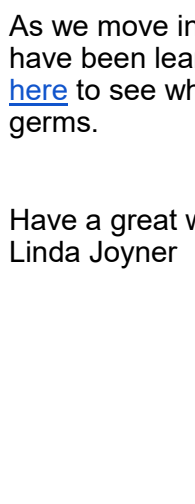




CHALLENGING MINDS • DEVELOPING CHARACTER • LIVING JESUS

Dear Families,

It is hard to believe that we are three weeks away from Christmas vacation! How is that even possible? The kindergarten, first, and second graders are working hard to prepare for their upcoming performance of **“Away in a Mango” which will be held on Thursday, December 14.** In this story a festive holiday cruise turns perilous for nine passengers when their boat, the SS Mango is caught in an unexpected storm and washed ashore on a deserted island where they meet Johnny Coconut, marooned there years earlier. Will they be found in time for the ship’s big Christmas Concert? You will have to wait until December 14th to find out.



This Sunday, December 3 is the beginning of Advent. During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare for the coming of Jesus. One common devotion during Advent is the Advent wreath which is typically adorned with sprigs of evergreen and four candles, three purple and one pink. These candles represent the four themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, Love. [Click here](#) for an Advent wreath blessing you can do at home. We will have an Advent prayer service on Monday morning. Students will be bringing home an Advent chain with daily acts of kindness that you can do at home as a family.

Trimester 1 report cards will be emailed home on Friday, December 8. Please contact your child’s teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

Our next **Spirit Day will be held on Thursday, December 7.** Mrs. Mrozinski’s class chose Jersey Day as the theme.

As we move into the cold and flu season sixth graders have been learning about germs in science class. [Click here](#) to see what they learned about handwashing and germs.

Have a great weekend!

Linda Joyner

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec. 4**
Advent Prayer Service
- Dec. 5**
Home & School Meeting (updated date!)
7pm
- Dec. 7**
Spirit Day: Wear your Favorite Sports Jersey
- Dec. 11**
[Noodles Restaurant](#)
[Night](#)
4-8pm
- Dec. 12**
School Rosary Meeting
6:30
- Dec. 14**
Christmas Musical
K5 - 2nd
6pm
- Dec. 15**
Spirit Day: Wear your Favorite PJ’s
- Dec. 15**
School Rosary - Joyful Mysteries
- Dec. 22**
Spirit Day: Wear your Wackiest Christmas Outfit
- Dec. 22**
Calendar Raffle Tickets due to School Office
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 2**
Christmas Break
- Jan. 9**
5th - 8th Grade Spelling Bee

[View Full Calendar](#)

Daily Playground and Lunchroom Volunteers Needed

We still have several slots open for our daily lunchroom and recess volunteer needs for the weeks ahead. If you are available to help with lunch (11:20am - 1pm) or recess (12pm - 12:55pm), please use the links below to sign up.

We currently still need many helpers next week.

Please see our upcoming needs below.

Week of 12/4/23	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchroom Servers (Need 2)	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	Terrie Frankowski	Chris Stueland	Christa Kleebea
Playground Helper	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed
	Becky Leupl	Nathan Ambrose	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	Rick Stelpflug

Week of 12/11/23	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchroom Servers (Need 2)	1 Parent Needed	Tori Gannon	1 Parent Needed (Costco)	1 Parent Needed	Christa Kleebea
Playground Helper	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed	Ann MacGillis	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed
	Becky Leupl	Carolyn Stelpflug	Lucy Koslo	1 Parent Needed	1 Parent Needed

Here are the links to sign up:

[Lunchroom Sign Up](#)

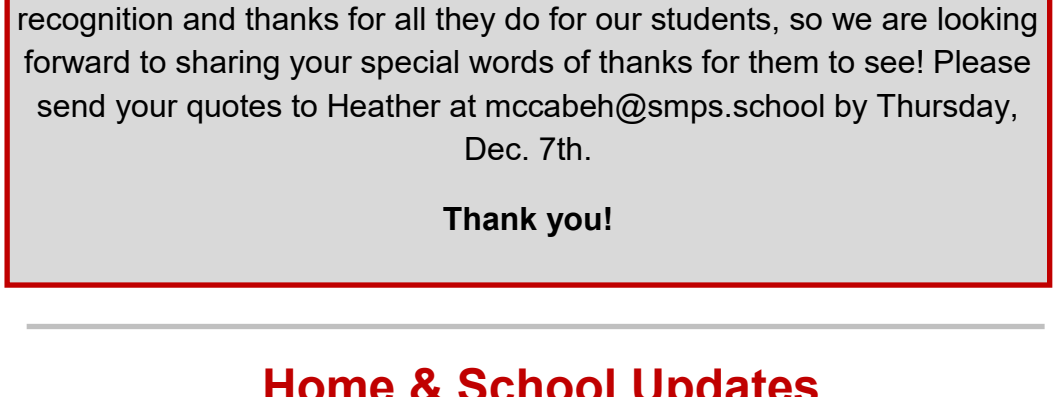
[Playground Sign Up](#)

**Please note, all volunteers must have completed the Safeguarding Training. If you have not done so, please contact Steve at scosentino@stam.church.*

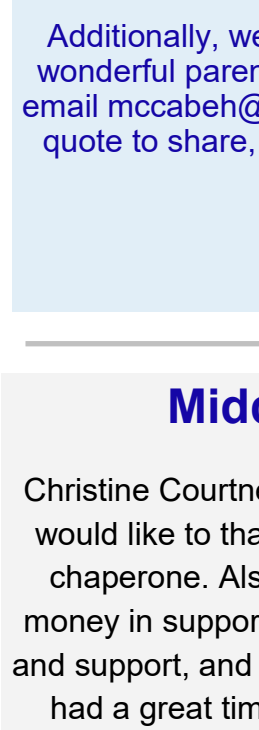
3rd Graders Celebrate Schools Walk with Bowling Party!

On Wednesday, November 29 the third grade walked to Krueger’s bowling alley for the field trip they earned by raising the most money for the Catholic Schools Walk. We bowled two games, ate some fries and had a blast spending time together! Thank you to Krueger’s and the Catholic Schools Walk Committee!

Check out a few [more pictures here!](#)



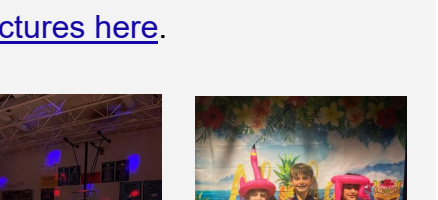
Special Congratulations to Mia B. and Isla J. - World Qualifying Irish Dancers!



Mia B. and Isla J., 5th Graders at St. Mary Parish School, achieved an amazing feat this past weekend, something only 1% of Irish dancers in the world are able to accomplish: they each earned a spot to compete in the World Championships for Irish Dance! This is the first year they were able to qualify, and because of their hard work and determination, they will now be competing in Glasgow, Scotland in March!

Mia and Isla both dance for Bellator Academy of Irish Dance in Germantown. Mia and Isla’s moms, Marie and Heather, shared a bit more about the competitions that led to this special moment. “They competed at their regional competition this weekend called ‘Oireachtas,’ which happens once a year. Our mid-America region is made up of 14 states and known to be one of the most competitive regions in the entire world.”

They shared that in Mia and Isla’s age group, there were only 106 dancers who qualified to even be at regionals. Of those dancers, 1/3 qualified for nationals championships in July, and only 14 dancers qualified for World championship. Isla and Mia were that small percent that qualified for Worlds!



As far as training, Marie and Heather shared it’s definitely not always easy and a lot of time and hard work for the girls. They each have dance class three days per week and do private lessons to help advance their technique. On top of that, Mia and Isla do personal training to keep their bodies strong and build strength, adding up to a minimum of 12 hours dedicated to Irish Dance each week.

They have to work hard to have a strong mentality to help with the competition portion of dance which is often very intense. At these major competitions, they have 5 judges watching them and scoring them all throughout all three dances. Dancers spend their whole career trying to even qualify for Worlds, and Isla and Mia were able to do it all at the age of ten!

On behalf of the St. Mary Community, we are so proud of your accomplishments! Congratulations to you both!

[Click here to read more notes of congrats from their classmates, teachers, and families!](#)

Teacher Appreciation Spotlight:

Middle School Families, please be sure to check your email! We sent out requests for our first Teacher Appreciation Spotlight of this year! In the weeks to come, we will feature our wonderful St. Mary School teachers by sharing quotes from you and your child(ren) right here in the weekly Connection. We know our teachers deserve so much recognition and thanks for all they do for our students, so we are looking forward to sharing your special words of thanks for them to see! Please send your quotes to Heather at mccabeh@smmps.school by Thursday, Dec. 7th.

Thank you!

Home & School Updates

Volunteer Spotlight: Nominations and Quotes Needed

**Middle School families, we sent out a request for quotes to highlight a parent volunteer, but we still need more quotes! Please email Heather at mccabeh@smmps.school by Thurs. Dec. 7th if you have any kind words to share. (See your email for more details!)*

Additionally, we are always looking for more nominations to thank our wonderful parent volunteers. If you’d like to nominate someone, please email mccabeh@smmps.school. Include the volunteer’s name along with a quote to share, and we will reach out to more families to get additional quotes to share!

Thank you!

Middle School Hawaiian Dance!

Christine Courtney and the rest of the Middle School Dance Committee would like to thank all the volunteers who helped set up, clean up and chaperone. Also, thank you also to those who donated items and/or money in support of the event! The event couldn’t run without your help and support, and judging by the happy faces in the pictures, the students had a great time! We are already looking forward to the next Middle School Social this Spring, so stay tuned!

Check out a few [more pictures here.](#)



Theatre Guild Christmas Play Wish List

The theatre guild is in need of a few props for the upcoming musical on Dec. 14th:

- Tan painters drop cloths (clean)
- Sailor captain costume (size 8-10)
- Pilot hat / costume (size 7-10)
- Two Fighter Pilot Costume (army green 1 piece size 7-10)
- Thin wiring (thinner than hanger)
- Red beret hat
- White boat life preserver ring

If anyone has any of these items and is willing to lend them to us for our 12/14 production, please email Ann MacGillis a photo at annmacgillis@gmail.com

Thank you!

Musical Director Needed!

Our Spring Musical is tentatively planned for March 21st, but we are still in need of a director or possible co-directors to help us continue our long standing tradition of musical productions.

You won’t get rich, but this is a paid position.

If you or someone you know may be interested, please have them contact the school office. This is a rewarding role and encourages our students to showcase their talents and gain confidence, while entertaining parents and families. Please spread the word!

Volunteer Opportunity!

Do you love to organize? We have a great volunteer opportunity! Our “health/sick” room is in dire need of some organization and TLC. Please contact the school office for more details!

Thank you!

Calendar Raffle Reminder!

Please turn in your calendar raffle tickets as soon as possible! They are due to the school office by Dec. 22 or to the Parish office by Dec. 29th at the latest. Calendars make great stocking stuffers!

Thank you!

Athletics Updates

St. Mary Parish Basketball Families!

Now that our season schedule is set, we need your help with the Concessions and Admissions. Please [click here for a link to our sign up.](#)

There are a few dates for tournaments missing as of right now, but those will be updated soon as soon as those timeslots are finalized.

The volunteer positions are open to all PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, AUNTS, UNCLES, etc. who are available and willing to help out. Please be sure to sign up for a minimum of 4 spots per family.

Please remember that we depend on volunteers to make this happen. There is no buyout available, and all families involved in St. Mary’s Athletics are obligated to help.

Thank you for your help!

-St. Mary Parish Athletic Board

Parish Updates

Holy Day of Obligation on Dec. 8
The Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

This week on Friday, Dec. 8 we will celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Holy Day of Obligation. Additional Masses at 6:30 am and 6 pm have been added at St. Mary on this day with working people and families in mind. There will also be a Mass of Anticipation at 5:30 pm at St. Anthony on Thursday, Dec. 7. A complete list of Masses and confession times for the week can be found on the front cover of the bulletin.

Family Advent Opportunity, Dec. 10

Next weekend on Sunday, Dec. 10, following the 9:30 am Mass, all families are invited to adore Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We will gather in the conference rooms at 10:45 for refreshments and a little socializing, then head to the church at 11:15 for Eucharistic Adoration led by Dcn. Lance Tappa. All are welcome.

Calendar Raffle Winners

Congratulations to these \$30 winners drawn on Nov. 29th:
Elena Nevins, William Stiyer, Joey Dudzik, Grace Gold, and David & Donna Roesch

Thank you for your support and participation!

In the Community

Child Development Day: Germantown School District invites those interested to Child Development Day, offered Jan. 8th and April 8th. Appointments required and will offer developmental screening to confirm the progress of children and to possibly identify children who may show a need for a follow-up assessment. (for children age 2 years, 9 months through age 5. [Click here to view the flyer.](#)