



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

LIFETIME LIONS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Winter 2018-19

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Alumni and Alumni Families:

As the final quarter of the 2018-19 school year approaches, we take great pride in looking back on so many wonderful experiences, and we continue to look forward to many wonderful things to come. Our students have once again excelled in academics, fine arts, community service, and athletics throughout the year. They've even benefited from some alumni mentoring and support. Read on for details...

St. Mark was just recognized as the ONLY school in North Texas to have raised \$20,000 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (\$20,331.18 to be exact). And, for the second year in a row, our 7th and 8th graders succeeded in raising more than \$10,000 to sponsor a child through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. A fabulous "send off" event was held on campus, aided by some helpful alumni.



Catholic Schools Week celebrations never disappoint, and this year was no exception. In addition to all of our annual traditions, we welcomed the Class of 2018 back to campus

for the unveiling of their class portrait. We also enjoyed seeing many alumni in our halls throughout the week, particularly on Family Day.

We just wrapped up the annual Auction at Southfork Ranch where we raised money for some exciting campus improvements including new flooring and additional playground equipment. Stay tuned for updates. Once again,



A NATIONAL SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

St. Mark Catholic School is a two time recipient of the U.S. Department of Education National Blue Ribbon Award. This means that St. Mark students consistently score in the top 15% in the nation on standardized tests.



St. Mark Catholic School was recognized as 1 of the top 3 Catholic schools in the nation for technology integration by *Today's Catholic Teacher* magazine.

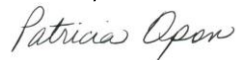
[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

we were honored to have several alumni families in our midst supporting St. Mark.

Are you sensing a common thread? Our alumni continue to be a part of our success!

From the annual STEM Fair, to the Spring Musical, to the May Crowning Mass, to the 24th Annual Monsignor Smyth Golf Classic, we hope you'll find a reason to get involved, or to simply stop by and say "hello" in the coming months ([view our school calendar here](#)). You are such an important part of who we are at St. Mark and we welcome you to campus any time.

Sincerely,



Patricia Opon, Principal
patricia.opon@stmcs.net

P.S. Don't see your recent accomplishment mentioned below? Please send it to us at debbie.reed@stmcs.net. We'll include it in the next alumni newsletter.

FATHER CLIFF'S RETIREMENT



Since 2005, Father Clifford Smith has been the Pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church and School, and many of your families attended the school under his leadership. In June of this year, Father Cliff will retire. The school is planning a special send-off which alumni will be invited to attend. Please keep an eye out for more information.

In the meantime, we have a special request. **Please email any old photos you may have of Father Cliff at the school to sarah.peralta@stmcs.net and indicate what event/activity the photo is from and approximately what year (think First Communion, Confirmation, Graduation, Fall Festival, Theater Productions, etc).** We are working on a special commemorative gift and would love to incorporate

Follow us and stay connected!



St. Mark alumni are invited to join Lifetime Lions, our official alumni network. Keep up with former classmates, become a mentor to current students, and learn about opportunities to earn service hours. [Click here](#) to register.

ST. MARK IN THE NEWS

Four St. Mark staffers were featured in the February 1 edition of *The Texas Catholic*. The article entitled, "[Building Bonds, Raising Families at St. Mark](#)," highlights the fact that Rene O'Connor and her daughter Megan Oliver, and Eileen Bongiovanni and her daughter Mariel Bongiovanni, all work for St. Mark, and that the daughters are St. Mark alumni.

[Check out the article](#) in the March 1 edition of *The Texas Catholic* about 8th grader, Theresa Tran's, spelling bee success and the story of her family's immigration to the United States.

FAVORITE ST. MARK MEMORY

as many photos as possible from his years with us. Thank you for your assistance!

ALUMNI UPDATES

Charlie S. '16 is a member of the Bishop Lynch High School Varsity Mock Trial Team that advanced to the final round of District competition, and went on to win the Texas High School Mock Trial State tournament. This is the team's first final four appearance, championship round, and state victory. They will now move on to nationals.

Kennedy G. '17 and **Zosia S. '17** are both members of the Bishop Lynch High School JV Mock Trial Team that finished 4th in State.

Former student, **Ethan P.**, a graduate of Cistercian Preparatory School, was accepted into AI (artificial intelligence) research internships at Facebook and the University of Montreal, which culminated in five publications. This past fall, Ethan entered the Ph.D. program in machine learning/artificial intelligence at NYU.

Tia T. '16 earned the 2018-19 Ursuline Academy of Dallas "Education Network - Community Service Award" for her work with Adaptive Recreation, a special needs children's program. She is also a member of the Ursuline Academy Cross Country team that finished in 2nd Place at State. Tia was awarded "Most Improved" compared to her time from last year.

Ethan Y. '09 graduated from Texas Tech University with a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering and minors in Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering.

Catherine F. '15, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, was recognized as an Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar.

Lexie P. '14 was named Simpson College Volleyball's 2018 Freshman of the Year.

Adam B. '16, **Kyanna I. '16** and **Julianna S. '16** were recently inducted into the John Paul II High School National Art Honor Society.

Giselle H. '18, a freshman at Bishop Lynch High School, is a member of the Women's Varsity Soccer team that won the 2019 TAAPS State Championship.

When registering for "Lifetime Lions," you are asked to share your favorite St. Mark memories.

Jingyao G. '18 has happy memories of the 2017 Spring Musical, "Right Before Your Eyes," and the 2018 St. Mark Talent Show.

These traditions continue! Be sure to join us on April 6 for the 2nd Annual Talent Show, and May 8 for the 2019 Spring Musical, "The Magical Land of Oz!"



LIONS MENTOR LIONS

In January, we had some special visitors from John Paul II High School: **Julianna S. '16**, **Gabby G. '16**, **Kevin P. '16**, **Hannah B. '17**, **Alejandro C. '15**, and their teacher, **Alyssa Donovan '09** passed out special JP II bundt cakes to our middle school students during lunch!



Bishop Lynch High School students **Annabella M. '16**, **Kevin N. '16**, and **Charlie S. '16** are members of the National

Ann T. '18, a freshman at Bishop Lynch High School, is a member of the Women's Varsity Basketball team that won the 2019 TAAPS State Championship.

Izzy C. '15, a senior at Bishop Lynch High School, signed to play volleyball at Boston College during the Fall National Signing Day ceremony. She was also named 1st Team All State Volleyball and Academic All State Volleyball.

The following alumni were inducted into their foreign language honor societies at John Paul II High School: **Ynez C. '18**-French Honor Society; **Kyanna I. '16**-Spanish Honor Society; **Hannah B. '17**, **Marti F. '17**, **Natalie J. '17**, and **Zach V. '17**-Latin Honor Society.

Ethan J. '15, a senior at Jesuit College Preparatory School, is a member of a Jesuit Debate team that qualified for the State Debate Championships.

Annabella M. '16, a junior at Bishop Lynch High School, was cast as "Anna" in BL's production of *The Arsonists*.

Sarah H. '16, a junior at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, serves as the Treasurer of the CAUSE for Life Club. She attended the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. with several of her fellow students.

Justin H. '16, a junior at Bishop Lynch High School, was one of six BL students selected to attend the "Sustainability Summit" in Chicago.

Chase P. '15, a senior at John Paul II High School, signed to play football at Southwest Oklahoma State University during the Winter National Signing Day ceremony. During his time at JP II, he was a four year letterman with All District honors for the last two years in Football, and a State qualifier for shotput in Track. Chase was also named to the Blue-Grey All-American Bowl.



Alonso T. '18, a freshman at Bishop Lynch High School, won 1st Place at the BL Science Fair in the Microbiology category. He will now move on to the Beal Bank Dallas Regional Science and Engineering Fair, and is one of only two freshmen out of eleven total students representing the

Honor Society. They offer tutoring to students who need extra assistance.

Gabby G. '16, **Mitchell J. '15**, **Mary Kate M. '17**, and **Declan W. '17** performed in the John Paul II High School production of *Seussical* that visited St. Mark in February.



Several alumni who continue to participate in Girl Scouts in high school, including **Shelby V. '15**, **Jordan V. '15**, **Mary R. '13**, **Janice R. '15**, **Ashley B. '15**, and **Paige V. '18**, held a special program for current St. Mark Girl Scouts. The older girls led a flag ceremony and made presentations on the Girl Scout World Centers in Mexico, Switzerland, India, Africa and the United Kingdom. Admission to the event was canned goods that the girls delivered to the food donation boxes in the St. Mark church Narthex.

school. In addition, Alonso is one of only three students selected to represent BL on the TAPPS Mathematics team in grades 9 and 10.

Elena G. '15, a senior at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, was cast as the "Burglar's Wife" in the Jesuit College Preparatory School Spring Comedy, *The Virtuous Burglar*.

Kevin N. '16 and **Sharon V. '16**, juniors at Bishop Lynch High School, were inducted into the National Honor Society.

Several John Paul II High School students qualified for the TAPPS State Division 1 Swim meet including alumni **Kaitlin C. '15**, **Rachel D. '16**, **Matthew C. '17**, and **Andrew R. '18**.

Jingyao G. '18 performed in the Ursuline Academy of Dallas Musical Theatre Showcase.

Ella P. '17 and **Carly H. '18** are members of the John Paul II High School Cardinal Belles drill team that won the TAPPS State Championship. The team also took home 18 different awards from the ShowTime International Metroplex Regional Showcase including two Grand Champion trophies.

Mai-Vi O. '17, a sophomore at Bishop Lynch High School, was a member of the chorus in the BL production of *Mame*.

The Ursuline Academy of Dallas Swim Team captured their 12th Regional Championship, and was the Runner-Up winner in the TAPPS Division 1 State Girls meet. Team members include **Athena B. '15**, **Shelby V. '15** and **Paige V. '18**. Both Shelby and Paige qualified for State.

Several alumni who take Latin as a foreign language in high school competed in the recent Texas Junior Classical League Area C Convention in Waco and advanced to the State Convention in Austin next month: **Aenghus D. '17**, will represent The Highlands School in "Roman History" and "Decathlon." Representing John Paul II High School are **Katie K. '18** in "Latin Literature," and **Jake R. '18** in "Mythology" and "Art." Of special note, Aenghus and Katie won 1st Place in each of their categories at the Area C Convention.

Athena B. '15, a senior at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, competed in the YMCA Youth and Government Conference in the Senate chambers of the Texas State Capitol along with 62 other seniors. She was one of only six senators recognized as Distinguished Delegates of the Farabee Senate.



AROUND CAMPUS

2019 TEACHER OF THE YEAR:

Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Sharon Thompson, was voted St. Mark Teacher of the Year. She will now go on to compete for Diocesan Teacher of the Year. We are so proud of this deserving educator!



ACADEMICS

***Spelling Bee:** 8th grader, Theresa T., won 1st Place at the Diocesan Spelling Bee and the Dallas County Private Schools Spelling Bee, qualifying her to compete in the Golden Chick Dallas Regional Spelling Bee.

Uyen L. '14 is a freshman at The University of Notre Dame. Her RA (Resident Assistant) in her dorm this year is none other than **Emily P. '11!** Both girls graduated from Ursuline Academy of Dallas. Uyen was also asked to speak to current Ursuline students about her college experience at the recent UA Grad Panel.

Emily J. '18, a freshman at John Paul II High School and a pitcher for the Varsity Softball team, threw 17 strikeouts at a recent game against Molina High School (JPII won the game).

The Jesuit Rangerettes drill team, including **Jordan V. '15**, a senior at Ursuline Academy of Dallas, captured top awards at the Metroplex Dance Showcase competition including recognition in all categories, Circle of Champions for Elite, Grand Champions for Officers, and Grand Champions for Team.

Sydney B. '17, a sophomore at Bishop Lynch High School, was named All State 2nd Team in Volleyball.

Christian L. '15, Shelby V. '15, Jordan V. '15, former student **Samuel H., Savannah H. '15**, and **Avery B. '15** attended the Ursuline Academy of Dallas Snowball dance together. Once A Lion, Always A Lion!



YOU'RE INVITED!

We encourage all alumni and alumni families to come back to campus as a volunteer, a mentor to our students, or simply to take part in our events. If you're a high school student, you can even earn service hours!

2019 Opportunities:

St. Mark Catholic School **STEM** *2019 STEM Fair, April 26, 5:30-8:00 PM, St. Mark campus. Kids and adults alike will enjoy



***Geography Bee:** 5th grader, Nathan P., won the St. Mark Geography Bee and went on to qualify for the National Geographic State Geography Bee.



***Destination Imagination:** 6th graders Kara N., Laura P., Renit G., Kevin M., and Sophie K. competed in the Destination Imagination regional competition. They took 3rd Place in the middle school level and received the very special Renaissance Award which recognizes the demonstration of extraordinary amounts of effort and preparation in their solutions, and outstanding skill in engineering, design or performance.

interactive booths sponsored by corporations, non-profits, universities and other STEM-related organizations. Drones, robots, Star Wars characters, prize drawings, goody bags, food trucks, and more are all part of the fun. For volunteer and booth information, contact Assistant Principal, [Pam Steinkirchner](#).



*24th Annual [Monsignor Smyth Golf Classic](#), May 3, 1:00 PM shotgun start, The Courses at Watters Creek. 4 person scramble. Ticket price includes dinner, beverage tickets, gift bags, door prizes and a raffle. Proceeds benefit the St. Mark Athletics program. For tickets, volunteer, and sponsorship information, contact Athletic Director, [Marlene Ehring](#).



*2019 Spring Musical, "The Magical Land of Oz," May 8, 6:30 PM in the Cafetorium. Enjoy a performance by our talented students along with spectacular costumes, sets, and music. This will be the last show produced by Father Cliff and is not to be missed! To volunteer, contact Music Teacher, [Patty Corsi](#).

WAYS TO GIVE TO ST. MARK

St. Mark Catholic School appreciates your support. If you would like to make a donation of time, expertise, or financial support, please follow the links below.

*Donate your time or expertise. Simply email [Debbie Reed](#) and let us know what you are interested in contributing to our school. Need ideas? Community members have provided special presentations to students on a variety of topics including military service, cell phone use, the Titanic, and the Holocaust. Parents and alumni with interesting careers have presented at the St. Mark Career Days, others have taught electives on subjects such as the stock market and Pinterest projects, and many have served as interviewers at the annual 8th grade interview practice sessions.

*[Gap Fund](#) - This fund helps St. Mark bridge the gap between the tuition amount our families pay, and the actual cost to educate each student. For 2018-19, that cost is \$1,195 per student.

*[Technology Fund](#) - This fund assists St. Mark with keeping current on the technology made available to our students.



***Quiz Bowl:** The St. Mark Quiz Bowl team placed 3rd in the Fort Worth Open Tournament winning every game up until the semi-finals. Team members are: Anthony N., Sebastian R., Paul S., and Jon N.

***Speech Team:** The St. Mark Speech Team of Andrew A., Biya C., Renil G., Sophia L., Casie P., and Alina S. competed in the Diocese of Dallas Speech Competition. All students made it to the finals and Casie and Sophia placed 2nd in Duet Acting.

SERVICE

***Laps for Leukemia**
Raises Record Amount: The annual "Laps for Leukemia" service project conducted each February during Catholic Schools Week, resulted in a record \$20,000 in funds raised for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. **In fact, St. Mark is the only school ever in North Texas to raise \$20,000!**

*[Other Monetary Donations](#) - Make a general donation, or designate funds towards a specific program such as Fine Arts, Athletics, or Robotics.

*[Legacy Brick](#) - Commemorate your time as a LION. Buy a personalized brick for \$100 that will become part of the entryway to St. Mark Catholic School.

*[Merchant Programs](#) - Raise funds for our school simply by linking your shopper card to St. Mark.

STAY CONNECTED

Keep us posted! As we receive alumni updates, we incorporate them into our social media posts, weekly school bulletins, and alumni communications. Tell us about your recent activities and accomplishments -- we'd love to hear from you! Need to update your contact information? Simply contact [Debbie Reed](#) with all of your updates.

"ONCE A LION,
ALWAYS A LION!"



[Forward To A Friend](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)



***7th/8th Grades Make-A-Wish Come True:** For the second year in a row, the 7th and 8th grade classes raised \$12,500 to sponsor a child through the Make-A-Wish Foundation. "Emma," a five-year-old girl battling cancer, will enjoy a trip to Disney along with her family thanks to the Herculean efforts of our students. A spectacular send-off took place on campus, complete with princes and princesses and a fabulous tea party.



FINE ARTS

***The St. Mark Band** won 1st Place in the Youth Division in the Richardson Christmas Parade.

*The following students placed in the **2018 Knights of Columbus Poster Contest** that challenged them to illustrate "Keeping Christ in Christmas": Middle School Division-Kara N., 1st Place; Alina S., 3rd Place; 5th Grade Division-Quendi T., 1st Place; Karson A. and Jeslyn T. tied for 2nd Place; Diya C., 3rd Place; 3rd & 4th

Grade Division-Chris B., 1st Place; Sloane J. , 2nd Place; Overall Winners-Kara N., 1st Place, Karson A., 2nd Place.



ATHLETICS

*The 6th grade Boys D1 Basketball team won the **2019 DPL Championship**.



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