

St. Mary Catholic School



New Parent Informational Resource Guide

Rev. July 2007

This resource guide was created based on the feedback from school parents, new and long-term, that “wished that they had something like this when they started at St. Mary.” We hope that you find it a helpful resource and use it often.

If you don't find the answers you need here, please contact any member of the PTC, or the school office with questions.

All of the PTC members can be reached through the yahoo groups. To log on go to: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/st_mary_school and post your message. Someone will get back to you within 24 hours.

If you require immediate attention, please contact the PTC Leadership.

We wish you a safe and blessed school year.

The PTC Leadership Team

PTC Contact Information:

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Activities that make us Special

Teacher Luncheons

Teacher Luncheons are held monthly throughout the school year. Each month a different grade sponsors the luncheon. The Class Representative organizes the event by selecting the menu and recruiting either donations of food or money to prepare the meal. The teachers love it! They are also tremendously grateful for the kind and thoughtful meal.

First Communion Dinner

Each year the 1st grade families of St Mary Parish (school and faith formation) come together to organize a beautiful and memorable meal for the 1st Communicants and their parents. This wonderful event usually takes place the Thursday prior to the 1st Communion celebration.

The first grade organizers request the class parent's time and monetary donation to make the event special. The 1st grade Faith formation families and the St. Mary School PTC provide additional funds.

Annually, volunteers find this event truly rewarding and look forward to being the beneficiaries the following year.

First Communion “Dress-up” All School Mass

The First Communicants are invited to wear their celebratory clothing to the first All-School Mass following the ceremony. This is a wonderful opportunity for all the students to congratulate and celebrate the wondrous event.

Second grade students change into their uniforms following the mass.

Graduation Dinner sponsored by 7th Grade families

Immediately following the 8th grade graduation mass, the 7th grade students and their family provide a celebratory event for the grads and their families.

The evening includes food (whether it be a meal or hors d'oeuvres) and awards for the graduates. Traditionally, the kindergarten families provide desserts for this celebration for their class buddies.

This is a very special evening for all those involved.

After School Activities

Scouting

Scouting is currently available for boys and girls in the first grade and up. Details will be sent home as they are become available. You may also participate in scouting through the local public schools or churches in your area.

Music

Young musicians can participate in either the Children's Choir (K-4), Youth Choir (5th-8th), Handchime Ensemble, Youth Ensemble, and/or the Praise and Worship band. There are also solo instrumental opportunities. Sign-up sheets are in the church gathering space or contact the Music Director, Tony Giamanco, in the Parish Office.

Annual Activities

Art Show

In the spring, an Art Show is held to highlight the amazing work that our students do in the art program. It is a wonderful event allowing parents, and the community, to see the varied mediums that the students work in and the growth in their creativity. A Spaghetti Dinner accompanies this event.

Auction

The auction will be held in the spring. Through the PIP program your family requirements have been established. For example, most families participate in PIP positions that cover their Service points separate from their Auction points. If this is the case for you, you have been assigned an Auction responsibility (i.e. Set-up, Drink Tickets, Check-In, etc.). Incremental to this responsibility all families in this situation would have their second Auction point assigned as donation. ***Donation means that you as a family are responsible for a cash donation of \$50 or an item worth at least \$75.*** Wish list items for donations will be posted in the Messenger weekly.

Optional Participation: The auction is a *huge* event for the school. PIP positions do not fill all the help we need to run this event smoothly. We would love for you to attend as a bidder but if you are not interested or able to do so, please consider volunteering to work the night of the event. Contact the school office if you are interested.

Back to School Night

This annual evening is held the first night of the first full day of school in the fall. It is an opportunity to meet your child(rens') teachers and get an overview of the curriculum. Attendance is strongly suggested.

Catholic Schools Week

This annual celebration of Catholic education is usually held the last week of January. The week is chock-full of activities including: Book Sale, Bring a Friend to Lunch, Drive-in Movie Night and a School Open House.

Christmas Concert

This annual event usually includes an Advent pageant by the 8th grade students, the school orchestra, and musical selections by the classes. This is a mandatory event for students. Parents, siblings, grandparents, etc. are invited to enjoy the celebration of the season. Arrive early to get a seat!

Field Day

Each spring, the gym teacher organizes a fun day of "sports-related" activities. The students are divided into multi-grade color teams lead by a teacher. Your student should wear the shirt of their color team. The school provides a picnic lunch that day. Parents are always needed to help time events or organize lunch. Parents and siblings can also stop by to watch and cheer on their favorite team

General Motors Project

Parent engineers from General Motors come in to work with 4th – 6th grade students on special science projects. The students work with the leaders to develop scientific tests that teach the children how to establish a hypothesis and then experiment to prove (or disprove) it.

Golf and Skeet

This new event will take place in the September of 2007. It is designed as a parent-child activity. Not just men and their buddies. Golf will take place at Timber Trace in Pinckney and Skeet will take place in Dexter. More details will be available in the Messenger and watch your mail for invitations. This is a PTC sponsored fundraiser.

IOWA Exams/MEAP Exams

The 4th-8th grade students take IOWA exams in February of each school year. Incrementally, 7th and 8th graders take the MEAP exam in October of each year. The school suggests that the students get extra sleep this week and eat a healthy breakfast. Normally, the teacher will cut back on homework assignments during this week. These exams are used by the teacher to help assess where the student may need additional help. These tests do not affect the student's classroom grades.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences are held in November of each year. You are required to meet with all of your children's homeroom teachers. Special teacher meetings are optional. A sign-up sheet for times will be sent home attached to the Messenger in early November. Meeting times will be assigned. Children are not required to attend meetings.

Spring Band Concert

The introductory and advanced band students perform. All are welcome to come enjoy.

Spring Choral Concert

The individual grades, as well as many combined All-School performances are led by the Music teacher. This is a mandatory event for students.

Quick Reference Guide

Athletics

Opportunities for participation include:

- 5th - 8th grade Co-ed Soccer
- 5th/6th grade Girls Volleyball, Basketball and Cheerleading
- 5th/6th grade Boys Basketball
- 7th/8th grade Girls Volleyball, Basketball and Cheerleading
- 7th/8th grade Boys Basketball

Each family must pay \$25 per family to participate in athletics. Also parents are required to work concessions. The team coach will provide details on concessions.

Bingo **Insert your schedule in the back of the book**

All families are required to earn 4 Bingo points either by working 4 or 5 Bingos (depending on job) or earning the equivalent points through their PIP position.

Can't make a date? Review the schedule and switch with a person in a similar role. Complete the change of date form and send it to the school office to the attention of Melinda Gannon.

Fine for no-shows? The fine for not showing up for an assigned date is \$250. The School Office will bill you accordingly.

Book Fairs

The Librarian and her aides organize two book fairs each year to support the school library.

Scholastic Book Fair is held around November Parent Teacher Conferences. *Keep in mind that most teachers allow students to make a shopping list and/or purchase during designated school hours.*

Catholic Book Fair is always held during Catholic Schools Week. This sale includes children's books with religious themes, parenting books, biographies, and a great deal of Catholic merchandise. Specific dates and times will be announced prior to the event.

Be a Booster

Spirit Packs are available through the school office. Spirit Packs include yard signs, car window clings and dress down passes (with no expiration). Packs are \$8.00.

Jackets, Sweatshirts, etc. Many people like to utilize St Mary merchandise. Items approved for the school uniform as well as items for wear outside the school environment are available locally at A Touch of Class embroidery located in the Hamburg Village mall at Chilson and M-36. They offer online coupons at www.coupons4livingston.com

NEW THIS YEAR! Join the Wildcats Booster Club. This is everyone's opportunity to support our teams and promote our school. Watch the Messenger for more information.

Christian Service

A **1st Friday Food Drive** is held each month to help support the parish food bank. The parish Christian Service team facilitates the planning for this event including any monthly themes, contests and public relations. Watch your Messenger for themes. Non-themed months will accept any non-expired food items or paper goods.

1st Friday Popcorn Sale: Small bags of popcorn are sold the 1st Friday of each month for 25 cents. Proceeds benefit Heifer Project Mission

Misc. Events: Often throughout the year, various grades will sponsor events to benefit a cause. For example, last year following Hurricane Katrina, the children were so moved by the loss that each grade sponsored fundraising events throughout the fall. These events might include: Bake Sales at Lunch, Can and Bottle Drives, Dress Down pass sales. These events would be advertised in the Messenger and on signage around the school building.

Communication

Messenger: The Messenger is a weekly publication that starts with news from the principal. It includes any important information that is related to the following week. Attachments might include: School Lunch menu, Market Day form, PTC meeting agendas. Watch for it every Thursday.

PTC Meetings: Scheduled 5 times throughout the school year, PTC meetings offer opportunities for input on policies and events. This year's meetings are scheduled for
Attendance at 4 out of 5 meetings is required.

Yahogroups: This is an online method established for asking questions, getting updates, and sharing your thoughts with fellow St Mary school families. To sign-up go to yahogroups.com and search for St. Mary School.

Weekly Teacher Letters: Most teachers provide a letter each Friday updating you on what is scheduled for the next week for your child's classroom. This may include test dates, field trips or information to look out for.

Student Directory: This directory is published each fall. All families that agree to be in

the publication are listed along with their address, phone number(s). This is a great resource for homework, play dates, car pools, etc.

Website: The school website can be located at www.stmarypinckney.org/school. Each week the school Messenger can be found online along with many classroom websites giving you information on your child's class. The website also has a revision planned for this fall. We will let you know when the revised school website will be up and running.

Community Prayer Opportunities

Rosary: Each October & May, the students say a decade of the rosary at Morning Prayer to honor Mary, our Mother and patron of our school.

Adoration: Individual classes may take part in Adoration at the Teachers discretion. See Homeroom Teacher for more information.

May Crowning: Students have the opportunity to participate in the drawing to Crown Mary or be an attendant. This is a parish wide activity and usually takes place the 2nd Sunday in May.

All School Masses: All school masses are held each Friday for K-8th grade students at 9:00AM. Students must wear full uniform (i.e. Jumpers/skirts, long pants, ties where appropriate, No sweatshirts). A designated grade serves as the leaders for the mass serving as lectors, bringing up Offertory and serving as Ushers. Other All School Masses are held in conjunction with special events and for Holy Days of Obligation.

Holy Days: The Holy Days of Obligation during the school year are:

November 1, [the Solemnity of All Saints](#)

December 8, [the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception](#)

Wednesday Morning Mass: Wednesday masses are rotated between primary and secondary wings. Kindergarten students do not attend Wednesday mass unless it is a Holy Day of Obligation. A designated grade serves as the leaders for the mass serving as lectors, bringing up Offertory and serving as Ushers. Student must wear full uniform (i.e. Jumpers/skirts, long pants, ties where appropriate, no sweatshirts).

Library

Used Book Sale: Each spring the 3rd grade class hosts a used book sale to benefit the library. Families are asked to donate used books to the sale. Books sell for 25¢. Please consider saving books to donate.

Birthday Club: Any school family can participate in the Birthday Club. You pay \$10 to the Library and during your child's birthday month they are invited to the library to select a new book. That book will contain a placard that indicates it was donated in honor of your child's birthday listing the name and date.

See also Book Fairs

Lunch

Time Break-outs: K-2 Lunch: 11:30AM; Recess 11:55AM
Grades 3-5 Lunch: 12:00PM; Recess 12:25PM
Grades 6-8 Lunch: 12:30PM; Recess 12:50PM

Lunchroom Rules:

- ~Enter Quietly
- ~Walk to assigned table or to hot lunch line.
- ~Remain seated until it is announced that you can use microwaves or purchase milk or chips.
- ~If you need to use the restroom, ask for permission. Otherwise remain seated.
- ~Follow all directions for the supervisor.
- ~When you are finished eating: Clean your area; take trash to barrel; tray to window or lunch box to designated basket.
- ~As Jesus taught, 'treat your fellow students as you wish to be treated.'
- ~After prayer you will be dismissed. Follow the lunch supervisor to the designated area.

Playground Rules:

- ~Use the equipment safely at all times. Students in K-1 are not to use monkey bars or twirling beam attached.
- ~Take care of each other.
- ~For YOUR safety, do not: Jump off swings, hang from backboard rims, climb on slides, use improper language, sit on top of monkey bars, stand on teeter-totter or play football on basketball court.
- ~Show respect for volunteers
- ~Line up quickly when signaled.
- ~Follow supervisors directions at all times.

Hot Lunch Payments: Weekly Hot Lunch tickets:
K-5th Grade \$2.25 per lunch/\$11 per lunch ticket

6th-8th Grade \$2.50 per lunch/\$12 per lunch ticket

Please send cash/check in a sealed envelope to the office marked with the students name and the words “Hot Lunch”.

Cold Lunch Add-ons: Milk (white or chocolate) \$.50
Chips \$.30

Earning Stipend: For working a lunch shift parents can earning a tuition stipend. The stipend will be credited to your family account monthly.

Optional In-school Fundraisers

The school earns money or equipment for participating in the following programs:

General Mills Box tops: Box Tops provide three easy ways to earn cash for your school through everyday activities.

- ~ **Clip Box Tops from your favorite brands**
The original Box Tops program keeps getting better! As always, you can find the familiar 10¢ Box Tops coupon on hundreds of your family’s favorite products from **General Mills**. Clip and save the coupons and return them with your student in a sealed envelope marked “box tops”.
- ~ **Shop at your favorite online stores**
Box Tops has partnered with dozens of popular online stores to help you earn even more cash for your school. At the Box Tops Marketplace, you can shop at over 60 online stores including **JCPenney** and **Lands’ End**. Whenever you start your shopping trip at the Marketplace, a portion of every qualifying purchase is automatically donated to your school – all at no additional cost to you! To enter the marketplace, go to www.boxtopsforeducation.com
- ~ **Earn cash for your school with every purchase you make**
With the Box Tops for Education Visa® card you can make a bigger difference every day. It’s unlike any other card you carry because your school will earn 1% **cash back on every purchase** you and other cardholders make (up to \$20,000). For an application, check out the website above.

Campbell Soup Labels: Save and clip the UPCs from participating Campbell products. Send them to school with your child in a sealed envelope marked “labels for education.” Watch the Messenger for a complete list of participating brands.

Holsum Points: This is a new program that we are testing this fall semester. If you purchase Holsum bakery, Sunbeam or Soft 'n Good products (breads, buns, rolls) just clip off the UPC label with the Holsum School Spirit logo and return them to the school office in an envelope marked "Holsum points".

Little Caesars Pizza Sale Little Caesars Pizza kits are sold several times throughout the year. The money raised is used to support the 6th grade trip to "Ed"venture at Howell Nature Center and the 8th grade trip to Chicago.

Market Day: Market Day is a service that allows people to purchase packaged and frozen foods in bulk sizes (such as you would buy from Costco, Swann's or Gordon Foods). A portion of the cost is donated back to the school. Market Days are orders can be placed 10 months of the year for pick up at school. The money raised is used to support the 6th grade trip to "Ed"venture at Howell Nature Center and the 8th grade trip to Chicago

Jump Rope for Heart: This event to raise funds for the American Heart Association and awareness for health and exercise is sponsored by the gym classes. It is *voluntary* to participate in this program. To participate you would make a pledge for your child.

Optional Out-of-School Fundraisers

School Pop: School Pop is an online service that allows you to donate a portion of the proceeds from your online order to a designated school. Once you register with Schoolpop.com you can be transferred to different online shops including 1-800 Flowers, Lands End, Target, and Disney. You will only earn the credit if you enter these websites through www.schoolpop.com. If you are a big online shopper, consider purchasing TRIP cards to use online. Then you will be saving for the school, *and* yourself.

Target: Whenever you use your Target credit card a portion of your bill will be donated to the designated school. This works in-store or online. If online remember to enter through www.schoolpop.com to earn double points.

PIP

The Parent Involvement Program was established several years ago by the Parish Leadership to encourage parents to accept an active role in the education of their children. The level of both required and voluntary participation is another thing that makes St. Mary school special.

Each family is committed to the PIP program as part of their covenant to the school. Annually the PTC Leadership reviews the positions as well as the point requirements. Not all positions will be filled each school year. Priority positions will be assigned first.

***Insert booklet at the rear of this manual.
Insert your commitment sheet here***

Raffle

Every family is required to sell \$500 worth of raffle tickets per the Parent Covenant. Each ticket is \$10 and you will be given 5 booklets of 10 tickets to sell at the beginning of the school year. It is our hope that each family will be able to sell their tickets and not have to purchase them but those decisions are left up to each family.

All tickets sales are due by Monday, November 26th after the Thanksgiving weekend.

The Mega Raffle drawing will be held on Tuesday, December 4th after Morning Prayer.

There will be incentives for early ticket sales. In the past DRESS DOWN PASSES have been awarded.

The 3 families that sell the most tickets will be relieved of their PIP requirements for the 2008-9 school year.

Ride & Drives

Chrysler will provide vehicles for test drives. Participants are asked to test drive the vehicle of their choice and complete a survey. Chrysler donates \$5 for each completed survey.

TRIP

Insert your information here

Uniform Dress Code

Insert your dress code sheets here.

Dress Down Day Dress Code:

Clothes must be neat and clean.

No baggy pants
No short shorts or short skirts:
No t-shirts with inappropriate language or sayings.
No camouflage
No tank tops, halters or muscle shirts
No belly bearing tops

Uniform Suppliers

Uniform pants/shorts and knit shirts can be purchased in various brands, including (but not limited to) School Bells, Dickie, French Toast and Lands End. Brands can be found in stores and online including: School Belles, Meijer, Kohl's, Sears, JCPenney, and Touch of Class embroidery.

Uniform Jumpers/skirts are only available through School Belles. Khaki pants may only be purchased through School Belles or French Toast.

See Uniform Dress Code sheets for further details.

Resources:

This section list opportunities for *help* within the parish/school community and opportunities for *service* to the parish/school and Livingston county community.

Casserole Crew: Members provide meals to families with new babies or experiencing medical crisis, loss of a loved one, etc. To help provide meals, or if you know someone with a need, contact Julie Flaherty 7348789547 or Therese Redpath 810-231-3805.

Children's Liturgy of the Word: During Sunday 11:30A mass, children 3-years old through 1st Holy Communion age are dismissed with instructors to read and discuss God's Word and then return to the congregation at the presentation of the gifts.

Leadership and assistant roles are available. All teaching materials are provided. Contact Karen Burke if you are interested in helping out. You can reach her at 734-878-9233.

Christian Service: The mission is to meet the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of those broken and hurting in any way. Activities include collecting and distributing food, providing transportation for the homebound, bring the Holy Eucharist to nursing homes, the homebound and the hospitals. The team also sponsors Community Kitchen for Christ and Homeless nights.

If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, please call Julie Flaherty at 734-878-9547.

Knights of Columbus: The Knights sponsor many activities for the parish and the community. They are huge supporters of St Mary School. For more information on how you can become involved, contact Kevin Schang at 734-878-6902.

Parent Prayer Group: Parent prayer group is held on Friday mornings before the 9AM mass (beginning at 8:30A) in Meeting Room A. The group meets to pray for all the children, teachers and families of our parish. Younger children are welcome to attend. For more information contact the Parish office.

Social Team: It is the social teams mission to promote warmth, friendliness and a feeling of belonging. We sponsor several events throughout the year to bring parishioners and the community together. Are you a social butterfly? Contact Mary Morris 734-878-9445.

Stewardship Team: The stewardship team is responsible for creating and sustaining the "stewardship way of life" throughout the parish family. The team develops tools, events and opportunities for all parishioners to serve the Body of Christ through their gifts of time, talent and treasure. For more information, contact the Parish office.