



Saint Mary School

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November 2016

Dear St. Mary School Families,

I was recently invited to a Catholic Charities Breakfast which featured a presentation from Susan Conroy, an author who spent a great amount of time working side by side with Saint Teresa of Calcutta. Her words were powerful and I believe left a mark on all who attended the breakfast event. At the conclusion, Susan invited us all to recite the Saint Teresa of Calcutta Prayer (sometimes referred to as a poem), which I am reproducing for you below. I invite you to take some time with your family to review this wonderful and powerful message:

*People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered;
Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies;
Succeed anyway.*

*If you are honest and sincere, people may cheat you;
Be honest and frank anyway.*

*What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;
Build anyway.*

*If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;
Be happy anyway.*

*The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;
Do good anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway.*

*You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God;
It was never between you and them anyway.*

"Saint Mary School is a Christ-centered educational community dedicated to fostering Catholic faith and Gospel values, while striving for academic excellence within a nurturing family atmosphere."

As the First Quarter comes to an end, let's review the month of November and peek ahead to December. If you have any concerns or questions, please reach out to us in the Main Office.

Scholastic Book Fair

Our great book fair continues throughout this week. Coming in for Report Card conferences? Why not check out the Scholastic Book Fair, which is set up directly on our gymnasium stage. (Special Thanks to our great parent volunteers, especially HSA President, Kathleen Banks.)

Report Card Conferences

You should be set with your appointment times for your scheduled report card conferences. Please know that conferences are 15 minutes in length; if you require additional time, please set up a private appointment with the appropriate teacher(s).

Veterans Day

We would like to invite you to our school on Friday, November 11 for a special Veterans Day program. Starting at 9:30am, we will hear from Mr. Lang Reese (Captain, USN, Retired) and Mr. Bill Taylor (Major, USA, Retired) regarding our great military and the many sacrifices made for our country. There will be special guests on hand. Our 5th through 8th graders will be in attendance. Then, at 10:00am, we will invite the younger students (Grades K through 4th) to the gym to join us as we dedicate our new flag (and present the old flag to a very special guest).

All are welcome to attend on Friday, November 11. If you have a veteran in your family, they are welcome to attend also.

Wine Tasting

All are invited to join the Saint Mary Home School Association on Saturday, November 12 for an evening of wine tasting, craft beer samples, paired food specialties and great company. Mix and mingle, sip and snack while meeting others committed to the mission of Saint Mary School.

Why not plan ahead for the holidays by purchasing a bottle of your favorite wine? Raffle tickets will also be available for purchase with a chance to win beautiful gift baskets.

Tickets are \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary School and remitted to the school office to the attention of Jennifer Zinzi. For questions, please email jjinzi@yahoo.com

Picture Re-Takes

Picture Re-takes will occur on Monday, November 14. Please return the complete original package except for the Class Picture.

School Calendar

Please be sure to access our website (www.StMaryBethelCT.org) for the latest updates on our school calendar.

Parking Lot Safety

Your children are our number one priority. PLEASE be very cautious when driving through our campus. Our students feel very comfortable here at school and often are not looking out for cars. It is OUR responsibility to drive in a safe and slow manner around school.

Special Prayer Program from Father Corey

Father Corey has put together a wonderful program that asks members of our school community to pray in a special way for vocations in the priesthood. I have attached a letter from Father Corey that helps to explain the purpose of this endeavor.

Each week, one SMS family will participate in this prayer program (from Wednesday to the following Wednesday). We plan to start in the 4th Grade and will rotate throughout the year. Again, please see Father Corey's letter (attached to this email) for further clarification. If you have any questions, please email Mr. Viceroy.

The 2016-2017 St. Mary School Annual Fund

I want to thank those families who have already participated in our Annual Fund appeal. Your donation is so critical to our financial stability – I am beyond grateful for all of the sacrifices you continue to make to help our school. Your support makes a real difference here at St. Mary School.

Pep Rally

Our Pep Rally will take place on Tuesday, November 15 at 12:45pm. All students should wear their gym uniforms and athletes should bring their sports uniforms to school (basketball & cheerleading). All parents are welcome to attend.

Red Herring Puppets presents Aesop's Fables

On Tuesday, November 15, students in grades PK-4 through 4th grade will enjoy a presentation of timeless stories that address topics such as bullying, selfishness, competition, ingenuity, and the affirmation that little beings can achieve great things. The show includes The Lion and the Mouse, The Tortoise and the Hare, The Owl and the Grasshopper, The Stork and the Fox & others. This 45 minute show will begin at 9:15am.

Turkey Feast & Turkey Bingo

These fun SMS traditions will take place on November 17 (Turkey Feast for students) and November 18 (Turkey Bingo for families). Our students will have a blast on Thursday and *everyone* will have a blast on Friday. Please consider joining us for Turkey Bingo, a St. Mary School staple, starting at 6pm in our gym on the 18th.

Thanksgiving Family Project

Last year, our students sent special messages of thanks to grandparents. This year, the process is changing slightly and our students can write to any special family member. Please see the communication sent home on November 7. If you have any questions on how to complete the project, please contact us in the Main Office.

Thanksgiving Break

We will have an Early Dismissal on Wednesday November 23. On this day, we will attend the 9am Mass. Please note: Afterschool Club closes at 1:00pm on this day. We will not have school on Thursday, November 24 and Friday, November 25. We will return to school on Monday, November 28.

St. Mary Church Car Raffle

St. Mary Church is raffling off a 2016 Buick Encore, a small luxury SUV, **AND** a 2016 GMC Canyon, a premium mid-size pickup truck! Both cars are from Ingersoll Auto of Danbury. Tickets are \$100 each and one ticket wins both cars! Come and take a look on the front lawn of the Parish grounds! The drawing will take place on Saturday, November 26 at 6:45pm in the Parish Hall and the winner need not be present to win! (*The winner is responsible for tax, title and license fees.*) Tickets can be purchased after Masses on selected Sundays or at the Parish office during the week. For other options, please check the Church website. For more information, call the Parish Office at (203)744-5777.

St. Mary School Facebook page

After starting last year with 430 “Likes” on Facebook, we now have, incredibly, over 914 “Likes” on our school page! Please continue to go to our page, as we post pictures, updates and news that you will find interesting. It is a great way to see what happens at our school.

While we will use the MSP system to communicate school closings, delays or early dismissals, our Facebook page will also be used and **may prove to be more reliable**. You do not have to be a member of Facebook in order to view our school page. Often times, the Facebook page will be the first place to receive a weather-related update, so please consider becoming familiar with this page. (www.facebook.com/StMaryBethel)

#GivingTuesday

Last year, St. Mary School participated in a national day of “giving” entitled #GivingTuesday. We raised over \$3,000 in just 24 hours! That would not have been possible without your generosity. This year, #GivingTuesday is back, taking place on Tuesday, November 29. Please be sure to check out our Facebook campaign, which will begin as we progress through the middle of November. With much more to come, please stay “tuned” regarding this day of giving.

Christmas Concert

Our annual Christmas Concert will take place on Wednesday, December 7. Our “snow date” is Tuesday, December 13. **Please note:** Afterschool Club closes at 5pm on the day of the concert. Special thanks to the great Mrs. Chamberlain for all of her hard work with our students.

Advent Mass with Student Singing

Please join us on Tuesday, December 20 as we gather in St. Mary Church to celebrate the coming of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Beginning at 5pm, students will sing seasonal songs by grade with Mass to follow at 5:30pm. Please mark your calendars so that we can all celebrate the season together. **Please note:** Afterschool Club closes at 4:45pm on this day.

Last day before Christmas Break

Please note that our last day of school will be Thursday, December 22. We will return on Tuesday, January 3.

Snow – Early Dismissal Days

Some families have expressed concern regarding early dismissal days and not having the after-school club service available. After careful consideration of every option, we concluded that there really is no safe way to keep anybody in the school building during a snow emergency. I know this places a burden on some working families, but I ask you to consider the circumstances and why we need to close early: it is dangerous to travel.

I am asking families to begin to think **now** about alternate plans in the event of an early closing. I would rather we spend time now, creatively thinking of alternatives, as it will be imperative that we clear the building out in a snow event. The school closes at 10:50am on these snow-emergency days and there is no afterschool club option available.

Mid-Term Week

Mid-Terms will take place the week of January 9.

Catholic Schools Week

This fun week begins on Sunday, January 29. On this date, we will hold our Winter Open House from 9:30-11:30am.

*We wish you and your family a very
Happy Thanksgiving!*

May God to continue to watch over and protect our children.

Gratefully,



Greg Viceroy
Principal