

Fall 2014

Upcoming Events:

Dec 19 - Jan 5 - Christmas Break

Dec 21 - Alumni Event - 12:30pm Mass, reception, & school tours

Jan 26-30 - Catholic Schools Week (1/30 - TALENT SHOW)

Mar 28 - "Spring for the Children" Benefit Auction

Apr 20 - Alumni Scholarship Applications Due

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Contact Information:

School
903 W. Mission Avenue
Bellevue, NE 68005
402-291-1694
stmaryschoolbellevue.com

School Principal
Cheryl Castle
402-291-1694, ext. 8
cheryl.castle@stmarysbelleveue.com

Parish Pastor
Fr. Dennis Hanneman
402-291-1350
hannemand@stmarysbelleveue.com

Alumni Relations
Christina (Hascall) Legner ('91)
402-598-1262
alumni@stmarysbelleveue.com

SMS Mission:

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



St. Mary's School Alumni Newsletter



Principal's News

Dear Families and Friends of St. Mary's School,

The 2014-2015 school year began on August 12th. We are blessed to have 205 students attending St. Mary's School this year, 28 of whom are the children of St. Mary's alumni (and 10 of those are also the grandchildren of alumni)!

This year we welcomed three new teachers. Mrs. Michelle Storch teaches middle school math, 7th & 8th grade social studies, and serves as 6th grade homeroom teacher. She has five years of teaching experience and is excited about being at St. Mary's. She and her family moved from Utah last school year. Her husband, Steve, is stationed at Offutt AFB and their five children attend St. Mary's. Michelle was recently selected by the Secretary of the Air Force as Outstanding Air Force Spouse of the Year! Mrs. Jennifer Thompson teaches middle school science, 6th grade social studies, and serves as 7th grade homeroom teacher. She recently graduated from College of Saint Mary and is excited about her new teaching career. John & Jennifer have two children at St. Mary's. Mrs. Deborah Van Huffel is our new librarian. She is currently working on her Masters degree in library science and enjoys trying out new ideas in her library classes. Her husband, John, is stationed at Offutt AFB and three of their four children attend St. Mary's. Their oldest graduated from St. Mary's last year and is now at Duchesne.

Our students were very excited when they saw their new playground in August. Fr. Hanneman blessed the playground and recognized the Home & School Association for their effort and dedication in completing this project. The excitement grew as everyone took their turn on the new equipment. Even Fr. Hanneman couldn't resist sliding down the new slides!

This year, the students and staff of St. Mary's School are committed to being peacemakers in their community as part of their support of Pope Francis and his request that all people pray for peace in the world. As part of that commitment, the students and staff say the Prayer of St. Francis at the beginning of each school day. We also ask Mary, Queen of Peace, to pray for us each time we see her picture or statue. We hope to be good models of peacemakers, using St. Francis and Mary as our guides.

We continue to work on AdvancED opportunities for improvement. Our strategic plan has been approved by the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office. We have also created a comprehensive professional development plan for teachers and it has also been approved by the Catholic Schools Office. Teachers will be learning about differentiation, curriculum mapping, effective classroom instruction, and how to use data to improve teaching and learning. Examples of development underway include: teachers are learning to use Acuity testing to help improve math instruction. Teachers will use the information to chart student mastery of standards and individual math achievement and growth. On September 19th, the teachers attended an Archdiocesan-wide conference in West Point, NE, to collaborate with other teachers and learn how to interpret tests and improve instruction. On September 29th, the teachers spent the day at Engaging Technologies, learning how to use mimios in classroom instruction. They have also learned how to find, design, and enhance lessons using document cameras and microscopes.

The new year has been exciting so far and full of opportunity! The staff and students look forward to more learning and growing in faith and knowledge. We want to thank the St. Mary's School Community, including our Alumni, for their continued support of our school. You help make our school a great success—yesterday, today, and tomorrow!

God bless,
Mrs. Castle

Fall 2014

SMS Alumni News—Page 2

Alumni with Current Students at St. Mary's School:

We currently have 15 alumni with 28 children currently at St. Mary's! The asterisks denote those below that are also grandchildren of alumni!

Dane' (Huck) Ames ('86) - 4

Cindy (Wessling) Donahue ('80) - 1

Sean Giles ('04) - 1

Suzy (Peters) Godwin - 1

Patrick Kettleon ('95) - 1* (Debbie (Cook) Kettleon ('69))

Breanna Koch ('04) - 1

Patrick Kouba ('77) - 2

Joanna (Jungers) Lee ('89) - 3* (Dean Jungers ('56))

Christina (Hascall) Legner ('91) - 4* (Dean Hascall ('68))

Jennifer (Mayhan) Lillion-Targy ('85) - 1

Adrienne (Kibler) McGargill ('85) - 1

Mary Ellen (Vacek) Reckmeyer ('74) - 1

Alan Swiecicki ('89) - 2

Willie Wessling ('87) - 3

Janet (Jungers) Yale ('91) - 2* (Dean Jungers ('56))

Alumni Event - December 21, 2014 12:30pm-4pm

Though there has been a few informal get-togethers here and there and the Class of 1988 had a reunion in 2013, there has not been a formal St. Mary's School Alumni Event since the 60th Anniversary Celebration in March 2009...so it's time!!

Please join us on **Sunday, December 21, 2014 for 12:30pm Mass** at St. Mary's Church (Fr. Dennis Hanneman will preside), followed by a **reception in the school gym and tours of the school!** We welcome any and all former students, graduates, alumni parents or grandparents, and their families!

We want to be sure to have enough seating, refreshments, and tour guides, so please be courteous and **RSVP by Monday, December 15th** to Christina (Hascall) Legner ('91) at alumni@stmarysbelleveue.com/402-598-1262.

Congratulations to the Newest Alumni - SMS Class of 2014

Welcome to the newest members of the St. Mary's Alumni Community! The St. Mary's School Class of 2014 members and the high schools, if known, they are attending are:

Jenna Bellmyer (Bellevue East), Madeline Breathnach (Bellevue West), Diego Cox (Creighton Prep), Kellee Halliburton (Gross Catholic), Rene Hasiak (Bellevue West), Ryan Kontos, Megan Kreps (Gross Catholic), Adriana Penalozza (Bellevue West), Matthew Stephans (Bellevue West), Maggie Targy (Bellevue West), Isabel Van Huffel (Duchesne Academy), Nicholas Walker (Bellevue East), Joseph Walther (Bellevue East).

A new tradition began with this class. The Alumni Relations Committee worked with them to design a Class of 2014 Alumni t-shirt that was given to them at the Friday, May 16, 2014 8th Grade Banquet (remember yours?!) at the Knights of Columbus #6192 Hall. They got to choose overall design and color, as well as a phrase that was meaningful to them. The back of the shirt also includes the class list.



We are proud of them all and look forward to their future accomplishments!

Alumni Scholarships - 2014 Winners & 2015 Info

Last year the St. Mary's Home & School Association started offering scholarships to alumni. The three scholarships and the results are listed below:

Alumni Attending Catholic High School (Freshman Year) - awarded to Kellee **Halliburton ('14)**, who is now a freshman at Gross Catholic High School

Alumni Attending Catholic College/University (Freshman Year) - awarded to **Tommy Walther ('10)**, who is now a freshman at Creighton University

Alumni Entering Service Role/Non-Profit Work (Graduating College Senior) - no applications were received, so was not awarded

These opportunities will be offered for the 2015 graduates as well. Information will be in the St. Mary's parish bulletin and on the school website (stmarysschoolbelleveue.com) starting in January!

St. Mary's School Alumni Relations Survey – 2014 Q4

Dear Alumni,

I want to hear from you! This is an effort to further develop St. Mary's School Alumni Relations and I value your perspective and voice. This survey is being included in the Fall 2014 Alumni Newsletter. An electronic version of the newsletter and this survey will be available on the school website (stmarysschoolbellevue.com). Thank you in advance for your time and input! Please reach out to me at any time with questions/comments/concerns.

Sincerely,
Christina (Hascall) Legner ('91)
St. Mary's School – Bellevue, NE – Alumni Relations
E: alumni@stmarysbelleveue.com
M: 402-598-1262

Please complete this survey and return it **by January 30, 2015** to: St. Mary's School
Attn: Christina Legner – Alumni Relations
903 W. Mission Avenue
Bellevue, NE 68005

1. Name (First, Middle, (Maiden), Last):

2. St. Mary's School Alumni Relationship (indicate which one(s) apply(ies)):

Former Student &/or Graduate (year(s) attended: _____, graduation year: _____)

Alumni Parent or Grandparent (circle which) (student name(s), years attended, and graduation year(s))

Current School Parent or Grandparent (circle which) (student name(s) & 2014-2015 grade(s))

3. Contact Information: Address, Phone Number(s), Email Address:

Street _____; City _____; State: _____; Zip Code: _____

Home: _____ - _____ - _____; Cell: _____ - _____ - _____; Email address: _____

4. High School(s) Attended, Years, and Graduation Year:

5. College(s) Attended, Years, Graduation Year, and Major(s)/Minor(s):

6. Professional/Career Highlights (e.g., former/current employer, position, significant accomplishments):

7. Favorite St. Mary's Teacher (name, what grade they taught, which school year that was, & why):

8. Favorite St. Mary's Memory

9. Favorite St. Mary's Grade &/or "Special" (e.g., P.E., Music, Computer/Technology, Spanish, Library, Art—include teacher name)

10. Favorite St. Mary's hot lunch

11. Advice for Current St. Mary's Students

12. Are you interested in helping with any of the following:

Alumni Relations:

Activities (circle all that apply: sports/social/service) **Class Captain** (at least 1 per graduation year)

Public Relations (circle all that apply: stories/website/newsletter/emails)

Database (development, enhancement, reporting, maintenance)

Spartans Share (come into the school as a Guest Reader or Speaker, etc.—your story/experience/time can impact current students!)

Fundraising:

Benefit Auction (circle all that apply: Donor (item, gift certificate, money); Advertiser; Sponsor; Attendee)

Adopt-A-Student

Targeted School Project (circle all that apply: Religion, Science, Math, Reading, Language Arts, Sports, P.E., Music, Computer/Technology, Spanish, Library, Art)

Other (please list what you have in mind)

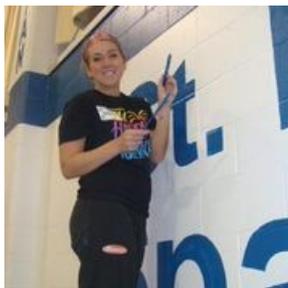
13. Names & Contact Information for other St. Mary's Alumni (e.g., siblings, classmates, etc.)?

14. Do you have any photos (e.g., candid shots, individual school portrait or class photos, etc.) or yearbooks that you are willing to share? Note: These will be copied and returned to you. Yes Maybe No

15. Is there anything else you'd like to ask or share?

Alumna Kaitlyn Embury ('04) WOWS as Gym Mural Artist:

Many of you recall the "old gym", the one that was too small to host home games in, but served us well for lunch, gym classes, practices, and dances. In 1994 the old gym became the computer lab and library and a new gym was built. It's been improved over the last several years, including new lunch tables, bleachers, floor, and sound system. However, it was missing something that let people know where they were, who we are, and what we stand for. Not anymore!! Thanks to the generosity of an alumna who funded the effort and another alumna who was hired to complete the work, Kaitlyn Embury ('04), we have revitalized our gym/lunchroom/multi-purpose space with art! Come to the Sunday, December 21st Alumni Event and see for yourself. Go to Kaitlyn's studio, KT Artistry, at the Hot Shops to see more of her work!



Teacher Spotlights

Mrs. Diane Embury - 3rd Grade Teacher



Years Teaching: 25 years at St. Mary's

Family: Married to Bob for 29 years; 2 daughters—Kaitlyn ('04) and Kristin ('09)—both attended SMS PK-8th; 8-year-old Westie and 2-year-old Golden Retriever

What she enjoys most about teaching: "It is so fun to come each day and see how excited the kids are to see their friends in the morning! Teaching allows you to let your creative flair flow. Every year I seem to learn new and better hints about teaching."

Why she chooses to teach at a Catholic School: "We are a continuation of the values taught at home. There is that wonderful warmth that comes from praying with your students each morning, sharing their needs, yet including the needs of others less fortunate. St. Mary's instills the need for service to the environment around us, as well as gratitude for our blessings. We are able to pray, learn, and play together."

What sets St. Mary's apart from other schools: "I feel so blessed that my own children were able to attend St. Mary's School. It builds a strong work ethic, with wonderful academic and study skills which helped them to be successful upon entering not only high school, but also college, and the work world. I love the fact that the teachers gather each morning before school for prayer, as well as work together in helpful ways. The special classes offered at St. Mary's are amazing and allow the students to bloom and work cooperatively in many different ways. I love the idea of the boys and girls being offered not only athletics afterschool, but also Chess Club, The Budding Botanist, Book Bowl, math, and Wits Clash competitions, and more. It was so inspiring to experience an author/illustrator this fall in our building. I think St. Mary's nurtures many sides of the students."

Mrs. Becky Feagan - 4th Grade Teacher



Years Teaching: 21 years, all at St. Mary's!

Family: Married to Doug for 40 years; 3 sons—Ryan ('94), Austin ('98), and Sean ('01)—all graduates of SMS!

What she enjoys most about teaching: "I love seeing the kids light up when they learn something new. I love teaching the kids about our country, especially the past and how it's changed. I love creating special events with them, like Immigration Day, Pioneer Day, and various plays and reenactments of saints, etc. through the year. I enjoy being with them during the day and speaking to them about things that aren't in their books. I really enjoy our annual trip to Lincoln."

Why she chooses to teach at a Catholic School: "Freedom of religion. We can talk about God every day, every minute of every day. God is a part of our day from its very start till we are ready to exit the room/school. We can say the pledge because we are one nation under God. We can have

religious men and women come to visit us and we can learn about being missionaries who serve God and his people and we can try to be missionaries in a small way."

What sets St. Mary's apart from other schools: "The people. As a school parent I admired the teachers. I thought they were the best. The teachers truly enjoy teaching and being with the students. When an opening came up for 4th grade, I couldn't wait to be a part of the "family". The staff/faculty truly care and pray for each others' needs. We are there for each other when there's a death or an illness. Our family has changed through the years with changes in staff and faculty but we become "family" again and again, gaining strength through the problems and tragedies that happen to members of our family."

Spartan Leaders' Spirit Shirts - Class of 2015

Besides the Alumni Shirt tradition that began with the Class of 2014, there is another new t-shirt tradition at St. Mary's School. Starting with the Class of 2015, we are now also giving the 8th grade class a special Spirit Day t-shirt at the start of the final St. Mary's school year. At the August 11, 2014 Back-to-School Night Ice Cream Social, the current twenty-five 8th graders were presented with their black and royal blue t-shirts and told that the whole school community was looking forward to their contributions and leadership this year! They can wear the shirts on Spirit Days (1st Monday of the month), on designated field trips, during parades, and any other time they would like to! Like the class before them, they too will help design their Alumni Shirt that will be given to them at Banquet 2015.



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SMS Alumni
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Prayer of St. Francis:

*Lord, make me an instrument of
Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow
love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, harmony;
Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master, Grant that I may
not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to
understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are
pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born
to eternal life.*

Help Fund the Future! - Benefit Auction & Adopt-A-Student

Benefit Auction March 28th - Food, Fun, & Financial Impact!

The 21st Annual "Spring for the Children" Benefit Auction is Saturday, March 28, 2015 at the Live-stock Exchange Building in South Omaha. This is our school's largest fundraiser of the year and features a silent auction, dinner, drinks, a live auction, and fellowship with friends new and old.

The 2014 event—co-chaired by Craig & Dane' (Huck '86) Ames, Ed & Joanna (Jungers '89) Lee, and Janet (Jungers '91) Yale—profited **\$99,065**...22% more than the previous year's net of \$81,098! We'd love for you to be a part of Auction 2015! This year's co-chairs are Ed & Joanna Lee and Janet Yale again, together with Brian & Bernadette Miller. Drop off auction donations at the school office or rectory. There are also opportunities for ad space in the auction catalog and corporate sponsorship packages. Volunteers are needed too! Keep an eye on the auction website springforthechildren.org for more information and contact information. You can also indicate your auction interests on the survey included in this newsletter. We would love for you to be a part of this exciting and rewarding tradition!

Adopt-A-Student (AAS) - Help Educate OUR Tomorrow

St. Mary's School's commitment to prepare Christian Leaders for the community through academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment is as strong as ever. Some cannot afford a Catholic education, but we believe every child should have the opportunity to receive one. Currently, in the 2014-2015 school year, 23 of our families (42 children/20% of our students), are in critical need above and beyond what is received through the St. Mary's Tuition Assistance Program. YOUR gift can help bridge the gap and assure a great Catholic education for those in need. No gift is too small. YOU can make a difference! For more information please contact Principal Cheryl Castle (402-291-1694/cheryl.castle@stmarysbellevue.com). You can also indicate your AAS interest on the survey included in this newsletter and/or see the parish website (stmarysbellevue.com) for an online giving option.



Address Service Requested
St. Mary's School Bellevue
903 W. Mission Avenue
Bellevue, NE 68005