



St. Mary's Servant

volume IV issue iv MMXI

Bismarck, ND

'TIS THE SEASON



SCHOOL NEWS

ENROLLMENT BEGINS FOR 2012-2013 YEAR

At the end of November, with most of us still full from Thanksgiving feasts and looking ahead to the Christmas holiday, the St. Mary's Grade School office began the task of registering families and students for the upcoming 2012-2013 school year.

Enrollment letters have now been distributed to families, and email communication has been sent home asking all families to indicate their intentions to enroll for next year.

Of course, current families with children enrolled at St. Mary's Grade School and LaMere Learning Center have priority for enrollment. All current families are asked to return their enrollment forms to the school office by Tuesday, December 13th; or, they may also re-enroll through Sycamore at www.sycamoreeducation.com/enroll.php?schoolID=1350.

On Wednesday, December 14th, enrollment will be open to the general public, with admissions accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

We will prepare for 50 student openings at the Kindergarten level, with limited additional enrollment available for 1st through 8th grades.

Please visit the school office or contact us at 701.223.0225 or st.marys@sendit.nodak.edu for more information on re-enrollment or new registration.



Over the Thanksgiving holiday, the school Christmas tree and Nativity scene appeared in the school entrance.

AS THE SEASON OF ADVENT BEGINS, STUDENTS AND FACULTY PREPARE FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST WITH PRAYER, ACTIVITIES

BISMARCK, ND - As the 2011-2012 school year races by, students at St. Mary's Grade School were greeted after the Thanksgiving holiday with a beautiful display of Advent season, with a Christmas tree and Nativity scene decorating the front entrance of the school. The decorations are just one part of the school-wide celebration of Advent and the coming Christmas season.

"The story of Jesus and Mary in Bethlehem looking for a place to rest teaches us such an important lesson about the true meaning of Advent," described Principal Tony Fladeland. "It's about making room in our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ."

In a cultural climate filled with messages to the contrary - those of filling one's thoughts and desires with material possessions - the students of St. Mary's Grade School are taught to understand and focus on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas.

Among other activities during the Advent season, all-school assemblies are held every Monday in the school gym, with students and faculty gathering around the Advent wreath to pray in anticipation. During the prayer services, students from different grades read different prayers and Bible passages.

Thank you to all the parents and teachers who make these activities possible!



Second grade student Samuel reads at an Advent Prayer Service in late November.

ADOPTED GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM IN ITS 23RD YEAR AT ST. MARY'S GRADE SCHOOL



Mrs. Haugen, Mrs. Bihle, and Mrs. Gilchrist form the Grandparents Program Committee, organizing the activities throughout the year.

LONGSTANDING STUDENT PROGRAM REACHES OUT TO ELDERLY IN BISMARCK

The St. Mary's Adopted Grandparent Program gives students an opportunity to reach out to senior members of the community on a monthly basis. Students write letters, make cards, and pray for their adopted grandparents throughout the school year. They also share in a Mass of Celebration followed by breakfast and bingo at the end of each school year. At St. Mary's Grade School, a Servant Leadership School, students are continually working on ways they can serve others. Our students are committed to caring for the elderly in our community.

This program was developed over twenty years ago at St. Mary's Grade School and is still going strong. This year we are excited that over fifteen adopted grandparents in our program are residents of the St. Vincent's Care Center in Bismarck. We appreciate all of the work that St. Vincent's Activities Director Jennifer Zobel does to make this possible. We are always looking for more grandparents to be a part of our program. If you know of someone who would like to participate in the Adopted Grandparent Program, please contact St. Mary's Grade School.

ADOPTED GRANDPARENT HEADS TO KENYA, AN EXAMPLE OF SERVICE FOR STUDENTS

Adoptive Grandparent Patricia Dvorak stopped by the 2nd grade classroom on All Saints Day to say good-bye to her adoptive grandson Matthew. She left that afternoon for Kenya, East Africa. She will be spending the next six months at the Diocese of Bismarck Kenya Mission.

The 2nd grade class will be following her adventure by reading her blog. You can visit the Kenya Mission blog by going to <http://kenyamission-dioceseofbismarck.blogspot.com>. We send to Patricia our heartfelt prayers as she serves at the Mission in Kenya.



Patricia Dvorak, at left, with others at the Mission in Kenya

FOSS SCIENCE KITS PROVIDE MORE INTER-ACTION, STEP UP SCIENCE LEARNING

St. Mary's, Saint Anne, and Cathedral Grade Schools are sharing Foss Science Kits this year. Each school has purchased several new kits for grades K – 6. Every three months the kits will be rotated between the three schools. This is a wonderful opportunity for each school to have three of the kits for the price of one!

The Foss Kits offer the students an opportunity to learn about science using hands-on techniques. The second grade is currently working with plants. They mowed their lawns this week, observed seeds becoming flowers, and are waiting for their wheat to sprout.

The third grade is studying the human body. They have been learning about the

bones in their bodies and their functions. With a partner, they had to put their skeletons together simply by feeling the skeleton bones.

The fourth and fifth graders have been learning about variables. They will be spending time making pendulums, airplanes, boats, and catapults. They will then observe and compare the outcomes of their experiments.

How do the students feel about the Foss kits? Third grader Hannah Zeien said, "It is fun!" And Quinn Johnson replied, "Awesome!"

It is clear to see that both the teachers and students are truly enjoying science these days!



2nd grade student Gracie works with measurements.

NEWLY ORDAINED BISHOP KAGAN CONFIRMS ST. MARY'S PARISH YOUTH



At right, Bishop David Kagan speaks to Confirmation candidates with Father Gene listening in the background.

IN HOMILY, BISHOP TELLS CANDIDATES TO LISTEN TO, ACT ON GOD'S CALL

Just days after Msgr. David Kagan was ordained and installed as seventh Bishop of the Bismarck Diocese, he presided over the Confirmation of 38 St. Mary's Parish Family parishioners. For Bishop Kagan, it was the first time he has presided at a Confirmation ceremony since his ordination and installation on November 30th.

In opening remarks at the ceremony, Father Gene Lindemann, Pastor of St. Mary's jokingly described the events as "God's will," with Bishop Kagan presiding over his first Confirmation ceremony at St. Mary's Church, the first cathedral of the Bismarck diocese.

During his homily, Bishop Kagan stressed the importance of listening to God's will.

The bishop instructed the candidates to ask, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

He then followed, "But when you ask that question, you better be ready for the answer."

"With confirmation comes wisdom, courage, fear of the Lord - that's reverence," continued Bishop Kagan. He described the importance of receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to listen to, accept, and live God's call to each of us.

After hearing and accepting God's call, we face the lifelong task of living up to that calling. "You can learn about how to live by reading about the lives of the saints," described the Bishop as he closed his homily.

As the first significant snow of the year fell outside that Sunday afternoon, the church of St. Mary's provided a warm environment for the Confirmation ceremony.

We are blessed to have Bishop Kagan as the new head of our Diocese, and we send him our prayers as he begins his new life in Bismarck.

STAFF UPDATE

JARED MARTIN JOINS ST. MARY'S STAFF AS EVENING CUSTODIAN

St. Mary's Grade School is pleased to announce that Jared Martin has been hired as evening custodian. Jared began employment in late October after the resignation of Jim Cossette.

For the past few weeks, Jared has been under the watchful eyes of custodians Dean Pflieger and Ernie Volland as they train him in the evening custodian position. Jared is a Bismarck resident, and son of St. Mary's parishioners Kim and Diane Martin, also of Bismarck.

Congratulations Jared on your new position!



Jared Martin

PRINCIPAL FLADELAND PART OF STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PANEL

Early last year, Mr. Fladeland was nominated by North Dakota State Superintendent Wayne Sanstead to serve on the North Dakota State IDEA Advisory Panel.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is federal legislation that identifies and provides guidelines for the appropriate education for students with disabilities. One of the stipulations of the legislation is the creation of a state panel that advises state authorities on the functioning of the program.

Mr. Fladeland serves on the panel as a representative for the private schools in the state. The panel meets 4-5 times per year to discuss state compliance with the federal regulations.

CHRISTMAS GIVING IDEAS FOR YOUR FAVORITE SCHOOL!

APPLE-A-DAY COMPUTER DRIVE CONTINUES SUPPORT FOR TECHNOLOGY LEARNING

With the introduction of Rosetta Stone language curriculum into our school day, one of the expected results has been the increased use of our Seiler/Klein Memorial Computer Lab.

St. Mary's Grade School is asking for generous contributions from interested families and individuals to our 'Apple-a-Day' Computer Drive, which aims to provide to St. Mary's Grade School students with 26 MacBook Pro laptop computers for use as a portable computer lab. The lab will be used in all grades to accomplish a wide range of educational goals. Please consider donating to the 'Apple-a-Day' Computer Drive by contributing to the purchase of these computers!

- Terabyte Level \$1,300 and above
- Gigabyte Level \$650 - \$1,299
- Megabyte Level \$325 - \$649
- Kilobyte Level \$100 - \$324

Please make check payable to St. Mary's Grade School Apple-a-Day

SPONSOR-A-STUDENT PROGRAM

St. Mary's Grade School served as the only Catholic School in Bismarck for nearly 70 years and, as such, set the standard for Catholic school education. Continuing in this rich tradition, we are committed to responding to the call to *A School with the Mission of Christ* - to celebrate faith, proclaim the Gospel, become servant leaders, and provide education.

Realizing the importance and blessings of a Catholic Education, please consider sponsoring a child to attend St. Mary's Grade School.

I will sponsor a child by contributing:

- \$2,400.00 for one full year
- \$1,200.00 for a half year
- \$ 520.00 for 2 months
- \$ 265.00 for 1 month
- \$ 66.25 for 1 week
- Other

Please make check payable to St. Mary's Grade School Tuition Assistance

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS UPDATE

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY MEMBERS WITH EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE COME TOGETHER, CREATE NEW VISION, FUTURE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN BISMARCK

The start of the new school year has been very exciting for the Catholic Schools in the Bismarck area. The Vision Statement was completed and published in May. The vision statement is designed to ensure that our Catholic schools continue to provide strong Catholic spirit; educational excellence with a focus on servant leadership; are sustainable well into the future and funded in a manner that makes them available, accessible and affordable to all families who wish to choose them for their children. The vision states that the schools will be jointly operated by the member parishes (currently Ascension, Cathedral, Corpus Christi, St. Anne's and St. Mary's). A unified system of Catholic schools provides many opportunities for us from the efficiency of reducing costs of services, a unified curriculum, enhanced resources to support staff development for our administrators and teachers and the

support and direction of an educational leader at the helm of our system. More importantly it will strengthen the already vibrant spirit of our faith community in Bismarck. The entire Vision Statement can be found below.

The strategic planning committees have been hard at work since August. Members of the Bismarck community, parents, parishioners and alums have been involved in every phase of the process: surveys, interviews, meetings, and now the strategic planning phase. The timeline calls for the strategic planning process to be completed by December 31st. Prior to the finalization of the strategic direction and plan for our schools, the pastors and consultants will be meeting with parish councils, finance committees and school boards to announce the draft plan, receive insights and responses to the draft, revise as needed and seek support to move forward. Although no decisions have been finalized to date, planning areas include: Catholic spirit, academic excellence, leadership, governance, finance and operations, facilities and property, marketing, development and communication, and resources. After the draft goes through review and revision, it will reach the approval stage of the process beginning with pastors and parish finance councils and followed by final approval from the bishop.

BISMARCK CATHOLIC SCHOOLS VISION STATEMENT

An excerpt from *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* \ published by the United States Catholic Bishops in support of Catholic schools. © 2005

"We are convinced that Catholic Schools continue to be 'the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people' who are the future of the Church."

The Catholic schools of the Bismarck area will be jointly operated by the member parishes (currently Ascension, Cathedral, Corpus Christi, Saint Anne's and Saint Mary's), for the purpose of educating children whose families are seeking an academically strong, early learning through high school education grounded in the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. The schools will work in partnership with parents, the primary educators of their children.

The schools will continue to employ highly qualified administrators, teachers and staff passionate about imparting faith and knowledge, and committed to empowering students to participate in their faith and educational development. Innovative and effective educational practices will be at the forefront of the students' learning experience. The Catholic spirit and academic excellence of the schools will continue to be enhanced through the accomplishment of a strategic plan that will include:

- ❖ A plan designed to ensure that the strong **Catholic spirit and culture** including religious education, opportunities for worship and prayer, and a commitment to servant leadership, stewardship and community service will be hallmarks for the Catholic schools of the Bismarck area.
- ❖ An **educational plan** designed to provide high academic standards for early learning through high school, a well articulated and unified preschool-high school curriculum and appropriate accreditation for all schools. As part of the educational plan, a plan will be developed for the acquisition, use and update of technology that supports the educational goals.

Committed to the premise that together we are stronger than any one of us is alone, the member parishes will jointly operate the schools through an **effective and efficient governance structure** designed to provide support and direction to the schools.

There will be a **comprehensive plan for the temporal vitality** of the schools that is sustainable, mission driven, responsive to changing demographics and provides for the spiritual and educational needs of the students. The comprehensive plan will include the following elements:

- ❖ A succinct **mission statement** that clearly defines the nature and purpose of the schools and inspires the actions taken on their behalf.
- ❖ A fiscally accountable **funding plan** that includes financial management, responsible compensation, resource development and investment.
- ❖ A unified **tuition model** that is affordable and just.
- ❖ A **facility plan** that provides for maintenance, capital improvements and appropriate expansion.
- ❖ A **communication plan** that informs and educates our community about our schools and encourages support and participation.
- ❖ A **marketing plan** that identifies target audiences, provides a compelling message, encourages recruitment and development, and includes effective strategies to reach the target audiences.
- ❖ A comprehensive **development plan** that includes the creation of a development office.

An excerpt from *Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium* published by the United States Catholic Bishops in support of Catholic schools. © 2005

"Our vision is clear: our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church...we must respond to challenging times with faith, vision, and the will to succeed because the Catholic school's mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation, and most especially our Church."

It is our **vision** that the Catholic schools of the Bismarck area will respond to the Bishops' call by being Catholic in spirit and culture, academically excellent, jointly operated by the member parishes, and funded in a manner that makes them available, accessible and affordable to all families who wish to choose them for their children.

Adopted 5/19/2011

SERVANT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

AFTER STORM CANCELATION, COMMISSIONER FONG VISITS SCHOOL TO DISCUSS IDEALS, EXAMPLES OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP



Commissioner Fong takes questions from the students.

Last year in March, St. Mary's Grade School was all set to have North Dakota State Tax Commissioner Cory Fong speak to students. The room was scheduled, the teachers were informed, and the standard visitor gift of a St. Mary's Grade School coffee cup was ready to be given.

Just one problem.

On Wednesday, March 23rd last year, a large storm system of heavy snow moved across central North Dakota, and schools throughout the Bismarck-Mandan area closed for the day. With those closings meant the postponing of Commissioner Fong's visit.

But at the end of November this year, schedules aligned again, this time with much better weather. Fong first spoke to students in grades one through four, followed by a visit with students in grades five through eight.



St. Mary's 3rd grade students listen to Mr. Fong

During the presentation, Commissioner Fong spoke about the importance of service to others, and how that service leads others by providing a good example of positive action.

Now in it's fourth year, the Servant Leadership Program at St. Mary's Grade School invites state and local leaders to visit the school and speak to the students about the values of servant leadership. Students also visit community groups to present the '7 Habits of Highly Effective Students', developed by author Steven Covey.

More events to be announced soon!

4TH GRADE SPREADS FUN, ACTIVITY WITH BACKPACK PILOT PROGRAM

By Student Reporter Tatum Butz



Tatum Butz

The fourth grade class this year has decided to do something new, an Activity Backpack Pilot Program! The goal for this program is to increase physical activity over the weekend. It is also to have connection time between parents and children. The backpacks contain activities such as speed stacks for cup stacking. There are six backpacks and they go home with different students every weekend.

Fourth grade students Morgan and Jackson got to take home two of the backpacks the first weekend of school. Jackson said that his favorite part about the backpacks was the cup stacking. He said that before he took the backpack home he was looking forward to having fun with the cup stacks. Morgan said she

thought the backpacks were fun, containing speed stacks and other games. Speed stacks originated in the 1980's in California and appeared in 1990 on the "Tonight Show", with Johnny Carson.



St. Mary's Grade School 4th grade students with the activity packs



Abbie, Tatum, and Rachel display their 'Student of the Month' medals.

OCTOBER 'STUDENTS OF THE MONTH' CHOSEN AT ST. MARY'S

As part of our Servant Leadership program at St. Mary's Grade School, we recognize students in grades six through eight at the end of each month who most exhibit the ideals of servant leadership.

At their last weekly meeting of the month, teachers of students in grades six through eight discuss choices for the awards and come to a consensus before reporting the students' names to Principal Fladeland. In a timely manner then, Mr. Fladeland contacts Dakota Awards to engrave the student names on the back of 'Student of the Month' medals.

Through their behaviors and interactions towards their peers and teachers, Abbie Morlock, Tatum Butz, and Rachel Burgard provide good examples to those around them. Congratulations to all three for being selected as September Students of the Month.



STUDENTS 'STACK UP' AT ST. MARY'S PHY ED ACTIVITY

Sport Stacking is a track meet for your hands at warp speed! It's an exciting individual and team sport in which participants stack and unstack 12 specially designed, high-tech cups in predetermined pyramids with amazing dexterity. Sport Stacking helps students use both sides of their bodies and brains, promoting hand quickness and concentration. Stackers race against the clock for individual times and race head-to-head in team relays.

Amy Heuer, our Physical Education instructor, has been leading the "Stack Up" World Record breaking event at St. Mary's Grade School since 2007. Recently, students in grades K-8 participated in the event and had a terrific time Sport

Stacking. Enthusiasm filled the school as students competed for record-breaking times. Students cheered on their classmates as they participated in stacking relays.

"I liked to see how fast other kids could stack," sixth grade student Victoria Windsor commented.

Top qualifiers from each class in grades three through eight participated in a championship Sport Stacking round. Students and staff at St. Mary's cheered on all of the competitors. It was an exciting event.

Congratulations to our top three stackers - Seth Fix 12.18 sec.(3rd place), Sam Wilke 10.38 sec.(2nd place), and Michael Salwei 10.36 sec. (1st place)!

WHAT DO TEACHERS DO AFTER SCHOOL?

By Student Reporter Gabrielle Youngbird



Gabrielle Youngbird

Have you ever wondered what teachers do after school? Well, I asked some teachers, and this is what they had to say:

- Mrs. Haugen said that she corrects papers and tests. She also teaches a University of Mary online Mathematics course, and works online after school. She also participates in church activities and helps with school liturgy planning and serves as a Eucharistic Minister at Medcenter One.
- Mr. Frink said that he corrects papers. He makes copies for assignments and also checks and responds to emails.
- Mrs. Zenker said that she corrects papers and gets ready for the next day's lessons. She also has a snack and checks her email.

ONLINE GIVING/SCRIP SIGN-UP AFTER DECEMBER MASSES

St. Mary's Parish Family is opening up its Internet bandwidth for two consecutive weekends in December to promote and encourage school and parish families to sign-up for two programs geared towards supporting the school and parish, Online Giving and SCRIP.

Online giving was introduced to the parish this past spring, allowing parish and school families to contribute to the different parish entities through online donations.

The SCRIP program of purchasing gift cards to local and national businesses has been in place for several years, but recent developments now allow families to designate student tuition accounts for the proceeds of their purchases.

After Masses on December 10th and 11th, and again on December 17th and 18th, school staff and members of the Finance Council will be available with computers to aid in setting up new accounts for those interested.

For more information on both programs, please call the church office at 701.223.5562 or the school office at 701.223-0225 or email st.marys@sendit.nodak.edu.

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



807 East Thayer Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58501
www.stmarysbismarck.org

Anthony Fladeland, Principal
tony.fladeland@sendit.nodak.edu
701.223.0225 - phone
701.250.9918 - fax

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

page 2 banner photo:
3rd grade Winter Art
December 1, 2011

page 6 banner photo:
Jr. Kindergarten Hand Turkey Art
December 1, 2011

DECEMBER/ JANUARY CALENDAR

DECEMBER 8

**Immaculate Conception
All-School Mass
9:00 a.m.**

DECEMBER 9

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

DECEMBER 9

**PTO Meeting
School Library
12:15 p.m.**

DECEMBER 9

**WW/Perc. Solo Festival
Cathedral School
4:00 p.m.**

DECEMBER 10

**St. Mary's Book Fair
Barnes & Noble Booksellers
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

DECEMBER 13

**Student Reconciliation
St. Mary's Church**

DECEMBER 15

**School Christmas Program
St. Mary's Church
7:00 p.m.**

DECEMBER 21

Last Day of 2nd Quarter

DECEMBER 22

**Christmas Break Begins
NO SCHOOL**

JANUARY 3

**1st Day of 3rd Quarter
Classes Resume**

JANUARY 11

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

JANUARY 16

**Martin Luther King Jr. Day
NO SCHOOL**