



# St. Mary's News

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October 2009

Character Trait – Respect

Quotes –

“People who look down on other people do not end up being looked up to.” -Robert Half

## Note from the Principal

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Thank you to all of our volunteers. The first few months of the school year seem to have slipped by so quickly. Think about it. The end of the first reporting period ends next Friday and that signifies one quarter of the year will pass soon. In one month's time we will be on Thanksgiving break and thirty days later will have completed final exams for the semester as we enter our Christmas vacation.

With time flying by so quickly, I ask you to stop and reflect upon your commitment to volunteer in some capacity with the school. Volunteering at St. Mary's is more than a necessity; it is a commitment that was undertaken by each family at the time of enrollment. We do not have a quota of hours to be met nor are there disparaging words if an individual or family cannot volunteer due to competing family needs. Volunteerism to the school is from the heart. Therefore, as your schedule allows, please lend your time and talents to the school as the children are the recipients of your gifts.

For those of you who have supported the many activities we have had so far this year either by preparing the kids, volunteering, mentoring, or just making your presence known on campus, thank you.

## Character Trait

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Students will learn that respect is showing admiration for a person or having a sense of her or his good qualities. Respect comes in all shapes and sizes. Please discuss the impact of prejudicial attitudes and behavior by sharing any experiences you have had with discrimination (racism, gender bias, discrimination against the handicapped, etc.). Read books about historical figures who battled discrimination or bias such as Susan B. Anthony or Martin Luther King, Jr. Read about prominent leaders who worked to eliminate the prejudice or discuss what obstacles people who are affected by prejudice or discrimination may face. Challenge your child to choose his or her own positive role models.

Books:

*Miss Nelson Is Missing (K – 4)* The kids in Room 207 take advantage of their teacher's good nature until she disappears and they face a strict substitute.

*Miss Rumphius (K – 3)* Deciding in childhood that she would seek adventure in faraway places, Miss Rumphius fulfills her dream and then has one more thing to do—something to make the world more beautiful.

*Gilda Gets Wise (4 - 6)* Gilda the hen goes to stay with her sister who is a different color than she is. When she returns to her neighborhood, she sees things differently and shakes up the status quo.

*The Best Worst Day (3 – 6)* Lucy wants a best friend, but she is scared to take the first step. Sometimes overlooking differences makes for the best friendship.

## School Closing Reminder

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Please remember we are closed on Friday, October 30. Teachers are attending an In-service in Nashville.

Please note on your calendar we will close at 1:00 PM (dismissal begins at 12:45 PM) on Friday, November 6. All faculty and staff have to attend a Diocesan meeting at the church office.

## Urban Ministries

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Urban Ministries is an organization that collects food for the needy in Clarksville. We provide non-perishable food to Urban Ministries as one of our community service projects. Our first Urban Ministries Out of Uniform Day is Friday, October 23. Students may bring in their can or box of food beginning Monday, October 19. Students are to take their food to their classroom.

## Think Like a Teacher When Helping Your Child Prepare for Exams

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So your child's notes are organized and all of the assigned reading is done. Now it's time to study. The key to good test preparation is to think like an instructor, not a student. Here are some tips to ensure your child is ready to take that exam:

### 1. Identify the most significant parts of the course.

- Start with the syllabus. Does it include goals for the course? Often, the subjects of these goals will appear on the exam.
- Review the course outline. Did the class spend three weeks discussing factors that led to the Vietnam War and only three days on events that occurred following the war? It's likely the exam will address those two issues in similar

proportions, with more emphasis on the events leading up to the Vietnam War.

- Review notes. The number of pages on each topic will also give your child a hint about the importance of each area.
  - Scan textbooks and reading material. Don't reread. Scan them to get a sense of key points.
- ### 2. Identify the kinds of questions that will be asked.
- Have your child ask the instructor what kinds of questions are on the exam. Will the test consist of multiple-choice, essay, or short-answer questions--or a combination of these?
  - Look over old exams to get a clue as to the likely format the upcoming exam will take. Don't look for answers--just questions. Get a feel for the way the questions are asked.
- ### 3. Develop practice questions and answers.
- Start with short-answer questions, beginning with the most important sections of the course. Look through notes and textbooks for headings such as "Three Factors That Prolonged the Economic Depression of the 1930s."
  - Develop definitions. If the instructor explained terms, your child should be able to provide definitions. Creating a comprehensive vocabulary list will help your child study for this test and future tests.
  - Don't try to make up multiple-choice questions. Instead, think of questions that will likely appear in multiple-choice format.
  - Understand the whys of key points. These are likely to become essay questions.

## Happy Birthday

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Mrs. Jasper, DaVanna Lockett, Tye Parsons, Mrs. Downey, Jacob Vaughn, Quinn Moss, Bailey Stiglich, Lilyanna Moss, Trey Dorsey, Madelyn Bissell, and Daniel Loos.

## October Information

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October is a month set aside to honor Mary, the mother of God. One of Mary's titles is the Queen of Peace. Hopefully, prayer and devotion to Mary will lead us in the direction of peace as the world problems unfold before us.

- 2 is the Feast of the Guardian Angels
- 4<sup>th</sup> we remember St. Francis of Assisi
- 7<sup>th</sup> is the Feast of the Holy Rosary
- 18<sup>th</sup> is the Feast Day of St. Luke
- We invite you to participate with us each Friday as the students will say: The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

## Partners in Faith

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The main article on page 1 gives reasons concerning the importance of nurturing a child's soul and gives several suggestions for putting the soul first. The main article on page 2, "Don't be too busy for Mass every weekend", starts by debunking two common reasons families give for not attending Mass each weekend. The ParentTalk on page 2 gives families a creative way to combine All Saints Day and Halloween.

## Should Catholics participate in Halloween?

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This issue comes up nearly every year. Everyone has their own opinion. The origins of Halloween are not Christian, but the "holiday" has taken on a whole new life of its own. It is fun to dress-up, and this is one of

the few times the kids (and some adults) get the chance to do it.

The children should be escorted by a responsible adult and the treats must be inspected in good light before they are consumed. Of course dressing up like a saint is the classic advice, but it should be remembered that some of the saints led quite interesting lives. One way to sneak a little religious education into your child's life is to encourage them to do research on the lives and deaths of the saints for their choice of costume. Here is a link for you to start with: [www.catholic.org/saints](http://www.catholic.org/saints).

For those who feel the need to incorporate horror into the night (by mutual agreement of parent and child) there is nothing more horrible than some of the ways the saints died.

Costumes should be age appropriate and only the parent is fully able to judge what is appropriate for their particular child's age in maturity and years. It is not recommended that anyone dress up as the crucified Jesus; the possibility of interpreting that as being sacrilegious is just too high. A Roman guard costume is pretty cool. Joan of Arc could include a stake tied to the back with a fan blowing paper Mache flames up the back of the girl's head. The resurrected Jesus with battery lights or glow in the dark chemical sticks under sheer fire retardant fabric would be inspirational yet creative enough to pass the test of peer review.

The Old Testament can be a source of inspiration as well. Brothers can dress up like Cain and Able. The children can dress like Noah and bring their pet along with them. Parents can dress like Noah and bring their young children dressed up like animals.

There is also the chance to pick positive historical role models to dress up as. The advice could go on and on, but the idea being presented here is that Satan,

zombies, and ax murderers are not required to have fun with this celebration. A starting place to get ideas for costumes is:

[www.chiff.com/home\\_life/holiday/halloween/costumes.htm](http://www.chiff.com/home_life/holiday/halloween/costumes.htm).

Another issue regarding this event is behavior. The Ten Commandments, the Law of Love, and the Golden Rule are not given special dispensation on October 31. Egging, ding-dong-ditch, and TPing houses are not acceptable behavior. Just because "everybody else is doing it" does not make it right. There was an incident in the news not too many years ago of a child who was shot by a person tormented into temporary insanity by the "game" ding-dong-ditch. If an adult reading this doesn't know that "game", just ask your older children if they know. This could lead to a discussion about the whole subject of appropriate behavior. Peer pressure can be your child's best friend or worst enemy. If you don't know your child's friends, get to know them a little before you let them go trick-or-treating together; you still have plenty of time for that. It is good for a child to learn and take to heart the advice that our choice of friends defines us. The earlier in life they accept this truism the better. It may be surprising to learn that there are such things as child and juvenile-aged child predators. Getting an otherwise innocent child involved in Halloween shenanigans is a way to get black-mail material on the child that can lead them to fall prey to something far worse later. The above thought may be very troubling, but ignorance is much more troubling and dangerous in the long run.

We cannot protect our children from everything, but we should be aware of the risks in any activity before we participate in it. In most neighborhoods it is probably more dangerous crossing the road than trick-or-treating with the wrong friend, so do not let the worst case scenario be the deciding factor in your choice of participating in Halloween or not.

If you feel that the satanic origins of All Hallows Eve are just too insidious to allow

into your child's life, there are options. Check if any local churches have "judgment houses". A judgment house is the Christian equivalent to a "haunted house". Some churches have a dress-up party with generous edible party favors as a substitute for Trick-or-Treat. If any level of participation in this seasonal event is offensive to you, then by all means make it a night of family prayer; perhaps include some meditative prayers about abortion and temptation. This would be a good opportunity to pray a full Rosary Prayer on this, your family night. If you are a little rusty on your Rosary, here is a site to refresh your memory:

[www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/prayers/rosary/how\\_to.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/Devotionals/prayers/rosary/how_to.htm)

## Absences and Tardiness- Learning How To Avoid Them

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Remember the old saying, "Time waits for no one"? It is true. Anyone who has ever excelled knows how important it is to use time wisely. Not only must you be mindful of time but your children, through you, will learn the importance of being in school and being there on time.

Many parents make the mistake of thinking that their children can "make up" what they have missed if they are absent a lot. Every day, those things your children are taught are directly related to things taught the previous day. When they miss just one day, a chance to build on information, understanding, and necessary skills is lost. It is very important that you get them there-on time-unless there is an unavoidable emergency. Poor attendance in elementary school has been shown to be directly related to many other problems in adolescents and young adults as well as tendencies towards violence, vandalism, and unstable employment.

Children who have no sense of responsibility in getting to school and getting there on time are more likely to be irresponsible in other

important areas of their lives, even if they happen to be smart.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- Encourage the development of good personal habits that include time schedules for getting to bed, getting up, and leaving for school.
- Make sure you know and have shared with your child the school's attendance and tardiness policy and the consequences for nonattendance and tardiness.
- Make your child feel good about their accomplishments in school. If they feel they are succeeding, they will want to attend.

### **Activity Checklist:**

- ✓ First, you will want to talk to your child about their attendance.
- ✓ If your child seems to dislike school and does not want to go, discuss the reasons for these feelings and share the discussion with his/her teacher.
- ✓ Discuss time with your child-how much time does it take to get dressed, eat breakfast, ride to school? Teach them early how to tell time and to benefit from good timing.
- ✓ Have your child complete this thought: "If I am late for school, I will feel \_\_\_\_\_ and if I miss a day of school for no reason, I will \_\_\_\_\_."
- ✓ Let your child know you will not be keeping them home for your convenience or minor ailments about which they will complain. School is much too important.
- ✓ Assure your child that every effort is being made to make school a positive experience.

- ✓ No matter how bad you (the parent) may feel, start each morning with enthusiasm. Your child will mirror your emotions.
- ✓ Plan now to become a part of more school activities for parents and set an example of promptness and positive thinking.
- ✓ Every night, take time to find out what has happened during your child's school day and keep lines of communication open with the school and teacher.

## **School News**

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### **Kindergarten**

October is sure to be spooook-tacular in Kindergarten!

This month we will take our annual fieldtrip to Patterson Place Farm to learn about animals, crops, and machinery. Mid-month finds us enjoying fall break. Later in the month, we will celebrate Halloween with a costume party!

We would like to thank Father David for spending time with us in our classroom; what a nice treat for the children!

### **First Grade**

Grandparents Day and the Book Fair were the two highlights of September for First Graders. We really enjoyed showing off our school to our grandparents and special guests. We wrote and published a class story about the Book Fair. We have enjoyed reading the new books that First Grade parents donated to our class from the Book Fair. Thank you so much! October promises to be a fun month. We will take our first field trip to the Pumpkin Patch at the end of the month. We are also looking forward to dressing up for Halloween!

### **Second Grade**

Second Grade is in full swing! The children are getting the hang of using their new agendas! Please remember to review and sign these every night!

We look forward to the month of October and Casino Night! The second grade theme basket is "Baking". Donations will be taken through Oct 9th. We look forward to our trip to the pumpkin patch this month. Thank you for all your continued support and I look forward to another exciting month in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

### **Third Grade**

Third Grade is progressing well. We are continuing to work on Reading in small groups and as a class. The students really enjoyed writing stories for English. We are working our way slowly into cursive. We are still working with addition and subtraction in Math but are also discussing word problems, larger numbers, regrouping and borrowing. In Social Studies, we have looked at Native Americans as a whole and individual tribes.

You may have gotten some interesting questions about reproduction. We have looked at life cycles in Science, and students are coming up with creative questions. We also adopted a class project collecting empty Capri Sun pouches. We are going to do this all year to help raise money for Saint Mary's.

### **Fourth Grade**

The school year seems to be flying by! I look forward to meeting with you during Parent/Teacher Conferences this month. In October the 4th grade will raise money to benefit disadvantaged children throughout the world through Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF. This will tie in with our study of the Good Shepherd and the Corporal Works of Mercy. Our novel for the month will tell the story of a much-loved wizard, and our project will focus on a saint.

### **Fifth Grade**

Can you believe that fall break is just around the corner? September has certainly flown by! Fifth grade is currently reading on their third novel of the school year, *Caddie Woodlawn*. Thank you to Mrs. Boscia, Mrs. Crawford, and Mrs. Gibbons for driving us to

Urban Ministries and for organizing our project for Casino Night. Fifth Graders are providing colorful pillows for sale at this event. Fifth grade will also sponsor a basket for the auction (wine and cheese), so start saving your money! Thank you for your support at our Spaghetti Supper, Book Fair, Open House, and Grandparents' Day. Fifth grade had a great turnout, and we have several new books added to our classroom library. We are looking forward to Halloween (a Halloween luncheon is in the works) at the end of the month.

### **Middle School**

October is full of activities for the faculty, staff, and students at St. Mary's: Parent/Teacher Conferences, the end of the first grading period, Fall Break, and Halloween parties.

Students in sixth grade examine and analyze the use of literary elements and devices such as setting, characterization, tone and mood, plot, and figurative language in literature. Through literature, students in seventh and eighth grade learn about the Civil War. Eighth grade students use computer technology to create and design a Memory Book. Pre-Algebra students learn about exponents, rational and real numbers, and the use of scientific notation. The seventh and eighth grade classes take the Explorer Test the latter part of this month.

Middle School had an exciting month in September beginning with Student Council Elections and the School Store. Collin Bryant and Levi Melton are running for Student Council President. Sydney Sabash has been elected Vice President, Natalie Weiber has been elected Secretary, Mycah Milton, Lauren Tucker, and Riley Dowdy have been elected as Middle School Class Representatives. Presidential Elections will be held Friday October 2, 2009. Please encourage your child to vote.

The School Store is open Tuesdays from 12:00 pm - 12:15 pm and Thursdays from

2:00 pm - 2:20 pm. Students must eat their lunch before coming to the School Store.

September has been a busy month for Middle School! In Science, 6th Grade learned all about the solar system and the planets; and made the paper mache' planets that have been hanging in the back hallway. Seventh Grade grew lima beans and learned about plants and the functions of flowers, roots, and stems.

Course 2 Math students learned about all different kinds of charts as well as exponents, scientific notation, and order of operations. In Religion, 8th grade spent the month learning about Paul the Apostle and that the Church is the Body of Christ. Seventh Grade learned why the Gospels were written and about Mark's Gospel. Sixth Grade learned that God revealed his love for us through the Bible and what we can do to grow in our faith in God.

### **Music**

Music class has gotten off to a great start this year. The students did a fantastic performance for Grandparent's Day and for Bishop Choby's welcoming. Our next project: lot's of Christmas everything! A special thank you to Alisa Milton and Jason Roberts for their guitar contributions. We also thank Mr. David Grimm from Illinois who donated 3 guitars and funds to purchase practice necks!

### **Library**

The book fair was a great success! THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!!!!!! Danielle Adams, Cathy Amabile, Janine Burton, Shannon Crawford, Gemma DePace, Heather Funk, Diane Hammond, Chad Hayes, Stacey Kelley, Linda Kramer, Donna Lieffers, Michelle Mullins, Greg & Andi Orr, Ellen Parsons, Jackie Phillips, Denise Quintero, Valerie Ribero, Jason Roberts, Christie Schumacher, Edward Vaughn, and Michele

Wieber! We couldn't have done it without you!

A special thank you to the students! The middle school children made the flags, the 3rd -5th graders made the postcards and the 1st and 2nd graders made the miniature books on the bulletin board. I especially liked the self-depictions of the students placed around the world! Decorations added to the excitement of the book fair! We must also thank our Grandparents, and teachers, especially Mrs. Watkins with the music program! Everyone worked so hard! When everyone contributes, amazing things can happen! Spaghetti Dinner Night and Grandparents Day exceeded our sales from last year by over \$500.00! We met our goal and have new books for the library as well as plenty of credit vouchers for the Teacher's Resource Catalog! I have always considered our library to be the "jewel of the school" as reading is the precursor to all other disciplines. Now we can get back on track, start reading books, and earn AR points!

### **Spanish**

We are nearing the end of the first quarter and off to a great start. Most of the students have been working very hard and have come a long way from the beginning of the year. There are still so many things to learn so please make sure your child studies Spanish during the week, brings his/her book or folder to class, and grades 3-8 completes all homework assignments. Grades K-3 are working hard on Spanish greetings, numbers and colors. I am excited to study El Dia de Los Muertos (the day of the dead) with the students at the end of the month. If you ever need to contact me, you can reach me at [nmoran@stmaryscatholicsschool.com](mailto:nmoran@stmaryscatholicsschool.com).

# Important Dates

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## October

- 3 Novice Retreat 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM  
at St. Joe's Center  
Middle School CYO carwash at  
St. Mary's 10 – 2 PM
- 5 Server Meeting for Novices, Council  
Members, and Escorts 3 – 4:00 PM
- 6 All Servers report at 7:15 AM  
Commissioning Ceremony  
All School Mass  
Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 8 Sacristans for Mass (be here at 7:30):  
William and Ally  
Servers for Mass (be here at 7:45):  
Cody, Hailey, Grace, Lauren T,  
James, Levi, and Mycah  
Home & School Association Meeting
- 9 End of the 1<sup>st</sup> Reporting Period
- 10 – 17 Fall Break – No School
- 20 Sacristans for Mass (be here at 7:30):  
Alexis and Lauren G  
Servers for Mass (be here at 7:45):  
Beth, Noah, Zach W., Sam, Patrick,  
and Katlyn
- 23 Urban Ministries Out of Uniform Day  
Report Cards issued to students  
CYO Halloween Party
- 24 Casino Night
- 25 CYO Trunk-or-Treating at IC
- 26 – 28 Explore Test for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>  
Grade Students
- 27 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Fieldtrip
- 29 K & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Fieldtrip
- 30 No School for students –  
Teacher in-service in Nashville

## November

- 4 School Uniform Picture Retakes for  
students and staff who were absent  
or unable to take picture
- 6 Students dismissed at 12:45 PM