



**Weekly Message from the Principal,  
Mary Ann McQueen**

**November 11, 2015**

### **Parent Information Sessions**

Topic: Star Testing and Accelerated Reading Program Implementation

Monday, November 16, 2015 at 1:45 PM

Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 7:45 AM

Monday, November 23, 2015 at 7:45 AM

Parents, we want to keep you updated regarding new and ongoing school initiatives. These sessions will be focused on STAR testing and the Accelerated Reading Program (the correlation/relationship between the two) and upcoming implementation of the Accelerated Reading Program!

These programs impact students across grades TK-8 and all parents are welcome to attend and participate! Please let us know if you plan to attend so that we can plan for seating!

### **Reminders:**

**1. There is school tomorrow!**

2. Used Uniform Sale will include all lost and found items unless they are claimed by the end of this week. The Used Uniform Wednesday Sale will include lost and found items (hoping people will claim these valuable items!

3. We invite parents to join us this Friday, November 13, 2015 for liturgy, as we will be focusing the liturgy on Veterans and in honor of Veterans Day this week.

4. This Thursday, students will have the opportunity to learn about how the brain works, and, specifically, epilepsy. This program includes a large blown up brain on the yard for students to experience. Thanks to the Hamilton family for sponsoring this program as it provides a great educational opportunity for all of us here at St. Mark! Please ask your children what they learned about the brain!!!!

**Tuesday, November 17, 2015 – 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Grade Liturgy and Potluck**

**6:00 PM, Liturgy, Potluck to follow.**

**Liturgy takes place in the Church, Potluck in the Parish Hall.**

**STATE OF THE SCHOOL PARENT MEETING: Wednesday, November 4, 2015**

**Thanks so much to all who attended! It was so nice to see so many parents and to provide this opportunity to share some information relevant to the school's ongoing growth and improvement.**

Approximately 170 school parents were in attendance and all grades were well represented! Several families signed up for a Ralphs card which directly benefits the school! We are so appreciative of your participation!

PAC provided a lovely buffet and beverages and everyone enjoyed the opportunity to socialize and share time together. It's always nice to see parents getting to know each other, share stories and build community! The gathering went on well into the evening and there was plentiful food and beverage. Great hospitality provided by PAC!

Thank you, parents, for your ongoing support and participation! Your involvement is at the core of the school's growth and success.

***ANNUAL FUND:***

As was stated at the State of the School Meeting, the Annual Fund provides an opportunity for parents to show their support for the school in a way that is completely tax deductible. Catholic and private schools, universally, need to raise funds to close the "gap" between income from tuition and fees and the actual costs of educating a student. St. Mark is no exception. But, rather than have many fundraising drives which can be burdensome to both parents and to the school staff, we focus on two – the Annual Fund and the Auction (which includes the raffle).

Our goal is 100% participation! The key to the success of the Annual Fund is that we have 100% participation. Any contribution is valued towards helping us achieve 100% participation. This is a critical component of this fund! We cannot emphasize this enough!

We depend upon parent volunteers for so much! Countless hours, spent by many parents to lead and enhance school initiatives and endeavors, is both valued and appreciated. We are grateful for this generosity, we depend on it! Event chairs, room parents, PAC Board and School Board members, library volunteers, as well as parent volunteers who lead the donut ministry all give tremendous time to the school and the parish on a regular basis.

Thanks to all who have participated to date in the Annual Fund! Your generous donation, your participation and your endorsement of the school is very much appreciated as we continue to invest in many school programs.

In addition to the "Greening and Water Reclamation Project" that was funded, in part, from both the Annual Fund, 2014-2015 and the "Raise the Paddle" at the Spring Auction, the following school enhancements, investments have been made to improve the educational experience of students since July 1, 2015:

Accelerated Reader Program (see below for more information about this program)

23 new iPads

1:1 iPad program implemented in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade

New version of Pup's Quest for Phonics

New desks/chairs in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Classroom (used by 7-8 grades)

New carpeting in 8<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms

**New sink in the Maintenance Closet to support the Art Program**  
**Six new wireless access points installed**  
**New desk chairs in 1<sup>st</sup> grade**  
**New tables for group work in 1<sup>st</sup> grade**  
**Display boards in 7<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> and Music/Spanish classrooms**  
**New stools in the Art Room**  
**New stools in 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom**  
**Complete set of sand toys for the new sand box**  
**Outdoor Rug for porch area outside 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms that students have been enjoying during free reading and group work time**  
**New furnaces in grades 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> (last year 2<sup>nd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)**  
**Three New Handball Courts**  
**Sewer Line Replacement (not very exciting but VERY necessary!)**

**ACCELERATED READER:**

**Orientation sessions for parents are indicated above. Please plan to attend if you are interested in learning more about this program and its benefits!**

**TRAFFIC AND SAFETY:**

**We are trying to streamline the pick-up system and to that end we have given each family a placard with their name on it so that we can quickly identify who goes to which car in the afternoons.**

**Hygiene Drive:**

**We are collecting items for the hygiene drive to benefit the Westside Thanksgiving event serving many people in need.**

**Items needed:**

**Shampoo**  
**Conditioner**  
**Tooth Paste**  
**Tooth Brushes**  
**Deodorant**

**Please send to school by Friday, November 20!**

**Loaves and Fishes Food Drive:**

**Each grade has been assigned an item! Thanks for your attention to this. This is a great way to support the community in need all around us.**

**AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS/NEW CLUBS:**

**The two opportunities below are the result of student leadership and resourcefulness!**  
***Congratulations to our student leaders: Eliza Peters, Charlie Walter, Lincoln Wallace and Phelan Gilmore!***

**BOOK WORMS:**

**This is a reading group/club open to students who want to read and discuss books. The first meeting will take place on Friday, October 30 at the times listed below. Typically, these times**

will follow liturgical choir but there is no liturgical choir tomorrow. Students who want to participate and who are currently in the 3rd-4th grade will meet in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom from 1:50-2:30. Students in grades 5-6 will meet in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at 2:30 – 3:10. This means that you can go home, have lunch and change clothes, and then come back for the session (due to Halloween festivities).

Ms. Robin Miskolcze (mother of Eliza Peters) will be moderating the club with Eliza and this first meeting is designed to discuss general goals and guidelines. We look forward to having many students share in this exciting reading opportunity!

#### **BOOK WRITING/COMIC BOOK MAKING CLUB:**

This club is open to all students, grades 3rd-8th, who are interested. The meetings will take place on Mondays in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom at lunch. Students participating should plan to bring their lunch on Mondays to avoid any delays to the meeting start time.

#### **FINGERPRINTING:**

St. Monica has fingerprinting on Nov. 10th. Call [310-566-1500](tel:310-566-1500) to make an appointment. We are doing such a great job of getting all of our parents fingerprinted. Please arrange to complete this process at St. Monica if you haven't done so already. There are still appointments available!

Thanks to Judy Girard, Director of Religious Education, and Helene Hickey, Chair of the Parish Safety Committee, for arranging for fingerprinting, volunteering, and supporting the school in this important way! When you see them, please thank them!

#### **UPCOMING CALENDAR DATES:**

|                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Wednesday, Nov 11th   | 8-10 AM Admissions Outreach          |
| Friday, Nov 13th      | 8 AM Veterans Day Prayer Service     |
| Tuesday, Nov 17th     | 6PM Grades 3 & 4th Liturgy & Potluck |
| Wednesday, Nov 25th - |                                      |
| Friday, Nov 27th      | Thanksgiving Break                   |
| Monday, Nov 30th      | Return to School                     |

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