



# St. Mary's Servant

volume IV issue i MMXI

Bismarck, ND

## DOWN TO THE WIRE



### **MORNING SUPERVISION, BREAKFAST BEGIN AT 7:30 A.M. IN THE GYM**

Again this year, St. Mary's Grade School will offer morning supervision and \$1.00 breakfast beginning at 7:30 a.m. Monday through Friday.

Each morning of the school week custodian Dean Pflieger will open both the Thayer and 8th Street doors for students to enter (see map on page 3). Upon entering the school, students should proceed directly to the gym. At 7:45 a.m., weather permitting, students in grades K-5 will be led to the playground for outside supervision until classes begin at 8:15 a.m. Students in grades 6-8 will remain supervised in the gym until their homeroom classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Preschool and Jr. K students should be escorted by parents to their classroom between 8:00 - 8:15 a.m. and 11:55 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. respectively.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR LUNCH SERVING**

In order to accommodate the larger number of students moving through the lunch line this school year, St. Mary's Grade School is seeking parent volunteers to help serve lunch from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Parents who are available during those hours could commit to volunteer as seldom or as often as possible.

Please contact the school office if you would be willing to serve the school by serving lunch!



*A view of the remodeling project as of late July, showing the site of the future 6th grade classroom. The door on the left and an adjacent hallway will lead to the 5th grade classroom.*

### **AMIDST A CHAOTIC SUMMER, CONTRACTORS WORK TO FINISH REMODELING PROJECT BEFORE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS**

BISMARCK, ND - This past year, as plans developed to add an additional Kindergarten classroom for the 2011-2012 academic year, it soon became apparent that additional classroom space would be needed at St. Mary's Grade School. After considering different options, the administration and school board decided on a remodeling project that will remodel the old locker rooms on the northwest side of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the school building.

The remodeling project involves reconstructing a small office and two locker rooms into two classrooms capable of accommodating 25 - 30 students each. Each classroom will have two large windows facing north, and will be constructed with adequate storage shelves, cabinets, sink, and coat/backpack storage.

For the upcoming school year, the new classrooms will house the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes. The west room will house the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and the east room will house the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mrs. Ritter's

Kindergarten classroom will be taking the place of the current 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, and Ms. Wald's Preschool/Jr. Kindergarten classroom will be taking the place of the current 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom.

"We want to keep the Kindergarten classrooms, and all future same-grade classrooms, next to each other to allow for greater collaboration between teachers of identical grade levels," described Mr. Fladeland in a recent interview with the St. Mary's Servant.

*(continued on page six)*



*One of the unexpected results of the remodeling project was the installation of an updated fire suppression system for the kitchen, shown above.*



## ***DEDICATION FROM ST. MARY'S PTO FUELS SCHOOL PROGRESS***

Each year in May, when students are turning their attention towards the coming summer months, the St. Mary's Grade School PTO officers are busy organizing the next year's events.

This past year, the St. Mary's PTO events and fundraising activities were successful, raising over \$20,000 for school related expenses. With the proceeds of such activities, the PTO allocated full or partial funding for numerous purchases, including education technology equipment like SmartBoards and MacBooks, Rosetta Stone language software, and other classroom supplies.

It is through the generous volunteering of time and effort by school families that the PTO's success can continue. For the upcoming 2011-2012 school year, the PTO will be sponsoring at least 17 events within the parish and school community.

In order to efficiently manage the different activities, a chairperson and co-chairperson for each event are required. Currently, there are several events for next year requiring leadership. Please contact PTO President Bernadette Dosch or attend a PTO meeting if you are willing to help. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 7th, at 7:00 p.m. in the school library.

## ***NEW PTO OFFICERS READY FOR THE YEAR***

We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated group of officers on the PTO board for the 2011-2012 school year. Thanks to the following parents for their leadership in the PTO:

Bernadette Dosch	President
Lynn Burgard	Past President
Johtona Roehrl	Treasurer
Karen Fischer	Secretary
Melanie Koneiczka	At-Large

## ***MENTORING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO HELP NEW FAMILIES***

We begin the 2011-2012 academic year at St. Mary's Grade School with over 20 new families joining our school community. In order to provide our new families with a welcoming environment and a knowledgeable source for school-related questions, we are currently pairing willing families with interested new families in a recently developed mentoring program.

"So many of us take this school knowledge for granted," described faculty member Mrs. Kim Ritter. "This program is a simple way to provide new families with someone familiar with the school who can answer questions and help them through the transition.

In the coming weeks, Mrs. Ritter and members of the PTO will be contacting new families to inquire about their interest in participating in the program. It will be organized informally, with mentor families contacting the new families to offer them assistance.

Of course, any family with questions or concerns about any of the school traditions, ceremonies, or events should not hesitate to call, email, or visit the school office. We would be happy to help.

## ***EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY THE PTO***

- McQuade Tournament
- SCRIP Program
- Pizza Corner Fundraising
- Palm Sunday Bake Sale
- Christmas Bake Sale
- Pumpkin Patch
- Popcorn Popper
- Fall Dance
- Light for the Future
- Santa Store
- Barnes & Noble Book Fair
- Family Fun Night
- Spring Rummage Sale
- Fall Rummage Sale
- Spring Showcase
- Soup Labels / Box Tops / Etc.

## ***PASTRIES FOR PARENTS EVENT SET FOR LATE AUGUST***

One of the first family events of this year is Pastries for Parents, which will be held on Friday, August 26th from 7:30 - 8:15 a.m. in the St. Mary's Grade School Gymnasium. This fun and simple event gives students and parents the chance to mingle with other families and to taste quite possibly the best caramel rolls on planet Earth.

For years, the St. Mary's kitchen has been baking the delicious rolls for the event, but "mum" is the word on what makes them so tasty.

"Honestly, one of my goals in becoming principal was to get a hold of that recipe," said Principal Fladeland. "But no luck! They keep the process a secret, and the recipe locked in a vault. I guess I should just be happy to eat them!"

Juice, coffee, and nut-free muffins will also be served on the morning of Friday, August 26th, and the playground will be open for parking. So come one, come all, to the Pastries for Parents at St. Mary's Grade School.

## AFTER SCHOOL STUDENT PICK-UP SCHEDULE

**FOUR POINTS OF DEPARTURE, EXTRA PLAYGROUND PARKING TO HELP ALLEVIATE CONGESTION DURING AFTER-SCHOOL PICK-UP; ALL POINTS MONITORED BY STAFF MEMBERS**



*An edited aerial view of the St. Mary's Grade School as seen from Google Earth, with the numbered entrances for after school pick-up*

- 1. Thayer (Front) Door** - Preschool (11:00 dismissal), 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades students with last names A - M
- 2. Playground Door** - Jr. K students *and older siblings* \*
- 3. Broadway (Church) Door** - 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades students with last names N – Z
- 4. 8th Street (Gym) Door** - All Kindergarten students *and older siblings*

\* - The playground gates will open daily at 2:45 p.m. to allow for vehicle parking.

Each door of departure will be monitored by a staff member beginning at 3:00 p.m. At 3:15 p.m., if students have not already been picked up they will be directed to a designated classroom to await their ride. After 3:15 p.m. parents will be required to check in at the designated classroom to pick up their children. A calendar outside the school office will list the schedule of after-school classroom duty. Please make every effort to pick up students in a timely fashion.

If possible, please refrain from parking for an extended period of time in front of the entrances before and after school. Also, in the interest of student safety, please remember to pull-over to the side of the street when picking up or dropping off students. Thank you for your consideration and flexibility.

## DETERMINING THE SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

St. Mary's Grade School has based its 2011-2012 academic year calendar partly on the starting date of SMCHS. The following is an explanation by Dr. Tom Eberle, Principal of SMCHS, on the high school's determination of the school calendar dates:

*"According to North Dakota state law SMCHS is required to have 175 student contact days. Survey results ... have indicated that parents, students, and teachers prefer to have finals before the Christmas break.*

*In order for this to happen it is necessary to start school earlier in August to ensure that we have approximately the same number of contact days first semester as second semester since all of our classes are based on a semester system.*

*In addition, survey results indicated that parents would like to finish school and graduate a week before the Bismarck/Mandan public schools. Because of this we need to start with the graduation date in mind and count backwards on the school calendar to ensure that we have 175 student contact days for any given school year.*

St. Mary's Grade School calendar is normally developed in February and March of every year. As always, we welcome all families' comments and concerns, and will do our best to accommodate.

## SPANISH TO BE STRESSED IN NEW LANGUAGE PROGRAM, OTHER LANGUAGES POSSIBLE FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

After completing the Rosetta Stone online orientation this summer, Spanish teacher Sarah Voigt and Principal Tony Fladeland have decided to make Spanish the default language for the foreign language program.

Under the terms of the online agreement with Rosetta Stone, St. Mary's Grade School will be able to offer the following languages to students:

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Dutch
- English
- Filipino
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hebrew
- Hindi
- Irish
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Turkish
- Vietnamese

Beginning this year, each student will be assigned a unique ID and password along with a specific language. Once the account is created, the user will not be able to change the language offered.

Because of this restriction of usage, and the Spanish teaching credentials of Mrs. Voigt, all students will be designated by default to enter the Spanish language program. If a compelling case is offered, administration will consider placing students in an independent study program whereby they will be allowed to learn a different language during foreign language class. Once placed in an alternate language program, students will not be able to switch languages.

For this school year, each class in grades 1-8 will have three sessions per week of language instruction, with each session ranging from 30-45 minutes. Each student will be asked to pay \$10.00 towards to the cost of a USB headset for individual use. St. Mary's Grade School will be purchasing the headsets and funding the remainder of the cost.

For more information about the new language program, or to request an alternate language for independent study, please contact principal Tony Fladeland at 701.223.0225 or by email at [tony.fladeland@sendit.nodak.edu](mailto:tony.fladeland@sendit.nodak.edu).

# FACULTY UPDATE

## **MRS. RITTER TO TEACH AT KINDERGARTEN LEVEL**

*(April 8, 2011 email from Mr. Fladeland to Fr. Lindemann, School Board, Staff, and Families of St. Mary's Grade School)*

Father Gene, School Board, Faculty, and Staff of St. Mary's Grade School,

It is my sincere joy to inform you that the new Kindergarten teacher for our additional classroom next year will be Mrs. Kimberley Ritter.

Mrs. Ritter has been teaching at St. Mary's Grade School since 2006 as our Preschool and Jr. Kindergarten teacher. In that short amount of time, she has developed a solid reputation as a quality early childhood educator.

Mrs. Ritter holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Mary in Elementary Education with and Early Childhood specialization. She regularly attends local and regional professional conferences and has recently participated in early childhood education consulting work at Princeton University.

As she continues her development in the teaching profession, she will be guided with the love and support of current Kindergarten teacher Mrs. Liz Bihrlle, with whom

she will collaborate closely.

As we prepare to open the search for a Preschool and Jr. Kindergarten teacher, we know Mrs. Ritter will be difficult to replace, but we look forward with great expectation to her new role as Kindergarten teacher. Congratulations, Kim!



*Preschool / Jr. K teacher Molly Wald and Kindergarten teacher Kimberley Ritter at St. Mary's Grade School in late July*

## **2011-2012 St. Mary's Grade School Faculty**

Miss Molly Wald	Preschool/Jr. Kindergarten
Mrs. Liz Bihrlle	Kindergarten
Mrs. Kim Ritter	Kindergarten
Mrs. Cindy Fischer	1st Grade
Mrs. Penny Goebel	2nd Grade
Miss Amber Birrenkott	3rd Grade
Ms. Julie Tello	4th Grade / 7th-8th Art
Mr. Michael Ulmen	5th Grade / 6th Science
Mrs. Roni Gilchrist	6th-8th Language Arts
Mrs. Camie Rae Zenker	6th-8th Language Arts
Mrs. Sharol Haugen	6th-8th Math / Religion
Mr. Corey Frink	6th-8th Social Studies
	7th-8th Science
Mrs. Amy Heuer	Health / P. E.
Mrs. Celia Schmaltz	Music / 7th-8th Choir
Ms. Sarah Voigt	Library / Spanish
Mr. John Krueger	6th-8th Band

## **MISS WALD HIRED FOR PRESCHOOL, JR. K TEACHING POSITION**

As soon as the decision to accept Mrs. Ritter's transfer to Kindergarten was final, St. Mary's Grade School administration immediately began searching for a new Preschool teacher, and the search didn't last long! St. Mary's Grade School is pleased to announce that Miss Molly Wald of Maddock, ND will be the new Preschool / Jr. Kindergarten teacher beginning this 2011-2012 school year.

Miss Wald received her undergraduate degrees in elementary education and special education from the University of Mary in 2002. She then moved to Arizona, working as a special education teacher and administrator. In 2008, Miss Wald received her Master's degree in educational leadership and curriculum from Northern Arizona University.

After completing her Master's degree, Molly moved back to North Dakota (good decision) to be closer to her family. For the past two years, she has been working in early childhood education and as a special education director in Devil's Lake.

St. Mary's Grade School is fortunate to have such a qualified, energetic teacher to work with the students of the Preschool and Jr. Kindergarten classes. We welcome with great enthusiasm Miss Molly Wald to our school community.

# STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

With the completion of the Vision Statement and its publication, Phase 2 of the strategic planning process came to an end. The Vision Statement along with other information gathered during Phases 1 & 2, has been given to the Strategic Planning Committee.

Phase 3: development of the strategic plan, officially opened on May 24 with an organizational meeting at Corpus Christi Church. Forty-five members of the community responded to a personal invitation to participate on the strategic planning committee. Members were chosen for their experience and expertise in one of the planning areas as well as their desire for the success of the Catholic schools. Planning areas include: Catholic spirit, academic excellence, leadership, governance, finance and operations,

facilities and property, marketing, development and communication, and, resources.

Work on the strategic plan was suspended during the summer due to the need of many of the planning committee members to attend to family and property issues created by the flooding. The process will resume the weeks of August 22 and 29 with organizational and committee meetings. A revised timeline will be developed and distributed to all constituencies after these meetings convene.

Official updates and information will be distributed through the parishes and the regular communication of the four schools. We ask that you continue to pray for the success of the strategic planning process.

## PRINCIPAL FLADELAND BALKS ON UNIFORM CODE ADJUSTMENT, PAST POLICY TO BE ENFORCED FOR 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR

At the Spring Showcase this past spring at St. Mary's Grade School, Principal Fladeland stood to make a few brief comments about looking forward to the 2011-2012 school year. One of those comments, about a possible change to the school uniform policy, caught the interest of more than a few parents.

As that school year came to a close, and a busier-than-usual summer followed, Fladeland's intentions to revise the dress code were tabled.

"I had lofty intentions combined with a very unrealistic view of how this summer was going to progress. After July 4th passed without any decisions being made, I knew it would have to wait," said Fladeland in a

recent interview with the St. Mary's Servant.

Rather than change the policy for this year, school faculty and administration will instead be intent on consistently enforcing the current dress code policy. Of prime concern will again be the students in upper grades, who seem naturally inclined to stretch the boundaries of the dress code.

Please carefully review the dress code policy found in the Parent and Student Handbook and online at [stmarysbismarck.org](http://stmarysbismarck.org) to ensure that students wear the appropriate attire to school.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

## MARCH INTERNET SAFETY PRESENTATION MESSAGE CATCHES STUDENT ATTENTION

*(letter to the editor from Principal Fladeland to Devil's Lake Journal)*

April 4, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

Last week at St. Mary's Grade School in Bismarck, Officer John Maritato of the Devil's Lake Police Department and Deputy Ben Myrum of the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office presented to students in grades five through eight an essential and timely presentation entitled, *Internet Safety and Text Messaging*.

It was an engaging 90-minute presentation that covered critical topics

ranging from online predators to text messaging to Internet bullying. The messages were clear: 1) stay away from strangers, 2) watch your language, 3) don't text and drive, and 4) anything posted or texted online can instantly become public... forever.

Officer Maritato and Deputy Myrum presented to the students examples of the dangerous consequences of inappropriate online activity and followed those examples with simple rules to avoid serious problems.

I am writing to thank both men and all others involved in making this presentation a reality for students across the state. It was first class, and its message was received.

## OFFICE NEWS

### SYCAMORE ONLINE

St. Mary's Grade School, along with Cathedral and Saint Anne Schools, use the online school management program Sycamore to better connect parents to the events occurring in the school.

With Sycamore online access, parents and students can check the school calendar, find contact information, check hot lunch balances, and stay updated on student assignments and grades.

Very shortly, the office will be sending Sycamore access codes and instructions to all families. Please contact the school office if you have any questions or concerns.

### TUITION STATEMENTS NOW ON QUICKBOOKS

As previously reported, St. Mary's Grade School has transitioned from Sycamore to Quickbooks for documenting tuition accounts and recording tuition payments.

In early August, each family should have received notification of this transition with their first statement. Also included in that notification was an option to receive paperless tuition statements by email.

While tuition balances will no longer be available on Sycamore, the statements on Quickbooks are sure to be more clear and more accurate.

Contact accounts manager Michele Vecchia or the school office if you have any questions or concerns about the new tuition accounting.

### 2011-2012

#### HOT LUNCH RATES

Breakfast \$1.00

K-8 Lunch \$2.50

Parent Lunch \$4.00

Sibling Lunch \$2.00



## ***IN LATE SPRING DECISION, PRESCHOOL / JR. K MOVE FROM LAMERE TO SCHOOL; PRESCHOOL OPENINGS AT LAMERE***

*(continued from page one)*

"In order to accomplish that, we will be gradually reconfiguring the locations of the different grades in the building over the next few years."

After the decision was made to create space for additional classrooms, the school board then decided to move the Preschool / Jr. K classroom from LaMere Learning Center to the school, much to the delight of outgoing Preschool / Jr. K teacher Mrs. Kim Ritter.

The former classroom, "was never designed to be a classroom. A classroom in that spot put unnecessary restrictions upon the LaMere program," said Ritter.

The decision to move the classroom into the school has also resulted in a few extra openings at the LaMere Learning Center, which has regularly been holding a waiting list at all age levels.

"It's so nice to be able to tell families that we can accept their children into

LaMere," said director Mariah Dodds. In her fifth year as director, Dodds has overseen the many positive changes at LaMere which have resulted in such high demand for its child care services.

In planning the classroom assignment, St. Mary's administration consulted with Fire Marshall Ron Kunda about placing a Preschool classroom on a second floor. To comply with regulations, the Preschool and Jr. K classes will have a designated stairwell for evacuation. Other grades on the second floor will use the north stairwell for evacuation.

"We are planning to eventually move all of the younger students to the main floor," said Principal Fladeland. "This will require some creativity and flexibility from the staff, but it will ultimately be in the best interest of the students, so it is an easy decision to make."

## ***SPRING VARIETY SHOW TO BE HELD AT THE BELLE MEHUS CITY AUDITORIUM***

Late last year as families, relatives, and friends packed into the St. Mary's Grade School gymnasium for the annual Spring Variety Show, plans were already underway to move the end-of-the-year event to a new venue. Beginning this spring, that new venue will be the historic Belle Mehus Auditorium in downtown Bismarck, located two blocks west of St. Mary's Church.

"With our growing enrollment, and outstanding school music productions, we knew the time was coming when we would have to look at a larger venue," said Principal Fladeland. "The Belle provides the students and families alike with a great performance experience in a beautiful auditorium.

In the coming years, the school will look to the Belle Mehus Auditorium to house the Christmas Program as well, which, like the Variety Show, has recently seen audience levels rise to over 400 people!

The Variety Show is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18th at 7:00 p.m. at the Belle Mehus City Auditorium.



*In April, St. Mary's 3rd and 4th grade students attended an annual Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra education concert at the Belle Mehus City Auditorium.*

## **AUGUST / SEPTEMBER CALENDAR**

**AUGUST 16**  
**Teacher In-Service**  
**NO SCHOOL**

**AUGUST 17**  
**School Open House**  
**9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**AUGUST 18**  
**First Full Day of Classes**  
**8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**  
**(8:00 a.m. for grades 6-8)**

**AUGUST 19**  
**School Board Meeting**  
**12:00 p.m.**  
**South Multi-Purpose Room**

**AUGUST 27**  
**Pastries for Parents**  
**7:30 - 8:15 a.m.**  
**Gymnasium**

**SEPTEMBER 5**  
**Labor Day**  
**NO SCHOOL**

**SEPTEMBER 7**  
**PTO Meeting**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**Library**

The St. Mary's Servant is a publication of:



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*page 1 banner photo:*  
*St. Mary's Grade School First Communion,*  
*April 23, 1911*

*page 6 banner photo:*  
*2011 Bismarck Diocese Christm Mass*  
*attended by the 8th grade class*  
*April 18, 2011*