



ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The Pink Note

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From the Desk of Mrs. Miscavish

Dear Parents,

Yesterday at preschool story time I could not quite decide what type of book to read due to it still being November and not wanting to get those little people too “hyped up” on Christmas just yet. As I looked around in the Christmas section everything was screaming Ho, Ho, Ho and I was thinking more about the beginning of Advent this weekend. A book on Advent was going to take time to explain and story time does not allow for long explanations when you are only three years-old. So I decided on what looked like a low key story about snowmen and their families at Christmas time. Monday’s wintry mix gave them an instant connection to the book and I knew I could paraphrase the story to keep their Christmas excitement contained. The book was about a town where all the snow families met on Christmas Eve to celebrate Christmas together. As the story went on, it got to the point where the next page Santa and his reindeer were going to arrive. I contemplated skipping that page because up until now, it had been all about families, snow families, but families with a nice message. I decided at that moment to ask a question, buying myself time to figure out how to end the book with or without Santa Claus. My question, “What do you think the snow families are waiting for?” Much to my surprise, the obvious answer is not the answer I got. The first preschooler shouted out, “Baby Jesus to be born.” Then much to my surprise instead of someone shouting out the obvious, they all chimed in, “Baby Jesus.” Though I would have expected most of them to do their very best three year-old preschool “parrot” impersonation because that’s what they do; I thought for sure one of them would not follow suit and would shout out Santa Claus, but they did not! In hindsight I should have gone with an Advent book! They knew, that though it is Christmas time at the mall, as Catholics, we are preparing for the celebration of the birth of Jesus. After much conversation about baby Jesus I decided not to skip the next page. Santa Claus arrived and by the end of story time, not only were we waiting for baby Jesus and Santa, but in the eyes of three year-old preschoolers, so were the snow families. They are the littlest of all Mountaineers at St. Mary, but yet yesterday they taught me a great deal!

That moment lead to this moment, me asking you to consider taking a step back and looking a little closer at Advent yourself. It is my hope you will pause before the full hustle & bustle of basketball, bowling, Christmas parties, shopping, and all the other festivities to find a few really good quality family moments together. The next four weeks are going to be crazy, you already know that because they are every year. Why not focus on two simple things that focus just on your family. I can guarantee that if you take my advice today, come January 1st, your family will be a more cohesive unit, more focused on each other, and you will all have a greater sense of what it truly means to be a faith-filled family. So here are my suggestions:

Number 1: Go shopping before the weekend and purchase an Advent Wreath for your kitchen table. It does not have to be expensive, you can buy the ring at any craft store, buy the wreath, and the three purple & one pink candle. Make sure you put some wax paper under it all and at each meal that you eat together at your family table, light that week’s candle. Take a moment as you say grace to share a quiet moment to begin your meal. You do not have to hold hands and sing Kumbaya, just have a quiet candle lit moment together. Focus on the candles and their meaning:

The 1st Sunday of Advent symbolizes Hope with the “Prophet’s Candle” reminding us that Jesus is coming.

The 2nd Sunday of Advent symbolizes Faith with the “Bethlehem Candle” reminding us of Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem.

The 3rd Sunday of Advent symbolizes Joy with the “Shepherd’s Candle” reminding us of the Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus.

The 4th Sunday of Advent symbolizes Peace with the “Angel’s Candle” reminding us of the message of the angels: “Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men.”

When is the last time you had candles lit at dinner with your family? If you are like most families, it was a really long time ago and it was probably with your spouse – before children! Please trust me when I tell you your children will enjoy a candle lit dinner. You might get a few looks from the “older” children, but they will enjoy it too, they are just too cool to admit it! For a greater effect, start dinner by lighting the candle in the dark and saying grace. The candle light will serve to remind your family that Jesus Christ is the light of world and each week as we get closer to Christmas, His light only grows stronger. That same light will also shine on those who are the Light of Your World and what a beautiful reflection you will see in that light of that candle around your table.

Number 2: Attend Mass together for the next four weeks, so that your children can witness your parish Advent wreath being lit – making the connection between your family’s table of faith and the Altar of faith in church. Spend that quality time together in a pew, celebrating your faith, your family and your love for one another. Share this time together, without the distraction of your phone, their phone, your tablet, their tablet, their Fortnite, maybe your Fortnite dads, their Snapchat, your Facebook, and all the other distractions that bring you farther apart as a family on a daily basis. You have on your calendar every party you will attend, Christmas Pageants, you know whose house you will be at on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, you scheduled your family Christmas card photo, the pictures with Santa Claus, your basketball or bowling practice and game schedule are all set – why not add Saturday or Sunday Mass for the next four Sundays of Advent into your schedule today. Make a plan to attend Mass, breakfast or coffee/donuts in the Fr. Welch Hall and take the time this Season of Advent to make your family and your faith a priority as well as your Christmas festivities. All our families need and deserve a few hours a week of uninterrupted time just to be a family. It may be the only time for some peace and quiet together. Yes all the other events are important, but they all come with great noise and craziness, all good, but still fast paced excitement surrounded by many people. Why not sit in a pew as parents take that moment to truly reflect on your family; feel the pride, the love, and the joy they bring you. Enjoy another moment of peace in your family world – peace brought to you by being together as a family of faith. There cannot be a parent out there reading this that is truly not longing for a moment of quiet time with those they love the most.

The liturgical calendar has a way of reaching our lives at times when we need to pause to refocus ourselves and our families. The Season of Advent is one of those times. It is a spiritual journey in our lives just as it was for Mary & Joseph. You, just like Mary and Joseph, brought a baby into the world and the journey began. At Baptism, you took the next step in that spiritual journey to raise your child surrounded by the light of Christ. A light you gave to them so that no matter where life’s journey takes them, the light of their faith will lead the way. Darkness sadly enough will come for all of them, it is part of life. The symbolism of the lit Baptismal candle and the Advent candles burning bright, is a symbol of the light of their faith burning bright to lead them through life. If you take the time today to celebrate the Season of Advent, alongside the commercial side of Christmas, you will help to ensure that the Light of their faith shines even brighter into their future.

If you take me up on #1 – below is a prayer to bless your Advent wreath and begin the Season of Advent together as a family. I found this prayer on the Dynamic Catholic website. You can find many other prayers & information to make your Advent more special by doing a google search or visiting: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever>.

Heavenly Father, your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us, a great sign of your love. Guide us as we strive to walk in that love together as a family this Advent. As we prepare our hearts for Christmas, bring us closer to each other and to your son. Give us the grace and strength we need every day. As we light the candles on our Advent wreath, may the light of your presence bring joy to our hearts. Bless our family and our friends, and be with all those who are in need this holiday season. Amen.

While you are at the Dynamic Catholic website, take a moment to sign-up for their daily Advent reflections to guide you through your Advent journey. Their message:

Tis (Almost) the Season

We all love Christmas, it's a wonderful time of year; but as the holiday approaches, it seems that every shopping trip, every gift exchange and every party brings us a little more stress. What if it didn't have to be that way? Advent is a time to slow down and remember what matters most. It's a time to give gifts yes, but also to give of ourselves. A time to wrap presents; but to also be present to others. A time to prepare our homes for guests and to prepare our hearts to encounter Jesus. When was the last time you prepared to encounter Jesus during Advent?

That is their invitation for you to join them on a life changing Advent journey this year, so that you and your loved ones can have the *best Advent ever!* If you take my advice, you will accomplish this goal!

I truly hope each one of you has the Best Advent Ever! Christmas is already so magical in the eyes of a child and those of us who are still a child at heart, as it should be. It is important to remember that the magic began in a little town called Bethlehem.

May grace and blessings be in your path,
Maureen Miscavish

NEW SIBLING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Attention St. Mary School families who plan on enrolling a 3 or 4 year-old, or an older child who is not currently attending St. Mary for the 2019/20 school year, we need you to call the school office and speak to Mrs. Lisey or email her at glisey@stmarymtclemens.com to place them on the enrollment list. Registration packets will be sent home on January 16 and it is imperative that we include paperwork for that child in your packet. Please let us know ASAP and by January 8 at the latest. We will need the following information on the new student: Family name, child's name, child's birth date, and grade level in the fall. Please do not forget. Almost every year someone does and then a class fills and we are unable to enroll a current family's child.



Daddy Daughter Dance

The Daddy Daughter Dance Registration form was emailed last week and is coming home today. This special event is Sunday, February 24, 2 - 6 pm at The Mirage. Cost is \$40 per couple (\$15 each additional daughter) Please return the form with payment in an envelope marked Daddy Daughter Dance to the school office.

***Tickets must be purchased by January 25th.**



Grades 1-4 Indoor Soccer

It is registration time for the Winter Session for Indoor Soccer grades 1-4. Registration forms are in your inbox. Final registration due date is December 14.



SCRIP NEWS!

Please plan ahead and place your orders early in preparation for Christmas. Gift cards make great stocking stuffers! Last Day to place SCRIP order for Christmas is Dec 10th before Noon to be picked up on Dec. 14th. The next order will be placed Jan. 7th.

St. Mary Volunteers

The Volunteer Hours Log sheet is located in the "Downloads" section of our website. If you need a copy to keep track of your volunteer hours, please print one from the website or stop by the office.



Box Tops for Education

Keep sending in your Box tops for Education. The classroom with the most turned in by Tuesday, December 11th will receive a free jeans day. Be sure to include the student & teacher's name on your collection sheet. Box Tops can be taped or glued to the collection sheet (no staples). Bonus coupons should not be attached to collection sheet. **Please make sure all Box Tops sent in have not expired.**

Save the Date

Thanksgiving Break

- Dec. 1 ~ Jingle for Jesus
- Dec. 2 ~ Altar Server Installation
- Dec. 3-7 ~ Santa Shoppe
- Dec. 7 ~ Progress Reports
- Dec. 7 ~ Gr. 1 & 2 Christmas Pageant
- Dec. 14 ~ Kdg. Christmas Pageant
- Dec. 17 ~ All School Mass @ SMS 8:15
- Dec. 18 ~ No Latchkey
- Dec. 19 ~ Noon Dismissal –
Latchkey until 6:00 PM
- Dec. 20 –January 1 ~ No School -
Christmas Break
- Jan. 18 ~ End of 2nd Quarter
- Jan. 21 ~ No School—Staff PD
- Jan. 27 ~ Open House for new Families
- Jan 28—Feb. 1 ~ Catholic Schools Week
- Feb. 1 ~ Honors after Mass
- Feb. 14 & 15 ~ Noon Dismissal—
Conferences
- Feb. 18-19 ~ No School - Winter Break

BEING GREEN



This year we are continuing our Green School efforts with collecting your old strings of Christmas lights. To save energy and money this Christmas, replace your old incandescent Christmas lights with LED lights. Then drop off your old lights at our recycling center across from Mrs. Chalk's preschool room.

St. Mary Catholic School provides strong academics within a faith-based community to prepare students for higher learning and to become moral, productive, God-loving leaders in society.



Kroger Community Rewards Program

St. Mary Catholic School is now part of the Kroger Community Rewards Program. Please take a few minutes and register your Kroger scan card at <https://www.kroger.com/>.

Select “Kroger Community Rewards” at the bottom of the page and create an account. Select St. Mary Catholic School or DA174, Enter your scan card number, and click “Enroll”. See your inbox for details.



SNOWPILE

The NJHS SNOWPILE Drive for Children’s Hospital of Michigan has begun and runs through **December 11th**. Please do your part to make these children and their family’s Christmas Day brighter. Check your inbox for more information and toy suggestions. Our goal is 500 toys!

“KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS” Poster Contest

Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

You are encouraged to share with your children the TRUE meaning of Christmas and then create a poster that reflects that message.

OFFICIAL RULES

- Contest opened to all students in grades K-8.
- Poster must reflect the theme of Keep Christ in Christmas. Each poster should be the original work (including concept, layout, slogan and any visual images) of a single person.
- Poster should be approximately 11x17 inches (Paper available from Mrs. Clara if needed). However, the supreme Council will not disqualify based on poster size. If pastels, chalk or charcoal are used, the poster must be laminated or covered with clear plastic.
- Each poster must be submitted with a Knights of Columbus Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest entry form (#5025) Available from Mrs. Clara.
- The name and age of the entrant should be printed on the reverse side of the poster.
- All entries become property of the Knights of Columbus supreme Council office.

ALL ENTRIES ARE DUE TO MRS. CLARA BY DECEMBER 19th

Weekly Highlights

Thursday, Nov. 29

NJHS Tutoring Team C 3:10-4:00
Snowpile Continues

Friday, Nov. 30

Mass at St. Peter Gr. 1-8
Gr. 4 Ford Factory Tour
Gr. 7 Stain Glass Tour
Gr. 8 Scapular Blessing
Snowpile Continues

Saturday, Dec. 1

Children's Choir 4:00 Mass

Sunday, Dec. 2

First Sunday of Advent
Altar Server Installation 10:00 Mass

Monday, Dec. 3

Mass SMS Gr. 5-8, 8:15
Snowpile Continues
Santa Shoppe is open

Tuesday, Dec. 4

Santa Shoppe is open
Snowpile Continues
Little Mountaineers 12:30-2:00
Gr. 6-8 Art Club 3:10-4:00
Children's Choir 3:10-4:00

Wednesday, Dec. 5

Mass SMS Gr. 1-4, 8:15
Santa Shoppe is open
Snowpile Continues
Candy Cane Sale begins
NJHS Meeting 3:10-4:00
Forensic Drama Night 6:00-8:00

Coming Home

Pink Note
Santa Shoppe Information
Daddy Daughter Dance Reservation
Daisies (Kdg. Only)

E-mailed Home

Kroger Community Rewards
Indoor Soccer

St. Peter Parish ROCK Youth Group News

Jingle for Jesus

Jingle for Jesus Walk & Blanket making is on Saturday, December 1. See Church Bulletin for more information.

ROCK Youth Ministry Winter Retreat

Calling all 6-8 grade students for our Winter Retreat! Join us January 25-27, 2019 at Springhill Camps. Springhill Camp is located in Evart, MI about 2 hours west of here. Students will spend time with other middle school students learning about Jesus from an amazing speaker and small group discussions. There will also be time to enjoy the tubing hill, zipline course, horseback riding, along with many other activities. A live band will also be there for entertainment and we will attend Mass on Sunday morning at the local Catholic Church! Check www.rockyouthmin.weebly.com for permission slips and more information or contact Tori Kearney at (586) 468-4578 or stpetyouthmin@gmail.com



Daisies

Calling all kindergarten Girls wanting to join Daisies. A flyer with information is coming home today with instructions to register. If you need more information contact Marcy Burkitt at mrastigue@comcast.net or Judy Brinker at jdydemick@gmail.com.

St. Peter Catholic Church



Out of the Past, THE FUTURE



E. PRAETERITIS FUTURA