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# SAINT MARY MESSENGER

The Newsletter for Alumni, Parents and Friends of  
Saint Mary Interparochial School

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020!



### IN THIS ISSUE

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 Class of 2020                                  | 7 2020 Student Profiles                    |
| 2 From the Principal                             | 11 Impact Giving                           |
| 3 Message from Our Board of Limited Jurisdiction | 12 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion         |
| 4 Thank You H&S Board Bittersweet Goodbyes       | 13 St. Mary Lifers                         |
| 5 18 <sup>th</sup> Annual Walkathon              | 14 Alumni Circle News                      |
| 6 STEAM Theatre                                  | 15 14 <sup>th</sup> Annual Harvest Hoedown |
|  | 16 Annual Giving Campaign                  |

**1st Row:** Father John Large, Maya Scarlett, Ambur Aguilar, Edmund Arquitola, Sofia Fisher, Sydney Arbitman, Harry Kane, Maria Shapson, Reve Underwood

**2nd Row:** Mrs. Judy Crossan-Sanicky, Astrid Olshin, Sela Perryman, Sana Moore, Maxine Pallante, Miles Shenk, Sofia Henningsen, Laurence Sullivan, Angela Hill, Ella Lewandowski, Alexa Tancredi, Ms. Jayda Pugliese

**3rd Row:** Robert Brooks, Ella Flood, Derek Smith, Nora Keer, Nicholas Squillante, Philip Watson, Marley Howlett, Andrew Binck, Comfort Mensah, Talan Hawkins

Congratulations to the Class of 2020! Our most recent graduates will continue to shine their St. Mary light as they embark on their new adventure of high school. The faculty and staff are confident that each student in their uniqueness are prepared to be Christ-Centered leaders in all that they do. In addition, it should be noted that members from this class received over \$1,000,000 in scholarships for the next four years of their high school careers. This is the highest amount received by any of our classes!

*Congratulations to our class of 2020 –  
your futures are so bright!*



## FROM THE PRINCIPAL



*Dear Parents, Guardians, Alumni, and Supporters of St. Mary Interparochial School,*

The 2019-2020 academic school year has been like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic has produced a high level of uncertainty and stress within our communities. By now, we have all been impacted by this virus, which has been devastating for so many. Despite all of the challenges we have faced and are still facing today, this pandemic has brought out the best in many people. We are so proud of the resiliency, adaptability, creativity, patience, and dedication of our faculty, staff, students, and families at St. Mary Interparochial School, and, even with the closure of our physical school building, we still have a lot to celebrate.

This past year, we provided weekly “STREAM” (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Math) programming which replaced our current technology curriculum. This curriculum shift is the result of current research which suggests that in order to prepare students for the 21st Century future workforce, students need to be complex problem-solvers, critical-thinkers, and creative, empathetic and collaborative team members. Through this refocused K-8 STREAM curriculum, students are developing the skills needed to be successful through hands-on, project-based, design thinking, that emphasizes STEAM learning with the added Religious approach. Through a generous two-year grant from the Ambassador’s Fund for Education (formerly known as the Archdiocesan Educational Fund), our STREAM mobile makerspaces and nutritional programming, through Greener Partners, were used to support this shift in learning.

St. Mary Interparochial School was also a proud partner of the Global Philadelphia Association, in celebration of Philadelphia being designated as the first World Heritage City in the United States of America. As the schoolwide theme for this year, students reflected on their family heritage, their Philadelphia heritage, and their Catholic and religious heritage.

In March, as concerns grew locally about the uncertainty of COVID-19, we informed families that we would meet as a staff to prepare auxiliary plans in light of a possible closure. This announcement also included a remote learning survey to better understand our families’ at-home resources for learning. A preemptive planning meeting was held before COVID-19 was officially declared a global pandemic and before stay at home orders were put in place. Because of this meeting, when the school community was informed that Governor Wolf had announced all Pennsylvania schools were officially closed for in-person instruction, our teachers and students seamlessly transitioned to remote/virtual learning. Remote/virtual learning was not easy, but we adapted. We learned new skills. We learned platforms. We were flexible to the changes needed to be made, and we were still creative and innovative. This is why our staff, our students, and our families are so special; that even with all of the challenges a pandemic may bring, you are still shining your St. Mary light through it all.

Although we were virtual for four months, our students still participated in many unique virtual clubs and competitions. Several of our middle school students participated and placed in the Philadelphia Carver Science Fair competition, the Delaware Valley Science Fair competition and the National History Day competition. Several of our 6th Grade students virtually participated in the Philadelphia Model UN Competition and placed. Our Mathcounts group competed in the Math Video Challenge and was spotlighted as a Gold Level Project. And from the pandemic, Sign Language Club, Guided Meditation and BreakoutEDU Live club was created.

As we close the chapter on the 2019-2020 school year, we know that this was a difficult year for many, but most especially for the graduating class of 2020. We were so happy to be able to celebrate you and we will always be proud of you. We wish you the best of luck in your respective high schools.

Looking forward to the 2020-2021 school year, we have many wonderful improvements to share with you. Through the generosity of our St. Mary donors, and with the help of our hard working advancement team, we are excited to improve the physical space here at St. Mary for our students. The classrooms and hallways in first through fourth grade received new flooring, and the hallways in both the lower school and middle school have been repainted. In addition to this, our Home and School Association provided the school with nearly \$10,000 in cleaning equipment to help maintain both the daily and deep cleanings needed within the building.

We are also very excited to announce that we are partnering with Thomas Jefferson University in a two year initiative to strengthen our students’ understanding and view of health and healing. Together, we will be aiming to redefine and provide relevant education of healing through mental, physical and spiritual growth. This initiative will bring long term health practices into our community’s mainstream living. In conjunction with this health initiative, students will also participate in a Roots2Rise project. This organization will provide Yoga mats and guide participants on the principles of patience, awareness, focus and daily ease.

Whether we are learning in-person, hybrid, or fully virtual, with your support, we are able to continue to offer a quality Catholic education to families from various parishes and zip codes while remaining a crown jewel in the historic heart of Philadelphia. It is our sincere hope that you will continue to share your time, talent, and treasure with our children. My most sincere thanks to you for your investment in Saint Mary Interparochial School and the Christ-centered leaders you are helping to shape for today and tomorrow!

Many blessings,

Mrs. Jayda Pugliese, ABD  
Principal



## MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD OF LIMITED JURISDICTION



None of us, if transported back to one year ago, envisioned a world upended by the effects of a global pandemic. And yet here we are, four months into the Covid-19 pandemic and counting,

and on the verge of opening the 2020-2021 school year. The challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic have been immense, but thanks to the collaborative efforts of the school administration, faculty, parents, and students, St. Mary's has been able to continue to provide a Blue Ribbon education in an environment designed to protect the health and welfare of the school community. As we embark on the upcoming school year, parents will have the option of choosing a full virtual learning experience or a "Hybrid" model, incorporating live attendance and virtual learning.

St. Mary's was at the forefront of virtual learning when the pandemic first affected the region in March 2020, and St. Mary's ability to provide its award-winning educational experience in the context of virtual learning allowed us to finish the 2019-2020 school year successfully and on schedule. Virtual learning, along with in-person classes, will be continued to be used in

the 2020-2021 school year. Every effort will be made to protect the health and welfare of the students and faculty. Thanks to the efforts of the Home and School Association, the school purchased nearly \$9,000 in cleaning and sanitation equipment. The school will undergo extensive daily cleaning and additional "deep" cleaning on Wednesdays and Saturdays (electrostatic sprayers will be used throughout the building using Bioesque Botanical Disinfectant Solution and Septin/420 on all hard surfaces, when the building is empty). The grades will be split into "cohorts" encompassing two grades each (kindergarten will be its own cohort) to ensure limited potential interaction with other classes. Ultraboard Barrier Micro, a plexiglass-like material, will be installed at each student's desk. Teachers will wear face shields (in the classroom) and face shields and masks (outside of the classroom). Masks and social distancing will be monitored throughout the school, as well, all to ensure that every step is being taken to protect the well-being of the students and faculty.

The Board will be working with the administration to assist in providing the support needed for a successful and safe school year. Accordingly, we invite you to attend the Open Board meeting on October 6, 2020. Now, more than ever, the Board

welcomes the opportunity to hear from the school community as we work to overcome the challenges of the upcoming school year.

We will eventually see brighter days and long-awaited normalcy will return to St. Mary's. Until then, however, we on the Board are fully confident that the school will provide another rewarding school year for the students, in a safe and healthy environment. Thank you for your support, sacrifice, and cooperation.

Best regards,  
**Michael Detweiler, Esquire**  
*Board Chair and President*

*Michael L. Detweiler is a member of the Professional Liability Department at Marshall Dennehey where he has defended clients in numerous professional liability and casualty matters. Prior to joining Marshall Dennehey, Michael was Assistant City Solicitor with the City of Philadelphia Law Department for two years. Michael graduated from Dickinson College in 1998 and from Boston College Law School in 2002. He is licensed to practice in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Massachusetts. Michael and his wife Alexandra are parents of two children, Charles and Gisele.*

### Meet our New Board Members



**JAMILA ABERDEEN**  
Parent '16 and '20

Jamila Aberdeen is a Doctor of Physical Therapy, Board Certified in Orthopedics at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for the past twelve years.

For the past five years she has served as the outpatient supervisor for the Outpatient Department at the University City Campus. She graduated magna cum laude from Morgan State University '04 and Temple University in 2007. She is currently pursuing her MBA in Health Care Management and Leading Organizations from the Carey Business School at Johns Hopkins University. External to CHOP, Dr. Aberdeen has held positions in the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Physical Therapists Association (APTA) and currently serves as a Steering Committee Member for the Council of Health Systems of the APTA.

Dr. Aberdeen is a passionate, patient advocate and mentor, who loves to impart knowledge and has undertaken several teaching assignments at Arcadia University at varying levels of instruction. She also serves as a Capstone Advisor for students seeking a Rehabilitation Administration Certificate at the University of Montana.

Jamila and her husband, Barry are the proud parents of two alums: Jabari Perryman '16 and Sela Perryman '20.



**ALANA LEE**

Alana is in her 19th year in education, the past five of which have been at the Gesu School; first as the Dean of Students and currently as Vice Principal. In addition to fulfilling her day to day responsibilities at Gesu, Mrs. Lee has led the school in City-Wide and State-Wide Service, Recycling, and Bullying Prevention Initiatives. She has nurtured a relationship with Gesu and the

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to continue

to be a No Place for Hate School, and has implemented a Self-Esteem & Empowerment Program for the 6th grade girls called "Gesu Girls with an Agenda" (G.W.A.).

Ms. Lee has taught at the elementary, high school and college level, in which she was an adjunct professor at Holy Family University. Prior to her teaching career, Mrs. Lee had a career in Journalism, where she worked at NBC10 News Station and WDAS Clear Channel Radio Station, where her love for research, writing and public speaking transpired, and later inspired her to publish her first children's book in 2007. She is also the co-founder of the Live & Love Life a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Cancer Research Group.

Mrs. Lee's educational philosophy is based on her uncompromising belief that all students can learn, given a positive learning environment, strong and knowledgeable leadership, a committed and focused educational team, an encouraging community, and a supportive family.

## Board Members for 2020-2021

MICHAEL L. DETWEILER  
Board Chair and President

JAMILA ABERDEEN  
Parent '16 and '20

RICH AUTIERI  
Parent '18 and '19

CHRISTIAN AUMENT

REGINA GRIFFIN-KELLY  
Parent, '08 and '13

SUSAN KOGER  
Parent, '25

ALANA LEE

FR. EDWARD O'DONNELL, S.J.

KRISTIN RICCHIUTI  
Parent, '21 and '25

JUDGE TIMOTHY SAVAGE  
United States District Court  
Board Vice President

VICTORIA RODGERS, ESQ

MICHAEL SHAPSON, ESQ  
Parent, '20 and '24

MARIA WALKER  
Parent, '08 and '12

AD HOC MEMBERS

JAYDA PUGLIESE  
Principal  
Alumna, '01  
Parent, '27

CHRISTINA HACISKI  
Director of Advancement

## BITTERSWEET GOODBYES

The St. Mary School community would like to thank and acknowledge the great service that two outstanding leaders provided over the past several years, Father John Large and Suzy Davis.

### Father John Large

This year we say goodbye to our beloved Father John Large who graciously served as Pastor Delegate at St. Mary Interparochial School since 2014. He has retired as pastor of St. Paul's Church and will be transferring to another Philadelphia parish where he will be able to help out where he can, but most importantly take time to ease into his well-deserved retirement. We thank Father Large for his years as Pastor Delegate of St. Mary Interparochial School, and for his lively and thoughtful masses that our students and teachers will surely miss!



### Suzy Davis

As an influential Board member since 2015, Suzy Davis has provided excellent leadership in the strengthening of the overall development model for St. Mary Interparochial. Serving as the Advancement Chair, Suzy worked closely with the Advancement team to create thoughtful development initiatives to support the overall school program which included the momentous year long celebration of the school's Golden Jubilee as well as countless academic, social and spiritual experiences for our students. We will miss Suzy greatly on our Board of Limited Jurisdiction but will always consider her a champion for St. Mary! Best of luck to Suzy and her husband Charlie on their future endeavors!



## THANK YOU TO OUR HOME AND SCHOOL BOARD!



Each year, H&S members sponsor school dances, Lunch with Santa, the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, and several fundraisers designed to raise money for important projects. Our Home and School members come together as one group, one voice, one school to benefit our children – our greatest asset!

Thank you to our outgoing Home and School Board members for their service to St. Mary Interparochial School during our 2019-2020 school year:

**Erin Connelly**, Outgoing Corresponding Secretary

**Kristen Zdanavage**, Outgoing Treasurer

We also welcome our new Home and School Association Members and look forward to all of the events to come during our 2020-2021 school year!

### Home and School Board 2020-2021

**Tara Murphy**, President

**Lori Panza**, First Vice President

**Trish Vezza**, Second Vice President

**Giovanna Lukash**, Treasurer

**Kristin Daly**, Corresponding Secretary

**Carrie Jamison**, Events Committee Chair

**Liz Barman**, Fundraising/Volunteer Coordinator

To learn more about our Home and School Association, please visit [www.saintmarys.us/family-resources/home-school](http://www.saintmarys.us/family-resources/home-school).



# 18TH ANNUAL WALKATHON:

Supporting Art, Music, Language, and Culture Education for our Children



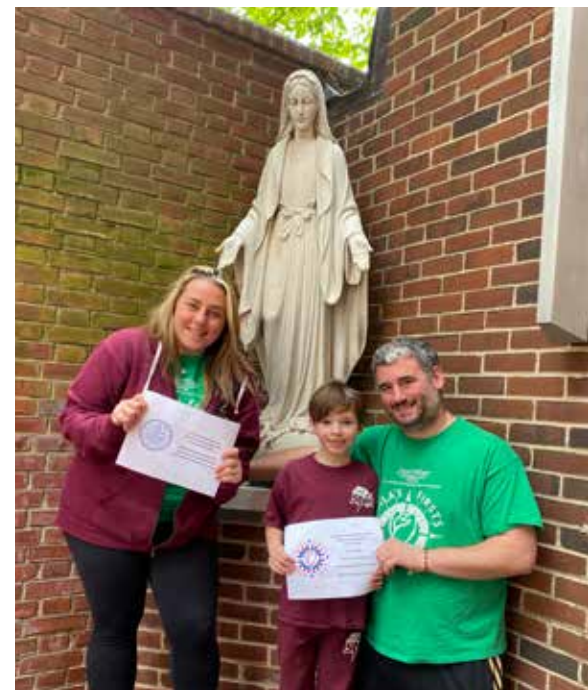
The 18th annual Walkathon on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, raised more than \$32,000 to support the art, music, and language programs at Saint Mary! Thank you to our sponsors and to those many friends, families, loved ones, and businesses for supporting our students and embracing this essential fundraising effort.

Held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Walkathon celebrated Philadelphia as the first World Heritage City in the United States as we continued to work with our Partner in Academic Excellence, Global Philadelphia. Throughout the spring, students learned about the heritage of Philadelphia as well as their own family heritage and what it means to be a global citizen. Their studies and fundraising efforts culminated in local neighborhood walks with their families and socially-distant friends. Students were asked to make signs celebrating the Walkathon and to submit photos of their walks, which were then posted to social media and presented in a commemorative video.

Congratulations to our top fundraiser, John K., Grade 3, and to nine runner-up prize winners: Adriana A., Grade 7; Charlotte F., Grade 2; Francis G., Grade 1; Alexander J., Grade 1; Emily M., Grade 7; Elizabeth N., Grade 1; Kellen O., Kindergarten; Elizabeth S., Grade 3; and Victor T., Grade 4.

Special thanks to Walter Modrys SJ, Pastor, and BJ Brown, Pastoral Associate, of Old St. Joseph's Parish, for creating and producing the beautiful "A Prayer for the Walkathon" video message which was shared with all of our students and families on the morning of the Walkathon.

On behalf of our children who benefit from this fundraiser, thank you to the entire St. Mary community for making this campaign so successful!



Thank you to all of our 2020 Event sponsors!



**RALPH AND BARBARA  
NOVOTNEY**

Cultural Champion Sponsors:

**ALBERGO  
FAMILY**

**BARNOSKY  
FAMILY**

**BHULLAR  
FAMILY**



**SUZY  
DAVIS**

**ERMILIO  
FAMILY**

**GENTILE  
FAMILY**

**KOGER  
FAMILY**

**MONTGOMERY  
FAMILY**

**TIGANO  
FAMILY**

**TROTTA  
FAMILY**



SAVE THE DATE

**Our 19th Annual Walkathon  
Friday, May 21, 2021**

Celebrating the "Art and Science of Medicine," it will honor all those working to help and heal within health care.



## STEAM THEATRE PRESENTS “INTO THE WOODS JR.”

By Betty Montgomery, '08  
*Advancement and Teaching Aid, Director of STEAM Theatre*

Our STEAM theatre program may not have looked the same this year, but our Theatre staff continues to be blown away by the dedication and talent of each of our students! From January to March, our Into the Woods Cast and Crew worked tirelessly - designing our set, costumes, and props, and rehearsing their lines, choreography, and music. Once our school transitioned to virtual learning, our cast and crew continued meeting each Wednesday on Zoom, where they participated in theatre warm-ups and even learned how to write scripts, which helped them develop their own short skits! While we are disappointed that we were unable to perform Into the Woods Jr. for the St. Mary community, we are hopeful that we will be able to meet with our theatre students in the near future, and are certain that we will see our talented graduating students on their high school stage and behind the scenes!

We thank Philadelphia Electrical & Technology Charter High School and 21st Century Community Learning Centers for their continued partnership and funding of our St. Mary STEAM Program.





## CLASS OF 2020 PERSONAL PROFILES

St. Mary's celebrates the achievements of the Class of 2020! Every year we ask the graduating 8th graders to share a few of their personal stories, goals, memories and influences. Read through their words of wisdom; these are good messages for us all!



### Ambur Aguilar

**High School:** Merion Mercy Academy  
**Activities and Achievements:** Volleyball, Basketball, Theater, Fit and Fun, GOTR, Big Brothers and Sisters,

Yearbook, Ambassador

**Fondest Memory:** The Delaware trip and the bus ride with my class.

**Future Goals:** To graduate high school, get into and graduate from college, go to medical school, and become a pediatrician.

**Greatest Influence:** My sister, because she helps me with stuff about school and other things.

**Words of Wisdom:** Live your life to the fullest and appreciate your class.



### Sydney Arbitman

**High School:** Academy at Palumbo  
**Activities and Achievements:** National Junior Honor Society  
**Fondest Memory:** When I met my friend

Maria in 3rd grade.

**Future Goals:** To be an Olympic Gymnast and doctor.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom. She helps me get through everything, no matter how hard it is.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Do what is right, not what is easy."



### Edmund Arquiteola

**High School:** Roman Catholic High School  
**Activities and Achievements:** JV Basketball, NJHS, Yearbook, Ambassador, Big Brother Program,

Lego Robotics, Chess Club, Fit and Fun, Boys on the Run

**Fondest Memory:** Catholic Schools Week

**Future Goals:** To give back to those who have helped me.

**Greatest Influence:** My parents.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Faith does not make things easy, it makes them possible"

- Luke 1:37



### Jordan Bechtold

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory High School  
**Activities and Achievements:** Carver 3 Times in a Row, Debate Team, All-Star Basketball

**Fondest Memory:** The end of last year.

**Future Goals:** To become an excellent student and get my work in on time. Another one is to make it into the NBA and then have my own franchise.

**Greatest Influence:** My family members, Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen.

**Words of Wisdom:** "There is no script in life" (unless you're an actor/actress).



### Andrew Binck

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory School  
**Activities and Achievements:** Honors Math, NJHS, Reading Olympics, Las Posadas  
**Fondest Memory:**

When I came back after my house burned down and everyone was very generous.

**Future Goals:** To graduate high school and go to college.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom

**Words of Wisdom:** Never give up.



### Robert Brooks

**High School:** St. Augustine Preparatory School  
**Activities and Achievements:** Reading Olympics, Fit and Fun, Boys on the Run,

Chess Club, Math Counts, Academic Bowl, Honors Society

**Fondest Memory:** Catholic Schools Week.

**Future Goals:** To go to medical school and then become a neurosurgeon.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom.

**Words of Wisdom:** "I will not be intimidated, I will not be harassed. I will not be silent, and I will be heard." - Martin Luther King Jr.

Class of 2020 Personal Profiles, *continued***Sofia Fisher****High School:** Merion Mercy Academy**Activities and****Achievements:** JV Basketball, Varsity Basketball, Volleyball, Cross Country, Girls on the

Run, Fit and Fun, Reading Olympics, Roller Coaster Engineer, 3D printing, Stage Crew, Ambassador, Big Sister, Yearbook

**Fondest Memory:** Winning the region 6 girls basketball championship back to back.**Future Goals:** To become a Medical Device Engineer working to create medical equipment. I would also like to develop my own indoor sports facility in South Philadelphia.**Greatest Influence:** My Mom. My Mom works extremely hard for myself and my younger sisters. She is someone I can look up to in hopes to be like her someday personally and professionally.**Words of Wisdom:** "Always work hard, never give up, and fight until the end because it's never really over until the whistle blows."

- Alex Morgan

**Ella Flood****High School:** Paul VI High School**Activities and****Achievements:** Girls JV and Varsity Basketball, Industrial Design, Math Counts, Girls on the Run, Big Brothers and

Sisters, Yearbook, Ambassador

**Fondest Memory:** Having recess on the roof.**Future Goals:** To become a sports commentator.**Greatest Influence:** My coaches.**Words of Wisdom:** Don't take your time at SMIPS for granted.**Talan Hawkins****High School:** Roman Catholic High School**Activities and****Achievements:** CYO Regionals Pick, Cross Country, Fit and Fun**Fondest Memory:** The end of the school year is when it's really fun. I also like Maroon and White Day.**Future Goals:** To be known for whatever I do.**Greatest Influence:** My dad, because he helps me.**Words of Wisdom:** "I can accept failure, everyone fails at something."**Sofia Henningsen****High School:** Merion Mercy Academy**Activities and****Achievements:** Theatre, Girls on the Run, Fit and Fun, Math Counts, Chess**Fondest Memory:** My class

and I playing Paranoia in our 8th grade year.

**Future Goals:** To be a successful neurosurgeon and to take care of myself and my family very well.**Greatest Influence:** My mom because she always knows the right words to say.**Words of Wisdom:** "There is no substitute for experience. You must have experience and be open to experience - that helps. That helps a lot. Most importantly, you have to be yourself, be who you are and take time to be open and honest with yourself. That is what it's all about. If you don't know yourself, you'll never have great style. You'll never really live. To me, the worst fashion faux pas is to look in the mirror, and not see yourself." -Iris Apfel, fashion icon**Angela Hill****High School:** Archmere Academy**Activities and****Achievements:** Girls on the Run, Theatre, NJHS, Big Sister**Fondest Memory:**

My first day of school!

**Future Goals:** To become

a professional photographer.

**Greatest Influence:** My family and friends.**Words of Wisdom:** Stay positive and love your life.**Marley Howlett****High School:** John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls High School**Activities and****Achievements:** JV and Varsity Basketball, Ambassador, Industrial Design, NJHS, Yearbook, Big Sister,**Fondest Memory:** Winning back to back CYO basketball championships.**Future Goals:** To play basketball throughout high school and college.**Greatest Influence:** My family**Words of Wisdom:** Make it happen.

Shock everyone.

**Harry Kane****High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory School**Activities and****Achievements:** Debate, JV Basketball, Theatre, Chess Club, Mathcounts, Academic Bowl, Fit and

Fun, Cross-Country, Yearbook, Big Brother, Ambassador, 1st Place Carver Award Winner, Critical Thinking award Winner

**Fondest Memory:** The Maroon and White Day games.**Future Goals:** To become a doctor.**Greatest Influence:** My family and God.**Words of Wisdom:** "Do something today that your future self would be proud of." -Michael Crossland**Nora Keer****High School:**

Philadelphia High School of Creative and Performing Arts

**Activities and****Achievements:** Reading Olympics, NJHS, Honors

Math, Mathcounts, Theatre

**Fondest Memory:** Las Posadas.**Future Goals:** To become a filmmaker and a musician. I hope to make a film for A24, and tour around the world with a band I'm in.**Greatest Influence:** My family**Words of Wisdom:** "Do yourself a favor, become your own savior."

- Daniel Johnston

**Ella Lewandowski****High School:** William Penn Charter School**Activities and****Achievements:** NJHS Secretary, JV basketball, Varsity Basketball, Girls on the Run, Industrial

Design, Honors Math, Academic Bowl, Ambassador, Big Sister, Yearbook

**Fondest Memory:** When the whole class fell asleep on the bus ride home from our Cora trip and Mrs. Sanicky showed us the pictures she took of us sleeping when we got back into the classroom.**Future Goals:** To successfully complete high school and college while playing lacrosse at the top level**Greatest Influence:** My parents.



**Words of Wisdom:** "When people tell you "No," just smile and tell them "Yes, I can."  
- Julie Foudy



### Comfort Mensah

**High School:** John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** NJHS, Theatre

**Fondest Memory:** When

there was an assembly with Ronald McDonald when I was in 1st grade.

**Future Goals:** To be a pediatric nurse.

**Greatest Influence:** When I finally got to eighth grade, I realized that as soon as eighth is over, high school starts. In order to go to high school, I have to get good grades and excel in all I do.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."

- Mahatma Gandhi



### Sana Moore

**High School:** Merion Mercy Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** JV Girls Basketball (5th and 6th), 1st Place Winner in the G.W. Carver Science Fair

in 5th Grade, Girls on the Run, Roller Coaster Engineering, School Safety, Industrial Design, Theater Program, Running Club, Debate Club, School Ambassador, Yearbook, CARES Assistant, and Big Sister

**Fondest Memory:** The annual Harvest Hoedown. It's always a fun time...rain or shine!

**Future Goals:** To become an entrepreneur and have my own business.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom. She is always there for me, helps me with everything, and she works so hard at taking care of our family and her job.

**Words of Wisdom:** Don't take St. Mary's for granted. You'll realize why when you're in 8th grade. Work on time management and have fun!



### Astrid Olshin

**High School:** The Agnes Irwin School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** NJHS, Theatre, Science Fair

**Fondest Memory:** When we dressed up as saints

for All Saints Day in first grade.

**Future Goals:** To learn more about creative writing.

**Greatest Influence:** My parents.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Tomorrow is always fresh, with no mistakes in it."

- L.M. Montgomery



### Maxine Pallante

**High School:** Merion Mercy Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** NJHS Treasurer, Math Counts, Theater, JV Girls Basketball, Yearbook,

Ambassador, Big Sister

**Fondest Memory:** All the class trips we went on throughout the years and how we were all close.

**Future Goals:** To graduate college and do something to help society and the well-being of all people.

**Greatest Influence:** My family because they always have my best interest at heart and even if it might seem like it's not, in the long run, it is. They also helped shape me into the person I am today.

**Words of Wisdom:** Don't let anyone tell you who to be because you are your own person and if they don't like you for who you are, it's their loss, so don't change yourself.



### Sela Perryman

**High School:** Springside Chestnut Hill Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:**

Ambassador, Yearbook, Theatre, GOTR, Fit and Fun, Math Counts, NJHS,

Honors Math, Dance and Yoga

**Fondest Memory:** The CORA trip in eighth grade because I got to know my classmates even better.

**Future Goals:** To become a forensic psychologist.

**Greatest Influence:** My mother. My mother is a very strong woman who manages her kids, work, and school and she couldn't be a better influence.

**Words of Wisdom:** Everything happens for a reason.



### Maya Scarlett

**High School:** Bodine High School for International Affairs

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Industrial Design, Heart & Sole, Musical Theatre, Yearbook,

Big Brothers and Sisters, Ambassadors

**Fondest Memory:** Maroon and White Day 2020.

**Future Goals:** To graduate college and go to an Ivy League University.

**Greatest Influence:** My Soul Connections and Friendships.

**Words of Wisdom:** Express yourself!



### Maria Shapson

**High School:** Merion Mercy Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Vice President of NJHS, Lead in the First School Play, Back to Back Varsity Girls'

Basketball Champions, Volleyball All Star, Neumann Scholar Nominee, and a great friend.

**Fondest Memory:** When I was in third grade and Sydney, who I never talked to before, walked up to me and told me that her mom is coordinating a sleepover for us.

**Future Goals:** To be part of the theatre program in high school.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom.



## Class of 2020 Personal Profiles, *continued*

**Words of Wisdom:** "Human greatness does not lie in wealth or power, but in character and goodness. People are just people, and all people have faults and shortcomings, but all of us are born with basic goodness."

- Anne Frank



### Miles Shenk

**High School:** Science Leadership Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Cross Country, Big Brother, Ambassador

**Fondest Memory:** Our

field trip to CORA.

**Future Goals:** To graduate high school, go to college, and start up my own business.

**Greatest Influence:** My parents, because they have been supporting me all my life.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Dream as you will live forever, live as you will die today."



### Derek Smith

**High School:** Girard Academic Music Program

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Debate, Tech Crew for our Theatre Program, Basketball All-Star.

**Fondest Memory:** Maroon and White Day.

**Future Goals:** To play professional baseball, but there are smaller goals I have to achieve to get to that main goal.

**Greatest Influence:** My father.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light not our darkness that most frightens us." - Coach Carter



### Nicholas Squillante

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory High School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** JV and V basketball, Boys on the Run, Yearbook, Carver winner, Little Brothers

and Sisters program, and Ambassadors.

**Fondest Memory:** All of the Maroon and White Days. They are extremely fun and a really good memory.

**Future Goals:** To finish high school, then graduate college with a degree. I want to have a great family, a good-paying job, and a nice house in San Diego.

**Greatest Influence:** My mother. She is my greatest influence because she works extremely hard each day, just like my dad, to provide for our family. She's also extremely caring and kind.

**Words of Wisdom:** "There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure."

- Colin Powell



### Laurence Sullivan

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory High School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** NJHS, Ambassador, Fit and Fun, Industrial Design, Reading Olympics, Chess, Honors

math

**Fondest Memory:** When we won Maroon and White Day.

**Future Goals:** To get into West Point.

**Greatest Influence:** My grand pop.

**Words of Wisdom:** "It's not how hard you hit, it's about how hard you can get hit and get back up again." - Rocky/Sylvester Stallone



### Alexa Tancredi

**High School:** Merion Mercy Academy

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** NJHS, Volleyball, Basketball Girls on the Run, Fit and Fun, Theatre, Dance and

Yearbook.

**Fondest Memory:** Doing activities and spending time together with all of my friends.

**Future Goals:** To graduate and be very successful in the medical field.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom

**Words of Wisdom:** Graduation is not the end; it's the beginning.



### Reve Underwood

**High School:** Paul VI Catholic High School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Ambassador, Big Sister, Yearbook, Girls on the Run, Reading Olympics, Theatre.

**Fondest Memory:** The candy grams or the CORA trip.

**Future Goals:** To get my high school diploma and achieving my dream of being in the Navy.

**Greatest Influence:** My mom-mom, because she raised me and my aunt and my mom by herself and put us in amazing schools.

**Words of Wisdom:** Make everything you do count.



### Philip Watson

**High School:** St. Joseph's Preparatory High School

**Activities and**

**Achievements:** Neumann Scholar, Debate, Fit and Fun

**Fondest Memory:** The only time I was on the Maroon

team during Maroon and White day and won.

**Future Goals:** To become one of the top students in my class in high school and then graduate college later on.

**Greatest Influence:** My parents because they push me to be the best.

**Words of Wisdom:** "Your focus determines your reality." - George Lucas





# ST. MARY GIVING CAMPAIGN

## TO OUR GENEROUS ST. MARY INTERPAROCHIAL SCHOOL SUPPORTERS

Donate to the  
Annual Giving  
Campaign  
[click here](#)

Thank you for your continued dedication to our students, staff, and exemplary school program! Your donation prepares our students to become Christ-centered leaders while maintaining the intentional Catholic culture cultivated at St. Mary.

There are several fundraising opportunities throughout our Giving Campaign that will help sustain our school program. This information will help you plan for voluntary giving throughout the year.

## ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

### YOUR DONATION GOES TO:

An Exemplary Faith-based Academic Program,  
Financial Tuition Assistance, General Operating Expenses,  
Professional Development for our Staff and Educators,  
Building Maintenance

<https://www.saintmarys.us/support/annualgiving>

### VIRTUAL *Harvest* **HOE-DOWN** ON LOCUST

Date to be determined

### YOUR DONATION GOES TO:

STREAM Education  
(Science, Technology, Religion,  
Engineering, Art, Math)

<https://www.saintmarys.us/support/harvest-hoedown>

### SAINT MARY *Soirée* BUILDING HEARTS, MINDS & FUTURES

Date to be determined

More details to follow

### YOUR DONATION GOES TO:

Improving our physical space to  
support our Students Academically  
and Spiritually

[https://www.saintmarys.us/support/st\\_mary\\_soiree](https://www.saintmarys.us/support/st_mary_soiree)

### PHILA'S FIRSTS WALK 2021

Friday, May 21, 2021

18th Annual Walkathon

"Celebrating the Art & Science of Medicine"

### YOUR DONATION GOES TO:

Art, Music, and Language Enrichment

<https://www.saintmarys.us/support/walkathon>

### PA Tax Credit Program for Tuition Assistance

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Opportunity and Scholarship Tax Credit (STC) programs offer businesses and individuals the opportunity to contribute tuition assistance for families who wish to provide their children a Catholic Education at St. Mary.

### Personalized Giving:

Please consider supporting these areas of need throughout the giving year at the level that is right for you. If you prefer to create your own personalized giving plan, please contact Christina Haciski, Director of Advancement at 215-923-7522 or [advancement@saintmarys.us](mailto:advancement@saintmarys.us) to schedule a giving meeting.

**Thank you for supporting St. Mary Interparochial School!**

Our light continues to shine brightly as a beacon for outstanding Catholic education in the historic heart of Philadelphia.  
Fifth and Locust Streets • Philadelphia, PA 19106 • [www.saintmarys.us](http://www.saintmarys.us) • 215-923-7522 • [advancement@saintmarys.us](mailto:advancement@saintmarys.us)

## TAX CREDIT FOR BUSINESS OWNERS WILL HELP CHILDREN BECOME “CHRIST-CENTERED LEADERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY”

The EITC program has had a tremendous impact on the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's ability to offer financial aid to many deserving families. Families who receive EITC scholarships would not be able to experience a Catholic education without these generous donations from individuals in the community.

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit program (EITC) allows qualified businesses to fulfill their state tax burden while supporting financial aid at St. Mary School. The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit program (OSTC) allows qualified businesses to fulfill their state tax burden while supporting low-income students who reside in low-achieving school districts in PA. A large percentage of our student population resides in a catchment zone for

a low achieving school. To learn more, visit [www.foundationforcatholiceducation.org/eitcostc](http://www.foundationforcatholiceducation.org/eitcostc).

St. Mary Interparochial School is happy to announce our students who qualify for tuition assistance will receive over \$70,000 in EITC/OSTC funding through BLOCS, Foundation of Catholic Education, the Bridge Educational Fund, Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia organizations.

St. Mary is grateful to the organizations and individuals who have designated tax dollars to make an outstanding education accessible to many of our students.

Thank you to our EITC partnering scholarship organizations for helping to provide financial aid to our students and their families!

### Business Schools Organized for Catholics Schools (BLOCS)

The Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia (CSFP)

Foundation for Catholic Education

Please consider designating your personal taxes or business taxes to make a quality education possible for our St. Mary students in the historic heart of Philadelphia!

If you are interested in this unique way of giving, please contact Christina Haciski at 215-923-7522 or email [advancement@saintmarys.us](mailto:advancement@saintmarys.us).

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES AT ST. MARY INTERPAROCHIAL SCHOOL

Dear St. Mary Friends and Family,

St. Mary Interparochial school continuously strives to grow and do better each day, both in the classroom and as an entire school community. Recently, we have been made aware of experiences of students and alumni related to inequalities and racial bias throughout their years at St. Mary Interparochial School. We are actively listening to these experiences and are working on improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in the school community through increased conversations, education, and community partnerships.

Creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive school environment is now a detailed priority outlined in our Middle States goals and action plans.

We will be holding an Alumni Forum on Diversity Equity and Inclusion during the first half of the school year and would like to hear about any experiences directly so that we may better learn how we can improve the educational environment our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students learn in.

We ask St. Mary Alumni to please consider joining in our DEI conversations by emailing [alumni@saintmarys.us](mailto:alumni@saintmarys.us) with any experiences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In the coming school year, we will be expanding this conversation to include current and former St. Mary Interparochial School Parents, Faculty, and Staff.

We are looking forward to creating a more equitable and inclusive environment for all students, families, faculty, and staff in the St. Mary community.

Thank you for being a part of our ever-improving and growing community.





## CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2020 “LIFERS”

*Each of the students in the Lifers Club are dedicated and committed to St. Mary's mission and values. Being dedicated and committed is part of growing and transcending to the next level and we congratulate these students to have attended St. Mary Interparochial School for 9 years. They have exemplified sacrifice, purpose and determination. Thank you St. Mary Lifers!*

Ambur Aguilar  
Sydney Arbitman  
Edmund Arquitola  
Jordan Bechtold  
Andrew Binck  
Ella Flood  
Marley Howlett

Harry Kane  
Nora Keer  
Ella Lewandowski  
Comfort Mensah  
Astrid Olshin  
Maxine Pallante  
Sela Perryman

Maria Shapson  
Derek Smith  
Nicholas Squillante  
Larry Sullivan  
Alexa Tancredi  
Philip Watson  
Sana Moore



## ALUMNI CIRCLE NEWS

*The Alumni Circle is an informal alumni community connecting former classmates and St. Mary School in a fun and easy way.*

### Class of 2020: Welcome to the St. Mary Interparochial School Alumni Circle!

We welcome the entire Class of 2020 into our Alumni Circle! We are very proud of our newest Alumni Circle members and all that they have achieved, and look forward to hearing all about their high school accomplishments! Best of luck!

### Alumni Facebook Group

If you are a St. Mary Alum, please join our Alumni Facebook Group! To stay up to date on our monthly Alumni News and Alumni Events, please visit [www.facebook.com/groups/smipsalumni](https://www.facebook.com/groups/smipsalumni).

### Alumni Service Opportunities

Stay tuned for St. Mary Alumni service opportunities for the 2020-2021 school year!

### St. Mary Alumni #Pledge10

We ask our St. Mary Alumni to #Pledge10 and join us as we begin our 2020-2021 School Year! By pledging just \$10 to the St. Mary Interparochial School Annual Giving Campaign, you are ensuring that future students will continue to be provided with a top-rated Catholic Education.

**Calling All Alumni #PLEDGE10**

[click here to donate](#)

### Alumni Good News Spotlight:

*Would you like to be featured as an Alumni Spotlight? Share your good news with us! Email [alumni@saintmarys.us](mailto:alumni@saintmarys.us) and provide a brief description of any milestones or achievements that you would like to share with the St. Mary community..*







# VIRTUAL Harvest HOEDOWN ON LOCUST

This joyous autumn celebration is an opportunity to bring students, parents, staff, alumni and friends together in the heart of historic Philadelphia.

While we will not be able to gather together for our Annual Harvest Hoedown this year, we hope to celebrate our Hoedown remotely! Stay tuned for more information regarding our 14th Annual Harvest Hoedown.

All proceeds benefit the students of St. Mary Interparochial School through STEAM programs.

## IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR (September through December)

### September 1, 2, and 3

Packet Pick Up and Stationery Sale  
9:00 AM - 2:30 PM Daily

### Tuesday, September 8

First Day of School (1st Grade - 8th Grade)  
1:00 PM Dismissal

### Wednesday, September 9

First Day for Kindergarten (Group 1)  
1:00 PM Dismissal (1-8) / 12:30 (K)

### Thursday, September 10

First Day for Kindergarten (Group 2)  
1:00 PM Dismissal (1-8) / 12:30 (K)

### Friday, September 11

First Day for all Kindergarten Students 1:00 PM Dismissal (1-8) / 12:30 (K)

### Monday, September 14

First Full Day of School for All Students 3:00 PM Dismissal (1-8) / 2:30 (K)

### Thursday, September 17

Back to School Night  
6:00 PM

### Friday, October 30

Parent/Teacher Conferences,  
No School for Students

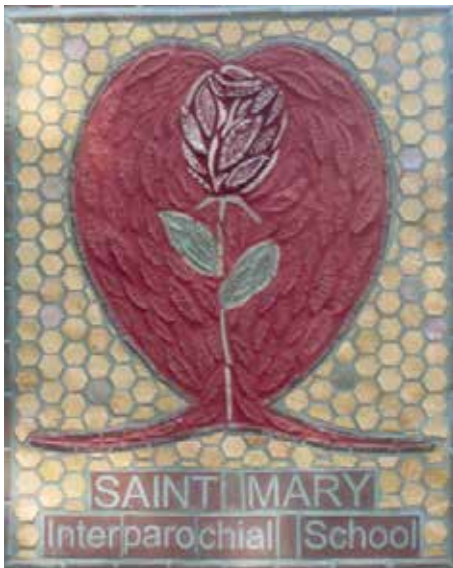
### Thursday, November 26 -

Friday, November 27  
Thanksgiving Holiday

### Monday, December 21 - Friday, January 1

Christmas Holiday





## Help us Kick off our ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN 2020-2021

The Annual Giving Campaign is a yearly fundraising drive for the purpose of raising much-needed funds to benefit the students of St. Mary Interparochial School. These essential funds assist in providing:

- A top-rated Academic Program
- Scholarship and Tuition Assistance for families in need
- Technology for the 21st Century
- Necessary building and physical plant maintenance

You will receive our Annual Report for 2019-2020 and our Annual Giving letter this fall. We are grateful for your generosity. We hope you will contribute once again along with our entire St. Mary School community. 100% percent of your contribution will be used to benefit the students of St. Mary Interparochial School. Thank you in advance for your donation!

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Donate online at [www.saintmarys.us/support/annualgiving](http://www.saintmarys.us/support/annualgiving), call 215-923-7522, or send a cash or check donation to:  
Saint Mary Interparochial School  
5th and Locust Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 1906
- Double your impact by requesting a matching gift from your employer
- Spread the word about our Annual Giving Appeal to others who, like you, believe in an excellent Catholic education for children of all religious, economic, and ethnic backgrounds.

This newsletter was designed and printed with the support of Alusiv communication design and Conner Printing, Inc



**Saint Mary  
Interparochial School**  
Fifth and Locust Streets  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
215.923.7522  
[www.saintmarys.us](http://www.saintmarys.us)

## History of Saint Mary Interparochial School

The rich academic and historic heritage of St. Mary Interparochial School dates to the early days of Philadelphia, as Catholics and Protestants engaged in a 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 over 250 children from all over the City of Philadelphia and its suburbs.

**Learn more about the  
Annual Giving Campaign**  
[click here](#)

**Donate to the Annual  
Giving Campaign Today**  
[click here](#)