



THE ACADEMY OF SAINT MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE

BRIDGES

WWW.STMATTHIAS.ORG

DECEMBER 16, 2021



ST. MATTHIAS FAMILY SERVICE TO THE HOMELESS

Thank you to the many St. Matthias families who provided more than enough food to feed 200 brothers and sisters who are homeless. The leftover food was sent to the shelter and used to provide additional meals. Thank you to the 6th and 7th grade students who very cheerfully and respectfully made the sandwiches and to the 5th graders who assembled the bags. The teachers and I are very proud of the seriousness and diligence they demonstrated as they worked together to have the meals ready for pick up before noon. We are grateful to the Student Council for their very successful bake sale. They raised \$116. \$62 was used to provide fresh fruit for the lunches. (The remainder will be used toward the improvement of the soccer goals.) Most importantly, the students experienced the joy of doing for others and in doing so, doing for Jesus Christ, "...Amen, I say to you, whatever you do for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Mt. 25: 40-41 Not only did the children send food, but they also sent love. As the driver was about to get in the van, fifth grader Olivia Udebuala spoke for us all when she said, "Please tell the people who get the lunches that we are praying for them."

Today the 8th graders counted, folded, and boxed 21 coats to be given to those who live on the streets. Again, the generosity of the St. Matthias families is amazing. Thank you all. Finally, thanks to those who have donated toiletries for gift bags for the homeless. The Student Council will be assembling them on Tuesday along with parents who volunteered to assist.

COVID SCREENING

Our second PCR covid screening (now with a new provider) went quite well. Approximately half of the students and all staff were screened. The next screening will take place on Wednesday, January 5 and continue biweekly until further notice. **All parents are urged to consider allowing their children to be screened.** Our testers are Mrs. Deborah Self, RN and Mrs. Concheeta Wright, RN, assisted by Mrs. Kiona Bush and Mr. Geoffrey Loughner who handles the technology part of the process. It is completely safe, utterly painless and takes less than a minute. To add your child to the screening process go to this link: <https://testcenter.concentricbyginkgo.com/minor-consent>

REPLENISH SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents please replenish your child's school supplies when they return in January. Pencils, crayons, colored pencils, etc. We are also in need of more Clorox wipes.



Friday, December 17

Red and Green Tag Day
(out of Uniform)

Monday, December 20

School Mass 9:45
Faculty Luncheon
Parent Volunteers needed
to cover classrooms
11:45 - 1:15 pm

Tuesday, December 21

PJ's and Pajamas
Christmas Craft/Activity
NOON DISMISSAL — NO ESP

Monday & Tuesday

January 3 & 4
School resumes virtually

January 5th

Students return to School
COVID Testing

PJS AND PANCAKES

On Tuesday, December 21, the students may come to school in their pajamas and enjoy a breakfast of pancakes and turkey bacon. The classes will meet in small groups in Friendship Hall, with table sanitation between each group. Christmas crafts will take place in the classroom. Dismissal is at noon. Please be on time to pick up your child.

A CHRISTMAS TREAT FOR ST. MATTHIAS TEACHERS

A parent, who wishes to remain anonymous, is providing a festive Christmas lunch for the teachers and staff on Monday, December 20. Parent volunteers are needed to supervise children during recess, lunch and for about additional 45 minutes. The gift of time and fellowship is a great gift to our teachers and staff and greatly deserved. Look for the Sign-Up Genius from the school office to volunteer.

UNIFORM NEWS

On December 14 we were officially informed that the Flynn and O'Hara supply issues were resolved. St. Matthias uniforms are now in stock at the store on and on-line. All students in grades pk-8 are to be in the correct uniform beginning on Wednesday, January 5. Sweaters are optional for grades 1-5, but highly recommended for children who may run cold. No other sweaters or jackets are allowed in school. The St. Matthias pullover sweater is required for grades 6 and 7. Due to the short time frame for 8th grade, long sleeve polo shirts are recommended. The sweater will not be required, but no other jacket is permitted.

OUR MATH RESOURCE TEACHER IS HERE

Ms. Gwen Nolt, a math specialist with Catapult Learning arrived today. She was meeting with teachers to discuss their math needs. Tomorrow she will be visiting math classes. She will meet with students identified as needing math help (based on Scantron and teacher recommendation) in January. She will be working weekly on Thursdays and Fridays.

WELCOME, MR. ANTHONY PIZZOLA

We finally have a permanent teacher for our physical education classes'. Mr. Tony Pizzola is a recent graduate of the University of Maryland, and the junior varsity baseball coach at St. John's College High School. He comes to us with sports camp and after care experience. He is a native of Silver Spring and is thrilled with the opportunity to share his love of physical activity and wellness with our students. We are adding a few additional PE classes. The new schedule will be given to the students and parents on January 2.

SCHOOL RE-OPENING IN JANUARY

The first two days of instruction upon return from Christmas break will be held virtually. Many of our families are traveling and most will gather with large family groups. All families will be expected to comply with the CDC travel restrictions which include proof of a negative Covid test prior to admission to the school on January 5. I want to assure our St. Matthias families that we follow health department guidance when we have a case and do everything possible to mitigate an outbreak. To date we have had 5 isolated cases over 3 months and no outbreak of Covid 19.

IXL WINTER CHALLENGE

The students will receive the details about the IXL Winter Challenge tomorrow. Please look for this information and encourage your child to participate. Scantron tests in reading and math will take place in mid-January to mid-February. Help us celebrate growth for every child (grades 1-8). IXL is a very robust learning tool. Every child should have completed his or her diagnostic by Monday, December 20. This will help children who have math learning gaps. Because of over a year of virtual learning, most of our students have gaps in their math skill. Your help, encouragement and support are vital to the children's growth and success.

JUNIOR SAINTS

Congratulations to fifth graders: Sydney Esene, Olivia Udebuala, and Korrine Wiseman, along with Ava Ramirez (3), and Amya Essel (K) for having their artwork and writing featured in the December issue of the *Catholic Standard*.