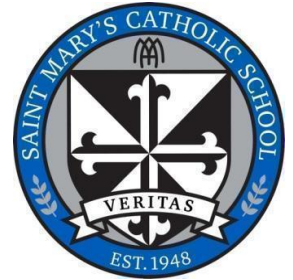




Rooted in the Dominican Tradition since 1948!
ST. MARY'S SPARTAN NEWSLETTER

Volume 16
December 7, 2016



MISSION: To provide a Catholic education that nurtures students' hearts and minds to become servant leaders in an ever changing world.

Front Office Corner

Office hours 7:30am-3:30pm and by appointment.

School Mass every Wednesday at 8:30am (or Fridays for the First Friday of each month)

Upcoming:

Dec 8: Mass for the Feast of Immaculate Conception; Santa pictures after Mass; Chess Club til 4pm

Dec 9: Christmas concert @7pm (Grades 1-5)

Dec 12: Home and School Mtg @6:30pm (library)

Dec 13: Budding Botanists F/T (Lauritzen Gardens); Jr Legion of Mary

Dec 14: Mass; Reconciliation (grades 6-8); PK Program @2pm; Freddy's Food Night

Dec 15: NO CHESS

Dec 16: Christmas parties in classrooms

The Advent prayer services are always inspiring. When the students hold up their lights in the darkened gym we are reminded to be a light for others. As I mentioned last week in the Principal's Corner, the 8th grade students are spending time doing an activity each day to spread the love of Christ and to cheer our hearts. In the past week they have added small signs with jokes, donated change for their Advent Family Project, chosen someone to forgive for a past hurt, and tomorrow will draw staff names and pray for that person.

When we choose to take the time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ as the 8th graders are doing, the Christmas feast is so much richer. I hope you'll be able to set aside your daily worries and cares to experience the anticipation and joy of Advent. Have a blessed week.

Patricia Wallinger

Dr. Trish Wallinger, Principal



School Reconciliation Service. St. Mary's School will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation for grades 3, 4 & 5 today after the 8:30 a.m. Mass, and will celebrate for grades 6, 7 & 8 next Wednesday, December 14th after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

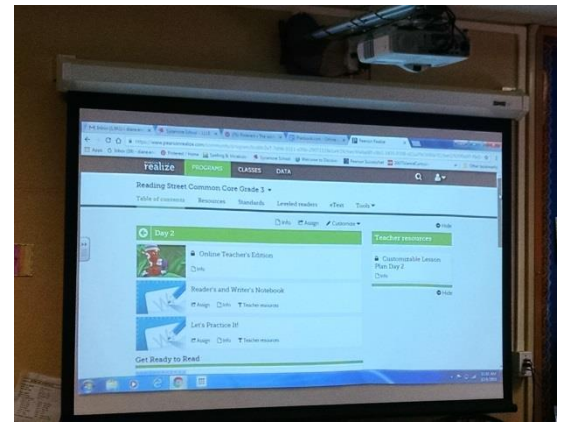
No Homework Room this Friday, December 9th, due to the Christmas Concert preparations.

Saturday School Update for 8th Graders. For second semester, there will be no more Saturday School opportunities for 8th graders as they begin their transition from middle school to high school.

Technology Update. St. Mary's received a substantial grant through the *Ignite the Faith* campaign for technology upgrades. Re-wiring is in progress and the hardware install is 75% complete. This project is scheduled to be completed January 4th.

Impact: So far, 14 of 17 new projectors have been installed in classrooms that will link to chromebooks and other eResources offering a dynamic and innovative learning environment. Wifi connections have been strengthened so they are faster and have more reliable connections.

Right top: See a picture of one of the new projectors. Teacher is clicking through website and demonstrating for students.



Right bottom: Students using chromebooks in classroom.



Weather Cancellations. It is time to review St. Mary's cancellation policy. If Bellevue Public Schools cancels classes or evening activities due to inclement weather, we will not have classes or activities that day/evening at St. Mary's School either. We will send *Beacon* notifications (texts) and all school emails as needed.

If you are concerned about the weather and we have not cancelled, it is a parent's discretion to decide not to attend class if you feel you can not safely drive to or from school. If this occurs, please let the office know: 402-291-1694 or cathy.braxton@stmarysbellevue.com. All announcements will be broadcast on local news stations.

Student Greeters! Thanks for volunteering and representing St. Mary's School by handing out Advent Bookmarks. This is an annual tradition that our parishioners look forward to and a great gift that you give them during the Advent Season. We appreciate your commitment to service and community. Thanks to our student greeters: Luis Carranza, Gianna Carranza, Ayla Lee, Abby Lee, Michael Giles, Grace Kolesik, Delaney Meinders, Bryce Frailey, Gavin Balanay, Anna Mlnarik, Sam Wilwerding, Katie Braxton, Caleb Braxton, Josh Braxton, Natalie Manahan, Rachel Schaffart, Zachary Schaffart, Nick Swiecicki, Christian Swiecicki, Nick Kouba, Joe Kouba, Daniel Wessling, Matthew Wessling, Bennet Achterhoff, Ayden Achterhoff, Lindsey Wessling, Sophia Zieno, Preston Ames, Judith Kadjo, Carson Ames, Presley Haas, and Greyson Ames. Thanks to the adult supervisors: Giovanna Zermeno, Joanna Lee, Debi Giles, Gene Meinders, Joanna Meinders, Tara Frailey, Joe Mlnarik, Alan Swiecicki, Melissa Swiecicki, Willie Wessling, Brenda Achterhoff, Jeremy Achterhoff, Kim Zieno, Chantal Kadjo and Allison Haas.

Project Hope Christmas Orders. Please remember Project Hope when doing your Christmas shopping. What an easy way to support our school!

SCRIP Special Orders. As you know there are a wide variety of SCRIP cards we keep in stock, but some selections require special orders. With Christmas around the corner, there will be offerings of special orders. Please see attached order form for special orders. Orders received will be submitted on-line and filled approximately weekly.

Christmas Concert Reminder. The Christmas Concert, featuring the students in grades 1-5, is this Friday night, December 9, at 7:00 pm in Saint Mary's School Gym. Students should dress in church-appropriate clothing. Boys should wear pants and a shirt or sweater. Girls may wear pants or skirts and a top or sweater or a dress. Please keep in mind that they will sit on the risers at times, so skirts and dresses should be knee-length or longer. Tights are recommended, but not required. Tops and dresses must have sleeves that cover the shoulder. Girls may wear a short sweater or shrug if they wear a dress with straps or no sleeves. No shoes or boots with heels are allowed. Please wear shoes that are non-marking to protect the gym floor.

All students should meet their homeroom teachers in their classrooms no later than 6:30 pm to warm up and line up. Students will bring their coats, hats, gloves, etc. upstairs and leave them in their classrooms. A parent or older sibling must come upstairs after the concert to pick up their student as the children will process back upstairs after final song.

Except for seats purchased at the Silent Auction, seating in the gym is on a first come-first served basis. We will, however, reserve an area for elderly or disabled adults who cannot sit on the risers. The gym will be open at 6:15 pm.

Please note: Families are encouraged to attend the main 7pm performance; however, if you have a work conflict or otherwise can't attend the evening performance, please feel free to attend our final rehearsal at 2:20 pm that Friday, Dec 9th. **Please call the office in advance to RSVP because the bleachers are for students. We will need to put out chairs for any guests coming that afternoon.**

Basketball volunteer opportunity. We are in need of volunteers to help with taking admission money at the door on Sunday Dec 11th: 1:00, 2:05, 3:10& 4:15. We also need help with cleaning up the gym @ 5:00. If you can help in any way please let me know [402-881-2576](tel:402-881-2576) or megjen992000@yahoo.com, so we don't have too many people showing up at the same time.

Come out and support Spartan Basketball Boys

3rd - Sunday Dec 11 @ 3:10 at Holy Cross

5th - Saturday Dec 10 @ 10:05 at St. Philip Neri; Sunday Dec 11 @ 5:45 at St. Bridget

6th - Saturday Dec 10 @ 11:10 at ICC; Sunday Dec 11 @ 2:05 at St. Matthew

7th - No Games



Girls

3rd - Saturday Dec 10 @ 12:15 at Home

5th - Saturday Dec 10 @ 9:00 at Home

7th - No Games

4th - Saturday Dec 10 @ 11:10 at Home

6th - Sunday Dec 11 @ 2:05 at ICC

8th - No Games

All questions on practice times should go to the coach. For any other sports questions, please contact Jennifer Kreps, Athletic Director, at megjen992000@yahoo.com or 402-881-2576.

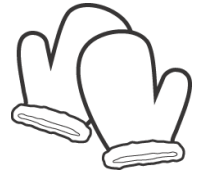
St Mary's Alumni Newsletter. St Mary's is blessed with all the support we receive from our Alumni. Periodically, the Alumni Relations team sends newsletter updates to our Alumni. Perhaps you are a parent here that was an Alum but you haven't had a chance to sign up for the newsletter...we would love to add you to our distribution. Check out the full Alumni newsletter on our school webpage at:

http://stmaryschoolbellevue.com/images/stories/project/docs/Alumni/Newsletters/SDC_AlumniNewsletter_2016Q4_v2.pdf

Mobile Food Pantry on Wednesday, December 21st, from 5-6:30pm. Pantry site is Mission Middle School in Bellevue, 2202 Washington Street, use the Wayne Street Entrance. It's best to get there early when they open! Please try to bring some grocery sacks, boxes or a laundry basket to put your food in. If you cannot - that's fine, too. Questions, please call Ted & Cindy Menzel at 402-292-2076.

Save the Date: Cultural Opportunity. St. Mary's School, in cooperation with United Methodist Church, will host the international touring group, Golden Gates, a company of youth and young adults who will perform a program of Russian and Georgian folk dance on Saturday, January 7, 2017 at 7 pm in the school gym. This program is for all ages and includes some opportunities for audience participation! There is no admission cost, but a free will donation is requested to help defray the costs of travel and expenses. Don't miss this one-night-only event. You can check out Golden Gates at the Moscow Nights website: www.russianfolk.com

Outside Recess Guidelines During winter months (reference: school handbook, page 35). The administration, faculty and staff would like to encourage students to be physically active during recess – especially when there is snow! This means that students will need to have appropriate snow gear to wear during recess. This includes SNOW boots (not fashion boots), snow pants, mittens or gloves, hats and heavy coats. All students should come prepared each day to be outside during recess; this would include heavy coats, mittens and a hat. For girls, please have them bring snow pants or wear heavy tights/leggings for recess- those little bare legs get cold quickly. Students will be encouraged to actively play, which may include climbing on the snow piles, making snow angels and building snow sculptures. It will not include throwing snow. Only those students who are wearing appropriate snow gear, including: snow pants, heavy jacket, hat, mittens or gloves and snow boots, will be allowed to be on the snow piles. Reminder: Bring school shoes to wear inside. If anyone has old towels to donate to put wet gear on, please send them in!



2016-2017 Yearbook. That's right...we are now taking orders for our upcoming yearbook. The current price is \$18 with orders from Nov 1-Jan 27, 2017. After Jan 31st the price will be \$20.

Junior High Youth Ministry (7th & 8th Grade). Please mark your calendars for the following dates in December:
Wednesday, December 7th - Jr. High Large Group Meeting - 5:30-6:30 p.m. - School Gym
Wednesday, December 14th - Jr. High Advent Party - 7:00- 8:30 p.m. - Parish Center



Winter Giving Tree. We are collecting winter attire to help those who are in need. We are accepting new hats, mittens/gloves and/or gently used coats/jackets, snow pants, boots and blankets. If you are able to help, we would appreciate it a great deal. We will use some for children in our school who do not have winter wear as well as send the rest to St. Vincent DePaul Society which helps families in need. Thank you so much.

Santa Photos. Picture orders/money will be accepted for Santa pictures up to December 7th (order form is going home today to all classes). All proceeds will be used to help families in need. Thank you to our 8th grade class and the Student Activities Council as they work to make Christmas special for others.



the difference **1** can make.

Did you know there is a mobile app for boxtops? IN ADDITION to cutting them out and sending them in, St. Mary's can earn extra points on certain products if people purchase them and save their receipt in the app. We still are collecting the regular Box Tops...this is just an additional way to earn extra money for the school. One of our parents used the app this week and added \$1.50 to the school's account just by uploading receipts for stuff she would normally buy anyway. Please see attached flyer.

Reminder about FAMILY FARE RECEIPTS. St. Mary's School is also collecting Family Fare (formerly No Frills) receipts. For every \$150,000 St. Mary's collects in receipts, the school will receive \$1,000 in cash. Receipts can be dropped off at school, in the box at the SCRIP table (main entrance of church), or in the collection basket at Mass or at the rectory.

Spring Auction Acquisitions Needs. Below is a list of needs for this week to help with auction...if any fit with your schedule, please email Cathy at cathy.braxton@stmaryschool.com or call 402-297-3385. Someone to pick up donation from:

--Mercy High School before 12/15/16.

--Skutt High School after the first of the year

--Ruth Sokolof Theater. 1340 Mike Fahey St., just a block west of the TD Ameritrade Stadium. Box office is open every day, 30 minutes prior to show times which are posted on our website (www.filmstreams.org). The packet will be under St. Mary's. *Volunteer will need to check show time to see if pick-up time works for schedule.

Home and School Association

Faculty/Staff Christmas Gift Collection. Christmas is only a few weeks away. It is a perfect time to express our thanks to our teachers and staff for all they do for our children. To keep in the spirit of the season (in lieu of individual gifts families might give), we are asking that each family prayerfully consider making an offering of \$5, \$10, \$15, \$20 or any amount to demonstrate our gratitude. The money will be pooled together and distributed as cash to the various faculty and staff. **Return your gift in a sealed envelope labeled "Attn: Craig Ames - Faculty/Staff Christmas Gift" to the school office as soon as possible, but no later than this Friday, Dec 9th.** The gifts will be presented at the Faculty/Staff Christmas Luncheon on December 19th. Cash or checks are welcome. Please make checks out to "St. Mary's Home & School Association" and in the memo include "Christmas Gift". Thank you for your generous support of our faculty and staff and in showing our appreciation for all they do for our children. May God bless you and your family this Christmas!

December General Membership Meeting. Everyone in the school community is a member of the Home & School Association. Thank you to all of you who are active members! We love to hear what you are thinking (We really do). Our next H&S meeting is **Monday, December 12th at 6:30 pm** in the school library. We look forward to your attendance! Remember that attendees are able to log one service hour for participating. *Please note, December calendar sent home incorrectly listed the meeting date on ~~December 5th~~. Please pen and ink this correction on your school calendar.

December Food Night. Our next food night is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 14th Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakhurgers in Papillion (Shadow Lake) from 5-9 p.m.** St. Mary's School will make 10% of all gross sales during that time.

Christmas Classroom Parties. Christmas parties are scheduled for **Friday, December 16th starting at 2:15 p.m.** Room parents should be reaching out to classroom parents for help shortly.

SIDEWALK TRAINING CLASS FOR PRAYER PARTNERS AND SIDEWALK COUNSELORS. Thousands of people are alive today because someone just like you reached out to their mothers with love and truth as they were entering abortion centers. This legal and effective practice is called Sidewalk Counseling and it is done by Christians all over the world. Join us to learn how you can provide lifesaving counsel to mothers in a time of need. Saturday, December 10th from 8:30-11:00 a.m. in St. Mark's. Cost is \$10; to sign up or for more info, call Judy Mansidor (parent of Raymond, Josie and Lucia) @ 402-541-8074 or email judyrizzo@yahoo.com.

CAROLS AROUND AN EMPTY MANGER. Please join with others Saturday, December 17th from 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. for our annual 'Carols Around an Empty Manger' outside the abortion center in Bellevue. Hot chocolate and cookies and fellowship to follow at St. Marks Hall. In the pro-life community, singing around an empty manger has a dual purpose: first, it raises awareness of the countless "empty mangers" left by the abortion holocaust. More importantly however, the tradition of singing carols proclaims the hope and victory ultimately heralded by the birth of the Christ Child. Please join Metro Pro-Life Advocates and Nebraskans United for Life in this festive and family friendly event.

Cheer/Dance Teem Clinic. Marian is hosting a cheer/dance team clinic for girls in grades 2nd through 5th on Sunday, January 15, 2017. Interested, contact St. Mary's office and we'll get you an info flyer. Deadline to register: Jan 1, 2017.

Healthy Playground Make-over. Spread the word! Anyone can enter the below sweepstakes on behalf of St. Mary's school. Enter once a day, every day until March 24, 2017. The more entries we have, the greater chance it has to win! <http://www.togethercounts.com/healthy-playground-makeover> . For school name, type "St. Mary's Bellevue near Offutt AFB."

Parish Family Afternoon Movie: Mulan. Come on November 13th, from 2-4 p.m. in the Parish Center. Blankets & pillows are welcome to get comfy!