



St. Mary Catholic Community School



FALL

Annual Wildcat Newsletter

2021 - 2022



Dear Friends,

On Monday, August 9th, I participated in the orientation session with the St. Mary School faculty and administration. As part of the session, I joined in the “backpack activity” along with the other new faculty members, sharing items that represented my family, my favorite quote, an accomplishment of which I am proud, and the inspiration for my decision to teach/be a priest. In my backpack, I tucked a photograph of my parents, the quote that hangs on my wall, and a copy of my doctoral thesis project. When Mr. Ruiz called on me, I was happy to share these parts of my life.

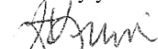
Under most circumstances, I would have presented these items, told my story, and sat down. This time, however, I had the experience of being received and heard. In other words, the teachers and the administrators not only listened to my stories, they engaged my story.

I cannot help but wonder if this is the key to the success of St. Mary Catholic Community School: The administration, faculty, and staff don't teach students, they engage students, who then in turn engage their teachers.

As the gospel writers related, this the same manner in which Jesus interacted with his listeners. He may have been on a mission to share the good news, but Jesus was also attentive to the needs, concerns, and the joys of the people who approached him. In the same way, while math, science, reading, and writing are essential skills for productivity, genuine concern for the value and dignity of other people is essential for a meaningful and satisfying life, not to mention an invaluable tool for evangelization. In my estimation, the cultivation of these skills and attitudes makes St. Mary unique from other centers of education.

As we begin the academic year 2021-2022, please be sure of my prayers for you and the students at St. Mary Catholic Community School, asking God to bless us with compassionate hearts and to shield us from influences that cause division. I am grateful to be part of a community that values engagement and reciprocity.

Faithfully yours in the Lord,


Fr. Kevin Huber



Dear Friends of St. Mary's School,

Here we are! A new school year is upon us, and this is a special one. We are embarking on our 150th school year! We have lots of new students (our enrollment is up by approximately 35 students) and we have a whole host of new staff members. Be sure to take a look at our faculty and staff page of our website for all the new folks.

The very first face you'll see is our new pastor, Father Kevin Huber. As we've gotten to know him over the last couple of months, everyone here now understands why he is so well-liked and respected throughout the diocese!


Last year when I wrote this annual message, we were just about to begin a school year in the middle of a pandemic. After much preparation, we opened our school doors on the first day not knowing whether our in-person education would last two days, two weeks, or two months. We started on time, and I am proud to say, provided an entire school year of in-person education. We went wire to wire, 180 days. While other schools started late, were in and out, half day, partial weeks, etc., we kept plugging along day by day in a safe and responsible manner. I cannot tell you how proud I am of our staff for the efforts it took to make this happen. Our school nurse, Patti Miskus, was one of four individuals in the state to win a prestigious safety award and was also named one of the top nurses in the area by the NWI Times. The most humble person you'll ever meet, Patti Miskus deserves all the accolades she receives.

This year we are working towards “normalcy” by easing many of the protocols that we established last year. It feels very good to go in this direction but erring on the side of caution served us well last year, so we will continue to evaluate things keeping this in mind.

Thank you for taking the time to peruse of annual newsletter. Within these four pages you will find our demographics, calendar of events, alumni spotlight, corporate sponsors, and opportunities to support Catholic education at St. Mary's.

On behalf of my entire staff and me, thank you for your support! We feel very blessed to have the opportunity to teach children math, science, reading, art, music, and all the other subjects, but most importantly, the ways and teachings of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you and your family,


Tom Ruiz
Principal

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St. Mary's Pledge

May God bless our minds
to think our best thoughts,

Our words to speak kindly to one another,

Our hearts to feel compassion,

And our hands to reach out to one another in compassion and care.

I promise always to do my best and to treat everyone with respect and kindness.

I will follow the example of Jesus and His Mother Mary in all things.

Today I promise to live what Saint Mary teaches.

We are all one
United in Christ!



Visit us at
stmarycp.org/school

Saint Mary School Profile

Enrollment:

Jr. PK – 8th Grade, 475 Students (Largest grade school in the diocese)

Accreditations:

DOE & AdvanceED Accreditations

“A” School Status

Faith Formation:

Students receive religious education every day and attend mass twice a week.

Faculty:

Please visit stmarycp.org/school for a complete, up to date, listing of our outstanding faculty, and staff complete with photos and bios.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

CYO Band, Choir, Student Council, Altar Servers, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Chess Club, Academic Team, Junior Academic Team, WSMW Student Run TV News Program, Environmental Club, Science Olympiad, Girls on the Run, Rosary Club.

Athletics:

Boys and girls in grades 5-8 participate in the following CYO sports:

Basketball, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Soccer, Track, Cross Country, Tennis, Football (CP)

Last Years CYO Champions:

5/6th Grade Girls Cross Country

Recognition and Honors:

Academic Team State Finals: Top 10

Science Olympiad - State Qualifier



Support St. Mary's School

Occasionally people ask how they can support the next generation of students at St. Mary's School. To make a tax-deductible, monetary donation, please make checks payable to St. Mary Catholic Community School and send them to:

St. Mary Catholic Community School
Attn: Principal
405 East Joliet Street
Crown Point, IN 46307

Your support is very much appreciated and will help add to the legacy of St. Mary Catholic Community School. If you have further questions please call Mr. Tom Ruiz, Principal (219-663-0676) or Mrs. Jan Mucha, Business Manager (219-663-0044).

Wish List:

- \$25 Teacher Appreciation Walk-a-thon donation
- \$100 Gym Equipment
- \$150 Breakfast for staff
- \$250 Safety Equipment
- \$300 Lunch for staff
- \$1400 Pavillion banner at Bulldog Park

Corporate Sponsorship:

St. Mary's Home and School Association is pleased to offer our Corporate Caring Sponsorship Package. We would like to invite you to join our efforts to offer our children the best education possible by advertising your business, or your employer's business exclusively to the St. Mary's School and Parish Communities. Sponsorship packages include tickets to attend all of the events, and year round advertising on our event posters, school newsletter, school website, facebook page, and at the SMS events. To learn more call Sarah Vicari at 219.746.1701 or email CorporateSponsor@stmarycp.org Please support those on the back of this newsletter, as they support Catholic education at SMS.



Upcoming Events

(All events subject to change due to safety concerns)

08-11-21 **School Resumes**

08-20-21 **Golf Outing**

09-17-21 **Teacher Appreciation Walk-A-Thon**

10-08-21 **Fall Family Fun Fair**

11-10-21 **Spaghetti Supper** - St. Mary's iconic event
Spaghetti Supper #60

11-12-21 **Veteran's Day Program - 9:00 am**

01-26-22 **Evening Open House**

Prospective families are invited to tour the school and meet the teachers.

01-30-22 **Pancake Breakfast and Open House** - Enjoy breakfast and tour the school!

02-05-22 **Celebration of Gifts** - Join us at our largest fundraiser of the year for dinner, dancing & silent auction bidding!

02-26-22 **Daddy Daughter Dance** - All St. Mary's parish dads and daughters invited

03-05-22 **Mother Son Bowling** - All St. Mary's parish moms and sons invited

03-12-22 **First Reconciliation** - Please remember our 2nd graders in your prayers!

04-30-22 **First Communion** - Please remember our 3rd graders in your prayers!



For more information about any of the events above, please visit stmarycp.org/school and see the Home & School page or simply call our office at 663-0676



Visit our New Alumni Spotlight Webpage: <http://www.stmarycrownpoint.org/school/smccs-alumni.htm>

St. Mary's School - St. Mary's Graduate Connor McCloskey Delivers CPHS Graduation Speech

St. Mary Catholic Community School graduate, Connor McCloskey, was chosen by the faculty at Crown Point High School to deliver a Summa Cum Laude speech at graduation last week. This was a huge honor! Connor attended Saint Mary's School from kindergarten until 8th grade graduation in June of 2017. Marian Weeks, director of Faith Formation at St. Mary said, "Connor has more than a brain, he has a heart too." Mrs. Weeks is proud of all of Connor's accomplishments, especially the balance that he has between his faith life and academics. Connor said about his time at Saint Mary's, "A Catholic education does not necessarily mean you have to be Catholic to benefit from it. Personally, I was not Catholic for eight of my nine years at St. Mary School and I never once felt out of place. It's about being a good person, showing kindness to others and giving back when we can."

When asked what was special about his St. Mary's School experience, Connor thought about it for a while and said, "... my friends. My best friends are all St. Mary's graduates and I believe this community tends to graduate some really special people." He went on to say, "my main friend group is actually four other St. Mary School guys. One I met in first grade, one in second, and the rest were met along the way. Outside of them, I still check in occasionally with a few of my other friends from St. Mary's School".

Connor has several favorite memories from his time at Saint Mary School. One of his favorites was going to Summer DNA Camp at The University of Notre Dame during the summer between 7th and 8th grade. He said, "Principal Ruiz recommended for me to go and I was able to really develop a passion for biology while there (and also a passion for Notre Dame!)" Connor also really enjoyed the school dances. He said, "while they were incredibly awkward memories (the dance moves hurt to think about), looking back, I believe they were a very fun experience and they helped break me out of my shell a little prior to going to high school". Connor also fondly remembers Father Pat converting him to Catholicism in his final year of junior high. Connor said of Father Pat, "he was incredibly influential in my religious life, and I cannot thank him enough for all he has done".



St. Mary

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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www.stmarycp.org/school

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