

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER
St. Mary's Parish School
Week of January 24, 2021



Welcome to our newest student, Coop Lange, who is in Preschool and to his parents Kandi Lee and Eric. We are happy you are with us! Blessings....

THIS WEEK:

- **Tuesday, January 26** our prayers have been requested for a young boy, Henry, who will be undergoing bone graft surgery. Thank you!
- **Wednesday, January 27th** is the feast day of *St. Angela Merici*. Why is she important to our school? She was the one who founded the Ursuline Sisters and it was they who begun our school in 1908. Angela lived in northern Italy in the 15th century. She was a woman of deep prayer who sought to bring a Christian response to the needs of her times which were *very similar* to our times today. St. Angela combined contemplation of the gospel and its values, with a life of action and service. She saw the value, strength and effect of uniting the two. In her relationships with others she was always respectful for the individual with a deep sense of love and kindness for each one. There are many ways that students in our school today are true to the spirit of St. Angela. This is achieved by being kind, helpful, respectful, generous and supportive to one another and by working together, eating together, playing together, talking together, laughing together, sharing together, celebrating together, rejoicing together and consoling each other. One quote she would often state in various ways is the following:

“Do something; get moving; be confident; risk new things; stick with it; get on your knees; then be ready for big surprises.” Such advice is still good today.
- Also, on Wednesday, January 27th all are invited to attend in person or via ZOOM the next installment of the hippo lectures by one of our parents Dr. Gracjan Kraszewski (intellect@vandalcatholic.com) at 7:00 p.m. at St. Augustine's Center.
- **Friday, January 29th** the school Mass is at 9:00 a.m. in the school gym. *ALL parents* are welcomed. Grades 5/6 are the prayer leaders.



ITEMS TO NOTE:

Recently our upper grade students participated in a nationwide MMA AMC mathematics competition. The MAA's American Mathematics Competitions program leads the nation in strengthening the mathematical capabilities of the next generation of problem-solvers. Through classroom resources and friendly competition, the MAA AMC program helps America's educators identify talent and foster a love of mathematics. The AMC 8 is a difficult 25-question, 40-minute, multiple choice examination in middle school mathematics designed to promote the development of problem-solving skills. The AMC 8 provides an opportunity for middle school students to develop positive attitudes towards analytical thinking and mathematics that can assist in future careers. **The national median score is 8 points.**

WINNERS of the AMC in our school were:

- First Place in our school: Gianna Niehenke (14 points)
- Second Place in our school: Andrew Hurley (13 points)
- Third place *ties*: Reagan Hurley and Wyatt Thornycroft (12 points)

Congratulations to our school winners who scored way above the national median score. And many thanks to Mrs. Bieker our 8th grade math teacher this year and to all our teachers over the years who have helped lay the foundation for such strong mathematics knowledge in our students.

As of February 1, please note that the choice of having sandwiches instead of the main entrée will NO longer be an option for the school lunch.

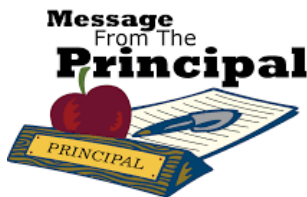
Wednesday, February 3 will be the **Polar Walk** to school. (More information will come next week).

Sunday, February 7th will be the first session, via Zoom, for First Communion class with parents at 9:30 a.m.

Friday, February 12th will be Valentines' parties for the classes.

Friday, February 19th will be the school's *Spelling Bee*.

Friday, March 12 will be **CLASS photos** and a **WHOLE school photo day**.



Dear Families,

It seems that just yesterday it was January 1st and now it's almost February! Our school year is sure flying by fast... I want to thank each and everyone one of you for ALL you have and continue to do to help keep our school community healthy.

Keeping the school fully open so that your children can be fully engaged and in person in school is a challenging task for all of us and you truly are to be commended -- it is a great gift to your children for sure. *Thank you!* In great thanksgiving, this past week, our faculty/staff have been able to receive the COVID vaccine. The day that I went, the process was extremely efficient and all the health care workers very helpful -- there was such a positive and hopeful vibe in the room. Personally, I have only experienced a little soreness at the shot site. We take the next one about 28 days from now. I pray that this roll out will reach everyone in as short of time as possible.

Every year, Catholic schools across the nation join together to celebrate what it is to be a Catholic school. Catholic school's week runs from January 31st - February 6th, with the theme this year being: *Faith Excellence Service*. For us, the celebration is run by our student council and plays out with some school traditions that are fun, educational, and service-oriented as well. One of our service activities, the "*Penny Wars*", is quite fun and makes a huge contribution towards helping people in need within our local community.

In the *Penny Wars*, each class has a large jar. Students donate pennies to their class jar. Pennies count towards the class's positive count. Nickels, dimes, quarters, and bills *deduct from the class' positive count*. Basically, what happens is that students put as many coins *other than pennies* in other class jars so that their own class jar keeps to the positive with loads of pennies. The winning class receives a pizza party. In past years classes have raised as much as \$900! **All monies raised are donated to our local St. Vincent DePaul Society to help people who often are in desperate need for heat, food, and other necessities just to survive.**

Below you will find a list of activities for Catholic Schools' Week in our school from Student Council. Please come join us for our school Mass on February 5th, where our Student Council will be the prayer leaders.

May you all stay healthy and have a blessed week. Dr. Jennifer Beller

Sunday, January 31 through February 6 is Catholic Schools' Week throughout the entire United States.

The theme for the nationwide Catholic School's week is: "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service."

All Catholic schools have as their specific purpose to form students to be good citizens of the world, love God and neighbor and enrich society with the leaven of the gospel and by example of faith. Catholic Schools are called to be communities *of faith*, instilling in all their students their destiny to become saints. Academic excellence is the hallmark of Catholic education intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person – *mind, body and spirit*. Finally, service is fundamental to Catholic education and the core of Catholic discipleship. Service is intended to help form people who are not only witnesses to Catholic social teaching, but also active participants through social learning.



The CSW logo emphasizes that the Catholic school, like the Catholic Church, is *not a building or an institution*, but it is **the people**. And as the people of God, we work together to bring the Kingdom of God to Earth and raise up the next generation to do the same. The image of teachers and students forming the foundation of the school shows that they are active people of faith who serve others and God. *May we all strive to live in active service of Jesus and his mission as we nationally join together during Catholic Schools Week and always.*

A note from Mr. Herrenbruck, Student Council Advisor: "Catholic Schools Week is the perfect time to show your St. Mary's Parish School pride! Our students always do an awesome job of getting into the spirit of the week. Led by our student council members, everybody gets into the festivities of dressing up and having fun, remembering to celebrate what it is to have a Catholic education. With everything that our community and families have been through the past year, I expect this will be a particularly joyful week, I know it will be for me."

Following activities have been planned by our Student Council to celebrate our school spirit the week of January 31 through February 6th. Please encourage your child to join in the Festivities and fun daily! ALL week will be Penny Wars (see Dr. Beller's letter for more information)

- Monday, February 1:** Pajamas and reading day (wear your favorite PJ's and bring good books to read)
- Tuesday, February 2: Twin Day** (dress the same way as your friend OR as dress the same as your whole friend group OR even your whole class dresses alike!)
- Wednesday, February 3:** Vacation Day (dress like you are on vacation at your favorite get-a-way)
- Thursday, February 4:** Super Hero Day (dress like your favorite "Super Hero" or make your own. That day we'll play Family Feud at a special assembly: teachers VS students!
- Friday, February 5:** School Spirit Day (Mass in the morning with Student Council as prayer leaders). UNIFORMS are required that day, as always. However, bring your favorite, fun, creative, unique face mask to wear too.
Penny Wars ends today.....

Questions recently asked.....

- Q. What happens if I (as an adult) or my child are not able to wear the required face mask?
- A. We know that for medical reasons face masks are not to be worn. In such cases, we ask that face shields be worn.
- Q. Why aren't the students in Preschool (ages 3 and 4) and Prekindergarten (ages 4 and 5) not wearing masks or face shields?
- A. At their ages they are **not required** to wear masks/ nor face shields according to the health department guidelines.
- Q. Why have these questions arisen?
- A. It has come to our attention lately that some comments have been made in the presence of younger students saying that some of them were "*not good kids*" for not wearing a mask. It might be worthwhile to remember that "*little ones have big ears*". What is unfortunate though, when a young person hears negative words (in grocery stores, hallways, or one's home) they often think the words they hear are being said about them! Realizing this, we wanted to encourage all of us to become more aware of being compassionate and respectful in our words, judgments, and actions to everyone, *especially* when children are around. As a friend has told me often, we have two ears and one tongue for a reason: we need to listen **more and speak less**. Thank you for taking these words to heart for the sake of the little ones among us!

IGNITING faith, knowledge, creativity and service