a nurse on staff full time!

HEALTH QUESTIONS?

If you have any health-related questions, please contact Ms. Paula Radley at (301) 733-1184, EXT. 104, or by email, radley@stmarycatholicsschool.org.

DRESS CODE REMINDERS

SHOES

The students did a great job transitioning from the warm weather uniform to the regular school uniform. I am asking that parents ensure that their children only wear sneakers on gym day. Please refer to pages 15 and 16 in the handbook for a description of the color and type of shoe appropriate for school.

HAIR POLICY

Please schedule haircut appointments in a timely fashion to ensure that students are in compliance with the hair policy explained on page 17 of the handbook. As I explain to the students, students who do not follow the rules for the hair policy are not being fair to those students who do follow the rules.

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAYS

HELP! Parents, please advise your daughters on their selection of clothes for out-of-uniform days. Tops that are low cut should not be worn to school.

SAFETY CONCERNS

A concern has been raised over dogs at dismissal time. Parents are asked not to take their dogs out of the cars during dismissal time.

Also, parents are asked to refrain from parking on the clinic lot. Our children are put at risk walking to cars in this area. Thank you for all the support and cooperation that is shown each day during dismissal!

SMCS HOODIES

There is still time to order your SMCS hoodie or the special edition 135 Anniversary gym t-shirt. Larger sizes for adults are now available. **Sweatshirts are made-to-order, so we are unable to exchange sizes once your order is placed.** Mrs. Milsom has samples of sizes. You are encouraged to have your child try on the sample prior to placing your order.

STORY/CRAFT TIME

Our next story/craft time for 3 to 5 year olds is scheduled for November 18, from 8:30 to 9:30. Please contact Mrs. Milsom if interested.

PICTURE RETAKES

Lifetouch will retake pictures on November 4, at 8:45 A.M. The entire packet must be returned on the 4th in order to have a student's picture retaken. Students who were absent on picture day may obtain an order form in the office to have their pictures taken. Orders must be prepaid. Students having their pictures retaken are to come out of uniform. All students who were absent on picture day will have their pictures taken for the Memory Book even if not purchasing a packet.

SISTER CORDA'S MINI-STORE

Sister Corda can be found each morning from 8:00 to 8:15 sitting on the bench outside my office selling pens, book socks, theme tablets, and copy books. Prices are reasonable. All proceeds benefit the student council.

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Eighth grade Confirmation Candidates who are parishioners of St. Mary Catholic Church will go on a pilgrimage to McSherrytown on **Monday, November 2**. Students are to meet in the Parish Center at **6:30 A.M.** Students will return at **5:00 P.M.**

FIRST EUCHARIST MEETING REMINDER

Children who are parishioners of St. Mary Catholic Church and will be receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time this year are expected to attend a meeting with their parents on Thursday, November 12, from 7 to 9 P.M.

CHRISTMAS SHOWS

- The Christmas Show starring the students in grades two through five will be Thursday,

- December 10, at 7 P.M.
- The First Grade Christmas Alphabet will be at 1:45 on Friday, December 11.
 - The Kindergarten Christmas Play will be at 1:30 on Monday, December 14.

ADJUST YOUR CLOCKS

Daylight Savings Time ends this weekend. Remember to turn your clocks back one hour.

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.

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.

BABYSITTING NEEDED

One of our families is in need of before-school babysitting for a St. Mary student. The family would like to drop the child off at a SMCS family's home at 7:00 A.M. and have that family transport the child to school. If you are interested, please contact the school office for more information.

IN YOUR PRAYERS

Please remember Mary Elvira Gibbons (mother of Mrs. Suzy Cochran) 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