



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES

WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG ❖ MARCH 4, 2021



THANK YOU ROOM PARENTS

Our school community is grateful for the following parents who have agreed to serve as room parents for the remainder of this school year:

PK – Tanisha Morton	Grade 3 – Anthonia Ekong
Kindergarten – Des Grillo	Grade 4 – Katie Aaron
Grade 1 – Milavia Paredes	Grade 5 – Nikki Akunwafor
Grade 2 – Phyllis Colclough	

We are still in need of volunteers to help in grades 6, 7, and 8. If you can volunteer, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

THE ANNUAL RAFFLE HAS BEGUN

Congratulations to the family of second grader, **Keelyn Hadley** who sold the winning ticket for our first raffle drawing. The next drawing will take place on March 15. Families who have not returned tickets had their TADS accounts charged on March 1. The money for the raffle obligation will be withdrawn on **March 25**. If you have sold tickets, please bring them in with payment and the debit amount will be adjusted. If you would rather have your \$350 charge considered a charitable donation, please let Mrs. Blackburn know and you will receive a letter of acknowledgement for your taxes. Shout out to the Onyewu family who sold an additional 20 tickets for a total of \$550.

PRE-K NEWS

Please spread the word that our pre-school program is expanding. We are in the process of designing a separate space for our three-year old children to be available in the fall of 2021. This also leaves additional space in the PK4 classroom. If you have children this age or know of friends and neighbors who do, please refer them to Mrs. O'Hare at aohar@stmatthias.org or call the school office at 301-577-9412. Tuition assistance is available to families who qualify.

SCHOOL DONATION

Our school recently received a very generous donation from Mr. Craig Hough, owner of Craig A. Hough and Company (Certified Professional Horticulturist) to expand the small garden that was created several years ago in our tot lot. We would love if several parents with an interest in gardening to help us plan and execute this expansion project. You will receive service hours. For more information on this opportunity, please contact Mrs. O'Hare (aohare@stmatthias.org) or 301-577-9412.

EASTER EGG HUNT

The Home and School Association would like to sponsor an outdoor Easter Egg hunt for children in grades PK-2 and grades 3-5. Volunteers are needed to run this free, fun event for the children. If interested, please contact the school office. This event will not happen without parent volunteers. A survey will be sent to our middle school students for ideas for a fun spring event for them.

Mark Your Calendar

Friday, March 5
CommUNITY Reads 9:45

Stations of the Cross
11:30 am Grades 3-8

NOON DISMISSAL

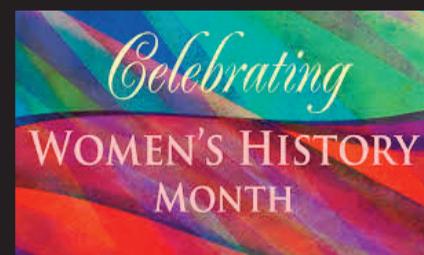
Monday, March 8
Read-A-Thon Begins

Tuesday, March 9
No on-site Kindergarten

Wednesday, March 10
God's Rods 2:15 - 3:00 pm

Friday, March 12
No on-site 1st Grade

NOON DISMISSAL



RE-ENROLLMENT FEE INCREASES IN 11 DAYS

Thank you to all families who have re-enrolled for the 2022 school year. Of course, we cannot see into the future, but we will make every effort to have the children in school while at the same time following all recommended protocols to keep the children safe. We will be expanding our STEAM program, analyzing Scantron and HSPT data to make any adjustments needed to strengthen our academic programs, adding a new math program for grades 3-5 and re-instituting Spanish instruction for grades PK-8. If you have any questions or problems with the re-enrollment process which occurs through your TADS account, please contact Mrs. Blackburn or Mrs. Schratz.

Congratulations to the Akunwafor family who won the early enrollment drawing for a \$200 enrollment fee credit for tuition. **On March 16, the re-enrollment fee increases to \$350. Please re-enroll today!**



READ-A-THON WEBSITE ADDRESS

The school website has a new address. To access the Read-a-thon and other important school information visit <https://school.stmatthias.org>

LET'S GET READY TO READ!

Our First St. Matthias Read-A-Thon begins on Monday, March 8th.

Your student(s) are encouraged to read a minimum of 25 minutes per day and ask family and friends to reward them for doing so. Check your email for a message from Read-A-Thon today. After a few clicks, your reader(s) will be ready to begin. We're asking each reader to raise a minimum of \$100 to support our school fundraising efforts for up-graded playgrounds/playspaces/and the primary courtyard. **We know we can count on you! After all, we're reading!**

Our students have heard about Read-A-Thon in class! Now you can see it at home. Emails were sent this afternoon from Read-A-Thon. **HOW? WHAT? WHEN?**

Look for your intro email with your secret access code and sign-up today.

Encourage your student to read at least 25 minutes each day. They can read anything they'd like, with you, on the phone, alone, with a sibling, friend or family member. Plan to take 2-3 minutes to log in reading minutes daily, beginning Monday, 3/8/2021, through Monday 3/22/2021. Use the secret code that was emailed to you today at read-a-thon.com. Look for fun ways to share your Read-A-Thon activity on Seesaw! Watch your reader's skills improve as their prizes add up.

Support Your Student! Support Your School! Let's Get Reading!

TUITION AFFORDABILITY

St. Matthias is committed to making a Catholic education affordable for all our families. Obviously, we have a broad range of financial need. Families who apply for financial aid and qualify for it receive a tuition grant. The sources of this aide include the Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) from an endowment funded by individual donors in the archdiocese, the Pastor's Aid Fund, which comes from a fee levied on all parishes to support Catholic education, the Shepherd Foundation, an independent foundation which supplies small grants for families in need and the Hughes Scholarship Fund, which is funded by the donations of parishioners of St. Matthias parish. The Knights of Columbus invited families in need to receive a tuition credit by working at the FedEx field concession booth that was hosted by the Knights. We are looking forward to resuming this opportunity as soon as the stadiums can safely open.

The State of Maryland has two programs which provide funding that lowers the tuition payments of families who qualify based on family income. The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today scholarship known as BOOST directly awards families with children in kindergarten through grade 12 who meet the strict income qualifications and submit complete online applications on or before the deadline. Another state program funds Preschool and extended care tuition for families whose children attend childcare programs with a state EXCELS rating and who meet the income qualifications. St. Matthias will be publishing our EXCELS rating before tuition contracts are released to families. The income qualifications will be posted on the school website.

It is important to note that tuition including tuition assistance provides most of our income. When enrollment declines it impacts the school expenditures significantly. Likewise, multi-child discounts and large family grants are unfunded sources of aid to families. Therefore, Fundraising is another very important source of income for the school. All families are expected to support our fundraising efforts. We also reach out to alumni and the parishioners of St. Matthias to support our school fundraisers. We do our best to apply for grants for special projects and comply with state programs to get funding through the Non-Public Textbook, Aging Schools and School Safety programs. Finally, we rely on volunteers to provide services that would otherwise be an expense. Parent volunteers especially with marketing, development, construction, landscaping, and accounting expertise are especially needed. However, all parents are needed to help teachers, support fundraisers, and lead student activities, especially in the arts and sports once these programs can open.