



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

Weekly School Bulletin
November 14, 2014

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Virtue of the Month – Conscience

Teachers discuss the Virtue of the Month with students by using either stories or activities to engage them into seeing the virtue in action. Ask your child what he/she is learning about "Conscience" this month.

Vocations Chalice

1st Grade was presented with the Vocations Chalice at the conclusion of today's All-School Mass, and will be praying for vocations during the upcoming week.

Reminders for Next Week

Saturday, November 15, Collin County Community College: DPL Tennis Tournament

See details below.

Sunday, November 16, 4:30 PM, Church: Children's Choir Sings at Mass

Tuesday, November 18-Friday, November 21: 5th Grade Visits The Pines Catholic Camp

Wednesday, November 19: 8th Grade High School Visits

Girls visit Ursuline Academy; boys visit Jesuit College Preparatory School

Friday, November 21, Church: All School Mass

Our All-School Mass will be held at 8:30 AM in the church. All are invited to attend. This Mass will be presented by the 1st grade. They will perform the Call to Worship, the Mass readings, and present the Communion gifts. **They will also present *The Giving Tree* play during the homily.**

Friday, November 21: Free Dress Day for Students

Thanksgiving is all about being thankful for the little things – like a free dress day! Students may wear casual clothes to school. (Please, no shorts or sandals, and t-shirts must be free of inappropriate slogans or advertising.)

Saturday, November 23, 6:00 PM, JPII High School: DPL Football All-Stars Game

See details below.

Monday, November 24-Friday, November 28: No School, Thanksgiving Holidays

Monday, December 1: School Resumes

Thanksgiving Holiday Planning

If you are planning a family vacation that extends outside the Thanksgiving break, please notify the school by emailing rene.oconnor@stmcs.net. And be sure to take advantage of the free dress day on November 21. See details above!

St. Mark Spelling Bee

The St. Mark Spelling Bee will take place on Tuesday, December 9 at 8:00 AM in the Cafetorium. Students in grades 5-8 are chosen by teachers to participate, and our 4th grade students will be spectators. The winner of the school spelling bee will move on to the Diocesan Spelling Bee held in January. Good luck to our participants!



HSA Invites You to a Free Family Movie Night – The Polar Express!

Your family is invited to attend a movie night on Friday, December 5 in the Cafetorium, compliments of HSA! The Polar Express will be showing, and dinner is included! Doors open at 6:00 PM and dinner will be served at that time. Showtime starts at 6:30 PM. Blankets, pillows, and PJs are welcome! Please register online in advance. For more information and to register online, [click here](#). This is HSA's way of thanking all of our incredible families for joining this year and for supporting all of our great activities and events.

Coat drive: HSA will be collecting new or gently used coats for those in need. Please consider donating a coat at the Family Movie Night.

Don't Wait: Participate!



The Mardi Gras Dinner & Auction will take place on Saturday, January 31, 2015. We need all hands on deck to pull off our biggest fundraiser of the year! Contact Auction Co-Chair Raju Kattady at rajukattady@hotmail.com for more information about how to get involved in the event planning.



Digital Wish Technology Donations: Earlier this week, Mrs. Opon sent a special message to all St. Mark families regarding school technology plans. In it, she mentioned that part of our technology fundraising efforts will involve the Digital Wish website. St. Mark is now accepting technology-specific donations through Digital Wish. [Click here](#) to help equip our students with iPads and iPad carts, and feel free to share this link with family, friends and associates who might like to help. If you or anyone you know would like to assist with St. Mark's technology project in other ways, please contact Mrs. Opon directly at patricia.opon@stmcs.net.

News from the Athletics Department

6th Grade DPL Volleyball Champs! Congratulations to the 6th Grade D1 Volleyball team who brought home the 2014 DPL Championship for St. Mark! They beat undefeated Prince of Peace to take the title. See their photo at the top of the bulletin.

5th Grade Volleyball Takes 2nd! Our 5th Grade Gold Volleyball team won 2nd place in their DPL Volleyball Championship – congratulations to these girls on a great season!

8th Grade Football All-Stars: The 17th Annual DPL 8th Grade All-Star Football Game will take place on Sunday, November 23 at 6:00 PM at John Paul II High School. Congratulations to the following St. Mark players who have been named to the All-Star team: Ryan H., Miles P., Ryan S., Dane S. and Grant Y. Come out and support your lions as the East and West teams face-off for the All-Star title!

DPL Tennis Tournament: Our St. Mark Tennis team will compete in the DPL Tennis Tournament on Saturday, November 15 at Collin County Community College in Plano. Brackets have been posted and can be found [here](#). Good luck to our tennis team this weekend!

GO LIONS!

Home & School Association (HSA) News



Scrip Gift Cards: Plan for the holidays and beyond! Purchase plastic gift cards or eCards from participating retailers, and a percentage will be given back to St. Mark! Over 400 retailers participate including Target, Walmart, Walgreens, Chipotle, Fridays, Hyatt, Macy's, Dillards, Toys R Us, Kohls, and many more. Tell family and friends - anyone can order and St. Mark receives a percentage from every sale!

For a limited time, order plastic cards using a paper order form, or order year round by purchasing eCards online. [Click here](#) for instructions and a link to the paper order form. Plastic gift cards will be distributed to families before Christmas break.

Grade-level contests are taking place now through December 3. **The three families who purchase the most gift cards by December 3 will receive a complimentary gift card from HSA!**

If you have questions, please contact Miki Heiss, Scrip Card Coordinator, at StMarkScrip@outlook.com.

Used Uniform Sale: Please consider donating your gently used uniforms to the Used Uniform Sale. This sale will take place in January and the funds generated will be put towards HSA activities. Donations can be dropped off anytime in the school office.

Upcoming HSA meeting: Save the date for the next HSA General Meeting: December 10, 2014 at 6:30 PM in the Cafetorium.

Teacher Luncheon: Thank you to our first and seventh grade parents for the wonderful Italian lunch spread provided this week for our teachers. St. Mark is lucky to have such devoted teachers and supportive parents!

Workshop Opportunity: Recognizing & Responding to Social/Emotional Warning Signs in Young Persons

St. Mark Catholic Church is hosting a workshop for parents, teachers and those who work with children and teens on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 7:00 PM in McGivney Hall (located in the St. Mark Parish Center, 1105 W. 15th Street). Topics will include the significance of early warning signs; myths/facts about emotional issues; signs of depression, anxiety, eating disorders; and what you can do as a parent, teacher, or youth minister. The workshop is free. To register, call (972) 424-5794 or visit www.stmarkplano.org.

At St. Mark, We Serve

Food Pantry Donations: November all-school service project donations continue to "roll" in! Keep it up – students have until the end of November to turn in their donations for a homework grade. All donations benefit the St. Mark/St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.

In Alumni News...

John Paul II Students Mentor 5th Grade Lions: Members of the John Paul II High School PAL program visited with our 5th grade students on Tuesday. Three St. Mark alumni were part of the group: Fernanda B., Claire F. and Abbie V. PAL stands for Peer Assistance and Leadership. Members visit area schools and provide mentoring to younger students. They discussed topics such as bullying, peer pressure, and communication skills.

Seen & Heard Around St. Mark

2nd Grade Receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation: Last week, in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Father Cliff spoke with our 2nd grade students about the sacrament, and Mrs. Eisele gave them a tour of the confessionals. This past Wednesday was their special day. Students and families gathered in the church as our students received Reconciliation for the first time.

Baby Egg Project: Our 8th graders recently began their annual "Baby Egg" project. This is a thematic unit designed to teach students about life as responsible adults. Last week, students were paired up with a boy/girl from their class. Then they had a lesson about the responsibilities and issues that accompany marriage, followed by a "mock" wedding ceremony and a reception. This week began with the "birth" of their baby eggs. Students decorated "baby" baskets and were given eggs to place inside (representing babies). As "parents," they are now responsible for caring for the eggs. A mock "Baptism" ceremony was held and a reception followed. In Science class, students learned about chromosomes and blood types in their "chromosome toothpick" lab. Life lessons will continue to be taught throughout this unit across all subjects. Highlights include:

English: Creation of a Baptism announcement

Religion: Marriage and Baptism talks by Deacon Sid; conflict resolution; guidelines for choosing names and godparents

Literature: Read newest picture books in our library aloud and discuss theme

Social Studies: Plan a honeymoon, learn history, culture, geography of destination

Science: Child birth, child care, body systems, genetics

Math: Budget, financial planning

4th Grade Worm Habitat Project: For the past two weeks, 4th grade has been working on their annual worm habitat project. First, they created their own worm habitats in class. Then they were asked to research worms and write paragraphs about them. Finally, using computer technology, they created animated videos describing their research ([click here](#) for an example; be patient, as it may take a minute to load). The project culminated with a "show and tell" to our 2nd grade students. This project was a great example of traditional learning paired with technology, and resulted in very high levels of student interest and engagement. It was clearly contagious among the 2nd graders, as they can't wait until it's their turn in two years!

3rd Grade Saint Reports: This week, our 3rd graders presented their saint reports. They were challenged to research a saint and prepare an informative oral presentation for the class, which they did beautifully. Great job, 3rd grade!

Children's Book Week: Children's Book Week is a week set aside every year to celebrate reading, books and children, and in particular, children's literature. We celebrated at St. Mark this week during library classes through stories, videos and games (see the photo of third grade playing "Children's Lit Jeopardy" below). Additionally, there was a children's literature trivia question each day during morning announcements. Names of students who answered correctly were placed into a daily random drawing. Winners could go to the library and choose a book prize!



LION PRIDE!

Just a few of the many reasons we're so proud to be St. Mark Lions! ...

3rd Graders Place in Volleyball Tournament: Several of our third grade girls competed in a PSA volleyball tournament last Saturday. This first year team finished in second place! The girls on the team are Lindsay K., Corina H., Gianna F., Nataly M., Eliana G., Izzy L., Aleia L., Erin D., Gabriela M., and Gabby L.. They are coached by Veronica Marques and Chris Keith.

3rd Grade Girls Softball: Congratulations to the PSA 3rd grade girls softball team made up of Izzy L., Corina H., Madelin M., Gia E., Libbi P., Grayson S., Lindsay K., Nataly M., Eliana G., and Sofia M.. They finished in second place for the season and third place in the season tournament! They are coached by Jorge Garcia, Jeff Leever, Billy Pantuso, Ryan Meyers, and Lori Gonzalez.

1st Grade Boys Softball: 1st grade boys softball team, the Mustangs, completed their season in third place in the 1st Grade CP1 Division at PSA and demonstrated great sportsmanship and team work along the way. Team members are: William B., Brewer B., Brady G., Trey G., Jack J., Josh L., Will P., Pedro R. and Mikey T.