



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES

WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG

OCTOBER 29, 2021



FEAST OF ALL SAINTS AND ALL SOULS

On November 1 and 2 the church celebrates the Feast of All Saints and All Souls. Our Latino brothers and sisters celebrate these feasts as el Dia de los Muertos, with an ofrenda or altar that commemorates loved ones who have passed. There are three ofrendas in our school! All children are invited to bring pictures of deceased loved ones to be remembered in our daily prayer and placed on the ofrenda. Please be sure that your name is on the back of the photos. The Catholic doctrine of the communion of saints unites us with our ancestors and all those who are now in eternal life. During the month of November we make a special effort to remember in prayer our family members and friends who have died.

STATE OF THE SCHOOL MEETING

Thank you to all who attended the parent meeting last Wednesday. Father Jack explained the need to raise tuition for the coming year and to the adoption of the archdiocesan single tuition rate beginning with the 2023 school year. Principal Schratz shared progress made on our strategic plan initiatives including exceeding the annual archdiocesan student retention rate, the addition of a PK3 class, the acquisition of an Maryland EXCELS rating for our pre-school program, iPad centers in grades K-3 (coming soon), and 1:1 chrome books in grades 4-8. The teachers have been trained in STEM integration, though teacher turnover presents a challenge. We are making progress on playground improvement and look forward to holding a Career Day in the new year. HSA president Kenique Freeman announced that parents will have the opportunity to hear from guest speakers on topics of interest at virtual meetings in November and December. Plans are underway for the annual PJs and Pancakes celebration for the children on the day before Christmas break (see flier attached).

IMPORTANT SCHOOL FUNDRAISER ABOUT TO BEGIN

The Annual ASMA Cash Raffle is an important source of income for our school. Unlike the Fun-d Run and Read-a-thon, the funds generated from this fundraiser support the daily operations of the school. Every family is required to sell 35 raffle tickets for a weekly drawing from February through May. The tickets are \$10 each and the prize is \$500. The winners are published in Bridges and the parish bulletin. These tickets will be sent home next week, giving families the opportunity to sell them to family members and friends over the holidays. Parishioners also like to purchase them for stocking stuffers and gifts for Christmas. Families are strongly encouraged to sign-up to sell tickets after the parish masses in November and December. Tickets may also be sold after daily masses which are from 8:30-9:00 a.m. The family who sells the greatest number of tickets will receive \$50 and an ice cream party for their class. Tell your friends and relatives the raffle is coming!

**Upcoming
EVENTS**
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Friday October 29
School Closed

Saturday, October 30
60th Anniversary Mass and
Reception 4:00 pm

Monday, November 1
All Saints Day
Begin Winter Uniforms

Tuesday, November 2
All Souls Day

Friday, November 5
End of 1st Quarter
School Mass 9:45

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Thanks to those who participated in the recent survey regarding the desire for in-person or virtual conferences. The results were nearly equal for each choice. Therefore, we are going to offer parents who wish to come in morning appointments and those who desire virtual, afternoon appointments. Parents with multiple children who desire face-to face will be scheduled first. Please look for the Sign-Up genius email from the school office on Tuesday, November 3 to make your appointment for the conferences which will take place on Thursday, November 11 at 8:00 a.m. -3:15 p.m.



We believe that each family is in a partnership with the teachers and administration to work for the growth and development of their child(ren). Conferences are an important means to strengthen this partnership. We want to ensure that the first quarter parent teacher conference is productive and positive. There are some steps that you can take to accomplish this goal.

- Review your child's report card and relevant materials prior to the conference.
- Talk with your child to find out if he/she has any specific concerns about schoolwork or relationships with classmates.
- Prepare a list of questions you want to ask your child's teacher: Is my child meeting expectations for learning and behavior? Does my child follow school rules and directions? Does my child pay attention in class? What are my child's strengths? What else can be done at home or at school? If my child is struggling in any area, what has been tried to improve performance?
- Be ready to collaborate. Assume that the teacher has your child's best interest in mind and respond calmly and tactfully.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions especially if something the teacher says is unclear. Not understanding can quickly lead to misunderstanding!
- Expect to hear good news about your child.

FUN-D RUN FINALE



We did it!! We not only reached our goal of \$10,000, but we doubled it! Thank you to the 95% of the families who supported the Fun-d Run and thanks to the 100% of the students who enjoyed the day running and cheering on their classmates! We could not have done it without the event chairs, Emma Hadley and Hillary Van Wagenen and our numerous other parent volunteers. Our top sellers were: David D'Abreu, Keelyn Hadley, Victoria Coker, Ava Shorter, and Peter Henry.

New playground equipment is being ordered and preparations are underway to make the play area ready for installation. Unfortunately, that will not happen until mid-winter due to supply issues. We look forward to having pictures of the new playground available for the children and donors soon.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need registered nurses to help with the Covid-19 testing project that will take place bi-monthly on Tuesdays beginning on November 9 through January 18. If you can help out, on one or a few of these days, please contact Mrs. Blackburn.



COVID-19 TESTING



St. Matthias is participating in a school wide testing program offered through the Archdiocese of Washington and funded with federal dollars. The decision to participate was prompted by our recent Covid case, which thankfully was a single student. However, the prospect of a more widespread situation is very worrisome. The upcoming holidays are also

cause for concern. Only children with parental permission will be tested. Please read the letter sent with this newsletter and complete the parent permission form if you would like your child included in the testing. It is totally safe, painless and only takes moments. Parents may also be tested with advance registration. It is free to parents as well.

BOOK FAIR

Our annual Scholastic Book Fair begins on November. Books make excellent Christmas and birthday presents for children and adults. The Book Fair will be open during parent conferences. All children will have the opportunity to visit the book fair and develop a wish list. Teachers also select books for their classrooms, which parents may choose to purchase for their child's classroom. Proceeds from the Book Fair are used to purchase new books for our school library.



SAVE THE DATE: GRANDPARENTS/SPECIAL PERSONS DAY



Our teachers have begun planning for your child's grandparents or other special persons to visit school on Wednesday, November 24. Classrooms will open to them at 9:00 and our half day will conclude with a school Mass where the children will be able to sit with their guests. Grandparents who come with the children at the beginning of the school day are invited to a reception in Friendship Hall from 8:00-9:00. Invitations will be sent out and guests must RSVP so that we can plan for adequate seating both in the classrooms and in church.