



Parent Newsletter
April 22, 2020

St. Mary's School...Putting Faith in Children Since 1913

Hello SMS Families,

We all hoped that we would be bringing our students back to school. As you know by now, the news from Governor Pritzker was that schools will remain closed for in-person instruction for the rest of this school year. The Diocese of Rockford Office of Education sent a letter through SchoolSpeak to all families in Catholic education yesterday afternoon. While we are disheartened that we will not be seeing our SMS children at school for the remainder of this school year, our teachers and staff remain committed to providing electronic lessons that reflect the standards for fourth quarter learning.

8th Grade News

At a meeting with Father Keenan last week, we selected June 26th as our alternate 8th grade graduation date **if the Stay Home order is lifted**. Please mark your calendars for June 26th at 6:30pm for this special Mass. Persona will be available on this date for graduation photos. If the Stay Home order is not lifted, we will try to have a live stream Mass and graduation. More on this later....

We will not be hosting the traditional 8th grade luncheon, but we will be having the awards ceremony for our graduates in a format like Google Meet. More information next week on these two events....

The school calendar for 8th grade stays the same. In other words, their last day is May 20th.

Student Belongings

Several parents have asked about their student(s) personal belongings and how these items will be returned. Using recommended sanitizing procedures, (washing hands, hand sanitizer, and new bags) teachers will gather students' items from lockers and

desks and place them in a new bag labeled with name and grade. **May 15th** will be the pick up date. I will let you know the schedule for this next week.

Textbook Collection

We will be collecting textbooks on **Friday, May 22nd**. I will let you know the grade level schedule next week.

Professional Development--Teachers Planning for RLD

Just a reminder that this Friday, April 24th and Friday, May 1st are Teacher Planning Days for Remote Learning. An in-service for all teachers is scheduled for May 1st. The Diocese of Rockford, in concert with the Illinois State Board of Education, has set aside five days for teachers to plan for Remote Learning Days. SMS will be scheduling three more RLD Teacher Planning Days on successive Fridays in May as follows:

- May 8th, May 15th, and May 22nd

Lessons are adjusted to reflect four days of learning during these weeks.

Google Meets with Teachers

Each week I have a Google Meet with our teachers and I am hearing some very positive things about our students! Some junior high school students are surprising their teachers by finishing work well before their due dates. Other students are very diligent about organizing their work flow. Students are reporting to teachers that they really like learning through electronic means. At our last GM, two teachers made the comment that this experience will influence how they teach in the future by incorporating electronic lessons.

Remote Learning Days

Thank you for sending photos of your students working on their assignments from home. Please continue to send photos to rclifton@smsterling.org for posting on our website. Mr. Sotelo will be posting a new batch tomorrow.

Please let me know how your child is doing with RLDays. And how are you doing? Please let me and/or your child's teacher(s) know how RLDays are going

Family Fun!

Parents of PreK, K and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders, please read this next paragraph to your child and enjoy this assignment with them. You may use a stuffed animal if you do not have a live dog at your house. You can substitute a cat or other pet also. Older students can read this independently.

Students, have you ever used the excuse that your dog ate your homework? Well, it is time for you to give your dog some extra credit. For some fun this week, we are asking you to take a picture of your dog doing your homework. You could take a photo of your dog sitting at your workstation and send it to rclifton@smsterling.org Be sure to include your name and your dog's name too!

Registration for 2020-21

Thank you to everyone who has sent in their registration fees and materials for 2020-21. Reduced fees for registration and books will continue through May 15th. After that date, fees will return to the regular rate. Please let us know if you need any additional registration packets and we will mail them to you.

Scholastic Virtual Book Fair

Mrs. Linda Cook, our librarian, is setting up a Virtual Book Fair with Scholastic. Chris Howell, SMS parent, is working with Linda to coordinate this event. Look for a link with information on our website page.

Wednesday Mass with Father Bruce

Just a reminder that Father Bruce celebrates Mass every Wednesday at 10:00am and it is live streamed through the NFHS network on the Newman CCHS website.

Parents and Students,

Thank you for hanging in there with us. We are focusing on how wonderful it will be when we are all together again.

- I invite all of you to pray to St. Therese with me.

St. Therese of the Child Jesus, remember your promise to do good on this earth. Pour out with abundance your shower of roses on those who invoke you and obtain for us from God the blessings from His infinite bounty through Christ Our Lord. Amen

Kathy Howard
SMS Interim Principal