

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL FAMILY NEWSLETTER

January 18, 2012

Dear Parents,

On Monday the teachers of St. Joseph, Erie and our school spent a professional development day learning a variety of technology skills to align instruction, curriculum, and assessment. A teacher consultant from Sound Engineering guided us in new ways to use our interactive boards to enrich student learning. During her presentation, Ms. Abbey asked that I remind our parents that there are many educational enrichment activities on their free web site www.prometheanplanet.com. Teachers also reviewed the Curriculum Mapper where our electronic curriculum maps are located. During our discussion on mapping we explored the two new components which will be incorporated in our monthly maps; an area where lessons are linked to Catholic culture and the insertion of State Common Core Standards instead of MI Standards. The final component of our day was assessment. Teachers looked at the components in the new Data Manager Site which Riverside Publishers has introduced. This site will allow teachers to view both the yearly Iowa assessment scores and Iowa interim assessment scores. It will also be a source of information for data interpretation, practice tests, etc. I extend a special thank you to Ms. B and her nephews, who provided the attendees of our Professional Development Day with a variety of fruits, vegetables, and cheeses to munch on during the day.

The new calendar year is a time when some of our dedicated volunteer parents begin to address the upcoming reality that their youngest child is approaching high school. This means their family will be depart our school community and transition on to the adventures of high school and beyond. It is with deep gratitude that I extend my thanks to these individuals and so many others who have provided years of service to our school so that the *Tradition of Excellence* can continue for current and future students. Some of the parents who are leaving their volunteer positions in the next year or two want to provide training and assistance to their successors while they are still in our school community. As a result, I have been asked to inform our parents about the importance volunteers play in the success of our school. I also extend an invitation to all of our parents, especially those who are newer to our school community to consider becoming active volunteers in our school. Volunteers keep our "per pupi" expenses lower than many other schools and provide additional enrichment activities and events for our students. Please join our other volunteers by contacting these individuals for more information on how you can share your talents and skills in our school community.

Auction: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. Each year this fund raiser provides approximately \$400 towards the educational needs of each student at St. Patrick School. There are several open positions and we need you to join the 2012 auction team. An information evening will be held on Tuesday, January 24 at 7:00 p.m. Please attend this gathering to learn about the open positions, thank our 2011 auction workers, and celebrate the success of the 2011 auction!

PTO: Contact. The St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. PTO provides the extras for our students and staff. Halloween Carnival, school assembly, Santa Secret Shop, Field Day, and many other activities receive the support of our PTO members. The PTO executive committee would especially like to see more dads involved in this group.

School Committee: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. School Committee. Members of this group serve in an advisory position as representatives for parents and others interested in the success of the school. Elections are held in late spring and we are looking for parents who are interested in improving our school community.

School Website: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. This at-home job helps to keep the communication link strong between administration, teachers, parents, students, potential families and the students at large.

Scrip Gift Certificates Program: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. Currently the program is run through SMCC. A request has been made to have the Scrip program more available at SPS. If you are interested in helping to provide more Scrip service at SPS contact Karen.

CYO Sports: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. Athletic Director, is for you if you enjoy sports and can help our students in grades 5-8 with boys/girls basketball, co-ed soccer, girls volleyball, boys baseball and/or girls softball.

Boosters: Contact St. Patrick School 734-654-2522. The parents of sport team members and other supporters of grade school athletics work the concession stand at games to raise funds and reduce the costs for those youth playing on a CYO sport's team.

Willy Wonka School Musical: Contact Mrs. Grinn if you can help with drama and/or costumes. Contact Mrs. Grinn or Ms. Maher if you can help with the scenery. Mr. Vandergriff is in charge of the musical portion.

In late spring our school plans to provide an evening of information regarding the various volunteer positions and also thank those who served in a variety of volunteer positions for the 2011-2012 school year.

Staff and students have begun preparations for Catholic Schools Week beginning on Sunday, January 29th. Our theme is Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service. On Tuesday, January 24 a parent and myself will be taking several of our seventh and eighth graders to Blessed Sacrament Cathedral in Detroit, to participate in the Catholic Schools Week Mass. They will join several hundred Catholic School students along with our presider, Archbishop Vigneron in thanksgiving for the many blessings God has bestowed on our Catholic Schools as well as those who attend and those who ministry in these faith filled schools.

During Catholic Schools Week there will be a variety of dress days and many activities. Our Catholic Schools Week Mass will be on Tuesday, January 21. On Wednesday we are still seeking parents to join our staff for a volley ball game against the eighth graders in the afternoon. Throughout the day on Wednesday all grades will attend a gym class and use our hockey equipment that was donated to us by the Red Wings Hockey Association. On Friday, February 3, students will attend First Friday Mass. As a student at St. Patrick School, I remember returning from Mass and having the opportunity to buy a donut and milk afterwards in our classroom. This year after Mass we are still seeking donations from our parents for muffins or donut holes to provide students with a similar treat after the First Friday Mass. Please call the school office or return the "Help Needed" form at the end of last week's letter if you are able to assist. After First Friday Mass and until 6 p.m. parents and guests may view the School Science Fair in the gym. In the evening, Julie Jones has organized a movie night in the primary basement. The show begins at 6 p.m. We will end the week by joining together at the 5:30 Mass on Saturday, February 4 to celebrate Catholic School education and the contribution made by past, present, and future members of the Catholic school community. Students will also speak at each Mass to share highlight the value of receiving a Catholic School education. Today you are receiving a schedule for the events to assist in planning for this special week.

Congratulations to the school winners of the National Geography Bee held last Friday. Our first place winner, an eighth grader will now take a written test to see if he qualifies for the state finals. Our second place winner was a seventh grader and an eighth grader received third place. I also congratulate the other students who competed in the school finals. Thank you also to Mrs. Shuman for organizing this event.

Congratulations to our junior high students who will be attending the Monroe County Young Authors Conference on Wednesday, January 25th. The primary students will attend their Young Authors Conference on February 28th. The conference features author, Gary Schmidt. His is an author of children's literature and young adult fiction. He has received two John Newberry honor Awards for his novels, *Lizzie Bright and the Buckminster Boy*, and *Wednesday Wars*. His most recent novel is *Trouble*. During the conference our school authors will also share the books they have written.

Due to legal issues, our eighth grade students will no longer do a field trip to Cedar Point or any other non-educational trip. In place of this event an educational learning experience to Chicago is being planned. Our school has been invited to travel with St. Charles eighth grade students for this day long trip. It will include visits to Shedd Aquarium, the Field Museum of Natural History, and other places. Phillips Travel Service Tour will provide the charter bus and serve as our tour directors. Students will not spend the night in Chicago but return around midnight.

Our school community has received a thank you letter from a school family for the many acts of kindness you have shown since becoming aware of the students father who is suffering with an illness. "We greatly appreciate you thoughtfulness and prayers for our family that means the world to all of us. We believe that all of your prayers are really working, because our daughters' dad is still with us now, and yet we were told he should have been gone this past fall. We are so blessed to have people like you in our lives. You all have done so very much for our family this past year and we don't know what we would have done without your prayers and thoughtfulness. Again, thank you so much. God bless each and every one of you and your families."

WEEK AT A GLANCE:

Thursday, January 19

- Uniforms Orders Due

Friday, January 20

- French Enrichment Grades 7/8
- End of Second Quarter
- Grade 7/8 Dance at St. John's

Monday, January 23

- Math Club, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, January 24

- All School Mass, 8:00 a.m.
- AOD Catholic Schools Week Mass in Detroit
- Auction Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, January 25

- French Club, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

Friday, January 27

- Report Cards Distributed

Saturday, January 28

- Grade 2 Eucharist Enrollment, 5:30 p.m. Mass

SCIENCE FAIR PROJECT DROP OFF INFORMATION: Science Fair Projects will be due on Thursday, February 2nd. Set up of the projects will be from 12:15- 3:30 p.m. in the gym. If your child needs to bring the project in the morning, he or she may do so and take it to the upper elementary building. This schedule will allow our students to have their gym class in the morning with the tables for science fair set up at recess. In the afternoon, class and group projects will be set up as well as the individual projects. **Projects will not be accepted after 3:30 p.m. as this is when judging begins.** The gym will remain closed on Thursday and be open for viewing after the 8 a.m. First Friday Mass. Projects will be displayed until 6 p.m. on Friday, February 3rd when they should be picked up. **If students in grades 1-2-3-4-5 or 7 are doing an individual project, please notify the school office.**

JANUARY SERVICE PROJECT: We continue to collect used blue jeans that are in good condition for homeless teens and children. Your donation will go to the *Teens for Jeans* collection drive sponsored by Aeropostale clothing store. Jeans should be gently worn with no holes or stains. Any sizes of blue jeans are accepted. The jean day for those who participate will be Friday, January 27th.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR GRADES 7 & 8: These grades have several wonderful opportunities to strengthen their faith and values. Please contact Mrs. Grinn or Mrs. Cooper if you are able to assist with transporting students to any or all of these events or need additional information.

February 9th: Grades 7 & 8 will spend the day in retreat at St. Joe Erie with the 7th and 8th grade students there. During their retreat Father Fred will celebrate a special Mass with these students.

February 21: Grade 7 will travel to Sacred Heart Seminary for a Vocation Awareness Day. Other seventh graders from throughout the AOD will be joining them for this special day.

February 24: Grades 8 will be with 90 other student leaders from the AOD for a special day at Father Solanus Casey Center for a conference entitled *Holy Heroes in our Midst*.

DRESS FOR THE WEATHER: Remember that students should be prepared for outside recess with gloves, hats, scarves, and boots (when there is snow).

SMCC HIGH SCHOOL PLACEMENT TEST: There are two remaining opportunities to take the SMCC High School Placement Test. The test is offered on Saturday, February 4 or Saturday, March 24 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The cost is \$27 and students should bring two #2 pencils. No pre-registration is necessary. You may contact Jason Linster at 241-7633, x121 if you have any questions.

“GRAND MONDAYS” AT CARLETON BRANCH LIBRARY: All are invited to “Grand Mondays” at the Carleton Branch Library at 6:30 p.m. The following people will be performing: January 23 – Mrs. Judy Weisbecker and her students; January 30 – TBA; February 6 – Bethany Pifer; February 13 – Carol Sieb; February 27 – TBA; March 5 – Brandon Pintar; March 12 – TBA; March 19 – Sabrina Brnlich; and March 26 – Carol Sieb.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

We must build a new world, a far better world – one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected. *Harry S. Truman*

Ruth Meiring, Principal