

**St. Mary Interparochial School Home & School Association
Dues Form 2006-2007 School Year**

Attention: St. Mary Parents

Did you remember to pay your Home & School dues this year?

Well, here's your chance:

Please complete this form and send \$5 per family to the School Office.
Make checks payable to St. Mary Interparochial School

Name of Family: _____

Name and Grade(s) of Child/Children: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

This newsletter was designed and printed with the support of
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Dreams for Our Future

- Establishment of Pre-K
- Additional Space for:
Kindergarten
Designated Art Room
Music Room, etc.
- Energy Efficient Windows
- Air Conditioning System
- Expansion of Language Program
- Renovation of Assembly Room/Gym

Thank You!

Once again, alumnus Anthony Morrison (1991) has come through for St. Mary's. In collaboration with colleague Robert Reger of Reger, Rizzo, Kavulich & Darnall, Anthony directed \$1,000 to our school to organize our Viva Las Vegas Night in November.

Many thanks to Anthony and Mr. Reger!

The rich academic and historic heritage of St. Mary Interparochial School dates to the early days of Philadelphia, as Catholics and Protestants engaged in spirited debate over educational practices. Founded in 1782 by the Jesuit fathers of Old St. Joseph's Church, St. Mary is known as "The Mother School" of catholic parochial education and is credited with influencing catholic educational patterns in this country. Situated near Independence Hall and other pivotal sites in old Philadelphia, it served children for more than a century before closing in 1902 after a devastating fire. St. Mary's reopened in 1968, again with a distinction: With students drawn from six different parishes, it was the first interparochial school in the nation. St. Mary Interparochial School is situated in Independence National Park and serves 250 children from all over the City of Philadelphia and its suburbs.

History of Saint Mary Interparochial School

Saint Mary Interparochial School
Fifth and Locust Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19106
— Since 1782 —



SAINT MARY
MESSENGER

Saint Mary Interparochial School – Since 1782

St. Mary and the Arts

Beading, painting to music, and writing with quills are just a few of the interesting and stimulating projects covered this year during St. Mary Interparochial School's art classes.

St. Mary's Art Program for grades three to eight will be entering its fourth year in the fall of 2006. The program usually takes on a life of its own after the school year begins, spontaneously incorporating the rich resources of the Philadelphia arts and cultural communities. The School's collaboration

The curriculum for grades three to eight included lessons on linear art, painting to music, pop artist Keith Haring, the art of holy cards and the symbolism of our patron saint Our Lady of Guadalupe, beading, Illustrator Chris Van Allsburg, how to make rubber band balls, typesetting, writing with quill pens, clay pottery, the Huichol Indians of Mexico's nierikas and kukas, and Pennsylvania-German fraktur.

The students also participated in the following art events:

Opera Company of Philadelphia
A Masked Ball, GRADES 5 TO 8

Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art
Changing Visions of American Life – Art and American History, GRADES 2 TO 8

Atwater Kent Museum
Philadelphia's People, GRADES 4 AND 8

The Claymobile
8-week outreach program, GRADE 8

Cliff Wright – Sunflower
Dancin' With the Honeybees, GRADES K TO 8

Franklin Institute, GRADE 8

Cecilia Brauer, Armonica Player, visits St. Mary, GRADES 1 TO 8

National Constitution Center
Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World, GRADES 4 TO 8

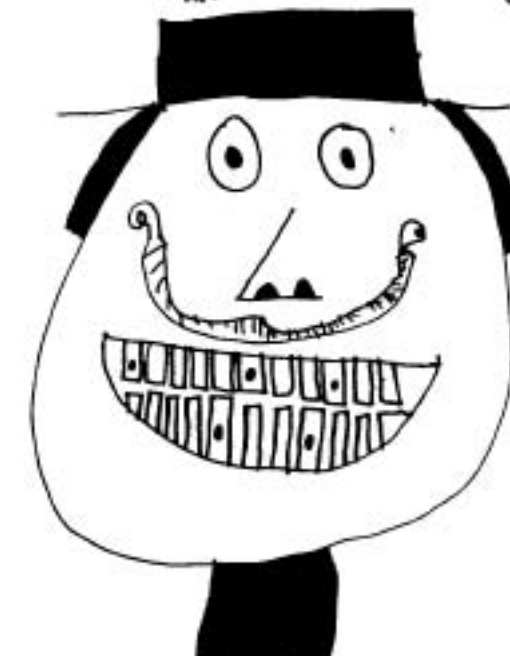
Rebecca Lawrence, Fraktur Educator, visits St. Mary, GRADES 3 TO 8

Ben Franklin visits St. Mary, GRADES K TO 8



with various cultural institutions such as the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Art-Reach, The Clay Studio, the Opera Company of Philadelphia and Atwater Kent Museum often presents the students with wonderful opportunities for hands-on learning and activities. Art teacher, Mrs. Donna Bridy, provides our children with a diverse, rich, broad education of art and culture.

4 grade gmathon Bunal
Self-Portrait Keith Haring



What's inside...

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Letter from the Principal

Dear Alumni, Parents, Benefactors of St. Mary Interparochial School,

So much has happened this past year. The faculty and staff of St. Mary Interparochial School have worked tirelessly on re-accreditation for the Middle States Association. This process includes a self-study, an in-depth examination of curricula and an action plan for improvement. We decided math and science are the subjects that need attention and have worked to set these goals: to increase math scores on the Terra Nova tests by 3 percent by the year 2010 and to use labs and demonstrations in science on a regular basis. The outcome of these goals will be higher standardized test scores and better understanding of the curricula.

We have contracted with Music on the Move to bring music instruction into the classroom two mornings each week. While two afternoons each week, the music teacher, Mr. Butler, is available for private and/or small group music instruction.

We now have three honors math classes, in Grades four, five, and six, which necessitated our hiring a part-time math teacher, Mrs. Donna Sulak. By September 2008, we will have five honors math classes, from Grades four through eight.

When we surveyed parents, many asked for a foreign language program, an idea that we have also entertained. We are

excited to announce that we have started a Spanish language course in 7th & 8th grades with Bernardo Aparicio, volunteer with DeSales Service Works, a program of the Oblates of St. Francis deSales. We hope to expand this program.

You all know that lack of space is a critical issue for us. Next fall, we hope to look for additional space to house our Kindergarten and possibly a pre-K.

Regarding our infrastructure, our current boiler and windows are original to the school (circa 1967). A 2004 engineering study by O'Donnell and Naccarato indicated these items must be replaced. These improvements are big ticket items, with price tags of approximately \$125,000 each. As you know, our school is fiscally independent of any parish, and therefore, any capital improvement, like replacement of the boiler, must be done on our own.

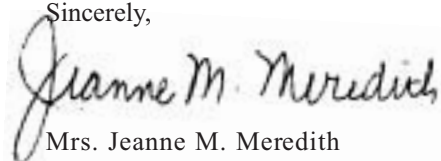
Our ultimate goal is to be not only the BEST Catholic elementary school in

center city, but the BEST in Philadelphia. We cannot continue to sustain and improve our school without your help. Every program mentioned takes funding. Our goal, as always, is to keep tuition affordable. We will raise tuition for the new year, but this will be the first increase in three years.

Without the aid of our alums, parents, and other benefactors, it is difficult to maintain the quality of education and the educational environment that all have come to know and love about St. Mary's. So, when you receive the Annual Appeal pledge or when fundraisers are sent home, please respond generously.

Thank you for your continued support and God bless you and your families.

Sincerely,



Mrs. Jeanne M. Meredith
Principal

End of School Year Awards

At the end of each school year, St. Mary Interparochial School Principal Jeanne Meredith bestows a variety of awards to students in each school grade. *St. Mary Messenger* thought it might be interesting to know what awards are distributed each year:

Perfect Attendance means just that, never absent, never late for 180 days of the school year.

Excellence in Religion – highest academic average, Catholic, working at becoming the best person he/she can become.

Academic Excellence – highest General Average for three trimesters.

Effort Award – ability to show his/her teacher and him/herself that the task at hand (elementary education) is most important each and every day. This child is almost always on task and engaged in the educational challenges set before him/her.

St. Mary School Award – service and school spirit, for example offering assistance to school staff without being asked.

St. Mary Leadership Award – the ability to demonstrate strength and maturity among faculty and classmates.

FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT ST. MARY'S ANNUAL APPEAL:

1. The Annual Appeal is a yearly fundraising drive that reaches out to local businesses, major corporations, parents, alumni, etc., for the purposes of raising much-needed funds to benefit St. Mary Interparochial School's building and infrastructure. This important fund forms the foundation for all other development efforts.
2. When you make a contribution to the Annual Fund, 100 percent of your contribution will be applied to our goal: a new boiler, estimated at \$125,000.
3. Your support encourages giving by demonstrating to potential donors in the business world that St. Mary's is a viable and worthy institution with the backing of our alumni, parents and friends.

To contribute to the Annual Fund, please make checks payable to St. Mary Interparochial School and mail to: St. Mary Interparochial School, 247 S. Fifth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Title One

As part of our commitment to academic success for all of our children, St. Mary's is participating in a dynamic early literacy program. We are privileged to have Mrs. Helene Gordon, Title One Reading Specialist, along with Ms. Carolyn Donato, Early Literacy Librarian.

The two specialists come to St. Mary through Title One Nonpublic Categorical programs, a federally funded initiative of the "No Child Left Behind" Law, benefiting children in private and parochial schools. The program is dedicated to ensuring that all children learn to read on grade level by the third grade, and be able to meet the high performance standards mandated by the state.

Mrs. Gordon (below) provides small group instruction to students in the early grades. Working with classroom teachers to



Spotlight on Teachers

Ms. Partice Passarello,
Kindergarten

Experience: She has taught for several years prior to St. Mary's in Pre-K, K and Special Needs students. She is also involved in CARES and teaches CCD.

Education: Community College of Philadelphia: Associates in Early Childhood Education. Temple University Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

St. Mary's Coordinator: for Terra Nova tests.

Hobbies: Scrapbooking, shopping, reading and spending time with friends and family.

detect reading challenges among the children, she applies research-based methods in her lessons to improve, monitor and measure individual achievement. Mrs. Gordon's program initially focuses on phonemic awareness (the manipulation of sounds in spoken words) and the alphabetic principle (the ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to form words.) Building upon this foundation, she concentrates on vocabulary, comprehension and reading fluency. She also recognized the desire of our parents to take a proactive role in their children's achievement this year and initiated a series of five workshops to guide families in working together for reading success.

Ms. Donato works with our children in grades K-2 each week, putting the literacy program into action in our school library. She has been instrumental in building interest and enthusiasm for new library books and reading through promoting such themes as poetry, fiction, non-fiction, fantasy, etc.

We are grateful to have these qualified and seasoned teachers as part of our team at St. Mary's.

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Rich & Lisa

Technology at St. Mary's

EQUIPMENT

St. Mary School is committed to maintaining and upgrading its computer technology to both educate the children with up-to-date equipment and to improve the day-to-day office operations. This year the school received six new laptops: two from the Home and School Association and four from the Office of Catholic Education.

DATABASE

In addition, the school has purchased a database program, and a custom application has been developed to help manage student records. The initial phase has already been installed, and it will save time by automating many tasks now done manually. Currently the database primarily holds contact information, including name, address, phone numbers, and emails. It also has emergency and health insurance information. As it stands, it will help with record keeping and communications, by allowing group emails from the school, and labels for mail and folder correspondence. It will allow us to publish a student directory to share addresses and phone numbers with our families. Many enhancements are planned for the fall, including tuition/Smart record keeping, as well as a permanent record section to track grades and attendance.

The system will also enable better communication with parents through our growing email list. To add your name and email to the list, send an email to info@saintmarys.us asking to be added to the list.

WEBSITE

Our new website is live at www.saintmarys.us. Please mark it as your home page to stay current with each month's events and special dates. We will continue to grow the site to meet the school's ever-growing needs. Check back often for news, announcements and special events!



ST. MARY IN THE COMMUNITY

Hurricane Katrina: St. Mary School was proud to have four families displaced by Hurricane Katrina enrolled in our school in 2005. A total of five students in various grades attended St. Mary's from September until the Christmas Holiday, when all of the families returned to their hometowns in Louisiana. Before they left, many of their classmates raised money and presented the families with gift certificates and well wishes for their trip back home.

Walkathon: The Fourth Annual St. Mary's Walkathon raised \$8,296 and focused on Ben Franklin, in honor of his 300th birthday. The April 30th Walk concluded a yearlong program including a visit from Ben Franklin himself, field trips to the National Constitution Center, an Armonica performance by Cecelia Brauer, research projects, and art and music programs. Students visited Franklin Court, Christ Church and Ben Franklin's grave. All funds raised by the Walkathon go directly to the children, in the form of cultural and academic enrichment programs, most notably the addition of a music program to the curriculum through Music on the Move.

Dressed Down for a Cause: St. Mary students (K-8) collected \$1,000 for the three-day Walk for Breast Cancer, by dressing in pink for one day, in support of St. Mary parent Liz Keegans' 60-mile walk to raise money for the cause.

Betsy Ross House: Christian Rufo, now in second grade, won the Flag Art Contest sponsored by State Rep. Marie Lederer's office. He received a certificate at the Betsy Ross House and his flag will be displayed with other winners' flags at the Betsy Ross House until next year.

Opera Company of Philadelphia: St. Mary School won third prize in the Opera Company's city-wide art contest for its unique portrayal of masks designed by our students and based on the opera "A Masked Ball."

Theresa Maxis Center: Once again, Students (K-8) donated canned goods for Thanksgiving and cans of soups for the "Souper Bowl" in January to this Community Outreach Center run by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at 56th & Chester.

Other Academic Partnerships:

Philadelphia Police Department: The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program for 4th & 5th grades and the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) program to 6th and 7th grade students.

School District: *Bus Safety*, Grades K - 3

Criminal Investigation Division, Delaware County: *Internet Safety Program*, Grades K - 8

Catapult Services: *Study Skills*, Grades 4, 6, 7, 8



**CHECK OUT ST. MARY'S
NEW WEBSITE AT
www.saintmarys.us.**

Letter from the Pastor-Delegate



Dear Saint Mary School Families,

Peace of the Risen Lord be with you and your family!

The purpose of every Catholic School is to evangelize the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. Evangelization is not a movement in the Church rather it is the entire Church in movement. Our primary purpose as a Catholic School is to support our parents in their role as educators in the faith. Therefore, all of us – priest, administrators, staff and parents – are to spread, promote, defend, but most importantly, "Live our Christian faith." As parents, do you bring your child/children to Mass each week? Are you active in your Parish community? Have you introduced your child/children to the Pastor of your Parish? Are you involved in various activities within your parish community? I strongly encourage you to take an active role in the life of your parish community. It is the parish that nurtures and nourishes the faith life in each of us. We celebrate the sacraments around the altar in our parish church where we are loved and fed by Christ each week. Please get involved in your parish! Please get your child/children involved in their parish as an altar server. The parish is the heart of the Church! Please keep it pumping!

Sincerely in the Lord,

Rev. Louis P. Bellopede

Father Bellopede
Pastor-delegate
St. Mary Interparochial School

Pastor, Saint Paul Parish
808 S. Hutchinson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
(215) 923-0355 Phone
(215) 923-1803 Fax

Freedom Corps Award – given by the President of the USA for volunteer service in school.

Serra Awards – for children who give service to their parish as altar servers.

President's Council on Academic Fitness Awards – for students who have 85% or above academic averages for every year of elementary school.



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4. Giving to the annual fund is the most convenient way for individuals to share in the mission of our unique school, and keep quality, Catholic education accessible to city residents.

5. Of course, the most important reason to contribute to The Annual Fund is the children of St. Mary School, who benefit greatly from all contributions.

Children's Corner

St. Mary's Super Powers to the Rescue!

This year's St. Mary's Student Survey included a range of questions from "Saturday Morning Activities to Favorite Super Powers."

The children's ability to imagine super powers included wanting to fly, becoming invisible, or having telepathic abilities. Others wanted super strength, the ability to time travel or super speed. One sweet surprise was the many students who wished for the ability to heal the sick.

Children bestowed a variety of super powers for parents. A considerate one-third chose powers that would make life easier for them, for example: Giving parents the ability to fly to avoid traffic, or super speed to get things done quicker allowing them more free time. Others wanted parents to have super strength or



stretching powers to make work around the house easier. Another third remained silent on the issue, perhaps believing their parents already possess super power. One third of the students chose powers that would benefit the students such as flying them to school or super strength for piggy-back rides. Also, if some students had their way, many parents would be cooking dinner with laser vision eyes!

It's hard to say where humor starts in the classroom, but comedy is clearly a part of life at St. Mary's. Students from every grade stated their teachers say funny things during class. When faced with less than ideal behavior, some teachers put on a silly crying act or explain that smoke will begin to come out of the teacher's ears and nose. Others stated that some teachers mutter a prayer for patience. It seems when a class takes a moment to laugh together everyone enjoys learning.

Not surprisingly, the results show that St. Mary's students enjoy spending leisurely Saturday mornings watching cartoons, having breakfast with their families or playing a favorite sport, like basketball,

soccer and ice hockey. Several students are back in class taking lessons in dance, art, music or karate.

The students' answers turned more serious when the survey asked: "What is your favorite time of day to pray?" For many, there is no better hour for prayer than bedtime, but also praying at Mass and saying grace at dinner with their families.

When asked to comment on something great about St. Mary's, a surprising number of students mentioned the word "fun." The younger students associated the roof with fun, while many older ones said teachers make learning fun. The upper school students remarked appreciatively on the quality of their education. A common thread weaved through all the grades as many students wrote about forming strong friendships with classmates and being taught by caring teachers. Many students took the opportunity to express what they think is the greatest thing about their school – its people.

Thanks to all the students who participated in our survey!



Celebrating the Rewards!

Donations to St. Mary School:

Rewards Programs

Library Memorials	\$ 490
Box Tops for Education	\$ 323
Target	\$ 236
Recycling Cartridges	\$ 72
Book Fair	\$ 1,200
CARES (Phila. Safe and Sound)	\$ 8/child

Home and School Donations

Web Page	\$ 1,000
Back to school wish list	\$ 1,800
Bee assembly	\$ 955
Teacher appreciation	\$ 1,000
Sport Uniform Stipend	\$ 800
Donut Day	\$ 135
8th Grade Graduation Fund	\$ 1,500
Laptops	\$ 2,408
Two Fans in each classroom	\$ 6,500

Home and School Sponsored Events

- Four School Dances
- Bus Trip to New York City and Radio City
- Music Hall Christmas Show
- Night at The Phantoms Hockey
- Spring Fling

Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to the Class of 2006:

- Rosemary Bencher
Little Flower High School
- Patrick Burke
Roman Catholic High School
- Mariah DuPont
A Better Chance Program
- Max Kroll
Roman Catholic High School
- Ashley Rivera
Connelly Scholarship
- Brandyn Wims
West Catholic

School Upgrades

- Storage cabinets have been built in the cafeteria
- School has been cleaned professionally for the 2006-2007 school year

Curriculum Update

- Classroom music provided for by "Music on the Move"
- Mrs. Bridy teaching art to children in grades 3 - 8
- Spanish lessons for grades 7 - 8

Spotlight on St. Mary Alumni

JAYDA PUGLIESE

Class of 2001 and a student of Holy Family University, is featured as a "Student Star" in the Spring edition of Mosaic, the university alumni magazine. Jayda is classified as one of St. Katherine Drexel's minor and informal miracles. While attending sixth grade at St. Mary's, Jayda and her family learned she had suffered irreversible nerve damage and was going deaf. Miss Margaret Dunn, Jayda's teacher at the time, presented her with a Blessed Katherine Drexel prayer card to whom Jayda prayed three or more times daily. "Then, one day, it felt like a special day," she reports. Doctors declared the impossible had occurred, and the process had reversed itself. Today Jayda, with her hearing restored to about 60 percent, reaches out to others who suffer hearing deprivation by teaching and performing sign language, and remaining active in campus and parish ministry. She continues to give thanks to Katherine Drexel each day, and inspires us to "Never stop believing in the impossible, because it just may be closer than you believe."



After graduating from St. Mary's, Jayda attended St. Maria Goretti High School where she organized a sign language club to tutor students at a local deaf school. She is also a gymnastics instructor at Palumbo Recreation Center and works in the admissions office at Holy Family. Jayda stated: "I believe I should share the many talents God has given me with others. Helping anyone, no matter if it is in a major or minor way, gives me a spiritual reward beyond explanation." *Article written by Jeannette Ryder, Mosaic, Vol. III, No. 1, Spring 06, page 8-9.*

JOSEPH PURUL

Roman Catholic High School freshman (and 2005 graduate of St. Mary's) Joseph Purul helped Roman's Crew Team, for the first time in school history, win the 2006 Catholic League Championships. The race was held on April 30, 2006, on the Schuylkill River. Joseph was the coxswain for the Boy's Varsity Light Four and their boat came in second place giving the crew team the winning points for the Championship! Joseph was presented with a Certificate and Plaque for the Second All Catholic Team and a championship ring.

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