



PARENT NEWSLETTER

February 2009

ST. MARY HIGH SCHOOL

Volume I, Issue VI



Prayer for Ash Wednesdays

Lord, protect us in our struggle against evil. As we begin the discipline of Lent, make this season holy by our self-denial. May the light of Your truth bestow sight to the darkness of our sinful eyes and our repentance bring us the blessing of Your forgiveness and the gift of new life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.



St. Mary's Values

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The new year is off to a wonderful start. We are looking forward to a year of continued growth and prosperity, and recognize your support in providing your sons/daughters with a high caliber education, grounded in Catholic principles.

At St. Mary's we are dedicated to helping all of our students be successful. Besides the academic content we present each day, we also teach our students how to be students of character.

As we forge our way through the remainder of the winter, let's renew our commitment to holding high expectations—both academically and behavioral for all our students. Let's support them as they attempt to reach our high expectations, and let's be there for them when they fall a little short.

Thank you for your continued partnership in helping each of our students to achieve great heights in 2009.

Sincerely,

Nichole D. Nietsche

Principal

Communication

The school year is half over and now more than ever it is important to recognize the importance of communication between home and school. Although parent-teacher conferences are not held during the second half of the school year, you are encouraged to communicate with your son's/daughter's teachers, especially if you are concerned that he/she is not progressing according to your expectations. Do not hesitate to call or e-mail the teacher you would like to speak with. Since this is the halfway point of the school year, it is important to communicate in order to help the student turn around a failing grade. Keep in touch with us.

March 6th - 3rd Quarter Progress Reports

April 3rd - 3rd Quarter Marks Close

May 1st - 4th Quarter Senior Progress Reports

May 8th - 4th Quarter Progress Reports (Underclassmen)

May 18th - Senior Marks Close

Important Dates

February

Feb. 6th—Winter Semi-Formal

February 14th—Wine Tasting

February 14th—22nd—Winter Vacation

February 25th - Ash Wednesday

March

March 13, 14, 15—Drama Production of Bye

Bye Birdie

March 19th—No School (Diocesan In-Service)

March 23rd—1/2 Day (Westfield In-Service)

From the Guidance Department

Financial Aid Process—Seniors attending college in 2009 need to complete the FAFSA form to be considered for Pell Grants, Work Study, and other financial aid. All college-bound seniors are encouraged to submit their FAFSA form regardless of financial status. Students should apply on-line for their PIN now at fafsa.ed.gov. It is suggested that parents compile and file their 2008 income tax forms as quickly in January as possible. If you need assistance in this process, please contact Mrs. White.

College Applications for Seniors—The guidance department encourages seniors to have their college admission applications submitted to them immediately. Please make sure a check or money order is made payable to the college for the admissions fee, and that the application is signed and complete.

College Scholarships—Please contact the guidance department for a list of available scholarships and applications. In addition, the internet is also a great resource for scholarships and financial aid information. Students should notify us of all scholarships and awards received.

The College Planning Process for 11th Graders—The guidance department is continuing to meet with current juniors to introduce them to the college planning process. If your son/daughter has not yet met with Mr. Hourihan, Mrs. White, or Mrs. Jazsek, be advised that the meeting will occur in the coming weeks.

S.A.T. Registration

JUNIORS...TAKE THE S.A.T. THIS SPRING!

Test dates and registration deadlines are as follows:

March 14th Test—Registration Deadline of February 10th

May 2nd Test—Registration Deadline of March 31st

June 6th Test—Registration Deadline of May 5th

Register online at www.collegeboard.com

Hockey Parents



Matt Collins thanks you for the timely return of your ice bill. If you have not yet sent in your payment please do so as soon as possible. If you are unable to do so at this time, please contact Sue Turrini in the Business Office.

Shh... it's a secret!

Rumor has it that there will be some exciting additions to next year's schedule! We promise that there are many exciting things developing and can't wait to share them with you in the Spring.

Financial Aid

Information was mailed home in January discussing the application process for Diocesan Financial Aid. To be eligible you must be a registered, contributing member of a parish. Diocesan Financial assistance is based on need. To receive the maximum benefit, the forms must be filled out and postmarked no later than March 15, 2009.

Applying online is the fastest and most direct method of submitting your application. It allows the Diocese to view your application within minutes of submission. Apply online at www.factstuitionaid.com.

If you feel that you have a greater need that the Diocese or your parish can provide, ST. Mary High School has limited financial aid available. If you are interested in applying for St. Mary High School aid, please send a copy of your completed Diocesan Financial Aid form directly to the school.



Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for making our Career Fair a success:

Dr. Armond Alliota—Neurologist

Dr. Mary Brainerd—Sociology

Matthew Collins—Special Ed.

Jeremy Felton, Konica Minolta

Kathryn Gaudreau—St. Anselm College

Meghan Hibner—Banking

Nanette Higgins—Preschool Teacher

James Lyons—Probation Officer

Jessica Machnik—Event Planning

Fr. Brian McGrath—Vocations

Marcia Pelli, Nurse

Chris Schweitzer, Accountant

Kristy Stefano, Graphic Designer

Jen Sullivan, Clinical Lab Science

Steve Sullivan, Insurance

Jamie Tierney, Landscape Architect

Westfield Fire Department

Westfield Police Department

Marisa White—Counseling

Community Service / Key Club Update

The Community Service Club is once again participating in the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days. Bouquets of 10 daffodils are \$10 each and can be ordered through February 26th.

Key Club members are helping the Westfield Kiwanis at their annual auction on March 1st. The money raised goes to local children's agencies.

Just a reminder to students still in need of Community Service hours. We serve at the Soup Kitchen the first Monday of the month. We are happy to have received new volunteers and would love more.

Winter Semi-Formal

Friday, February 6, 2009

6:30–10:30

\$15.00 per student

Shaker Farms Country Club

866 Shaker Road—Westfield, MA



As in the past, we will be using the Passive Alcohol Sensor before and after the dance to protect our students.

“LIGHTING THE WAY TO THE FUTURE”

St. Mary High School

27 Bartlett Street
Westfield, MA 01085

Phone: 413-568-5692

Fax: 413-562-3501

E-mail: admin@stmaryhs.com

Visit us on the web...

www.stmaryhs.com

St. Mary's School's

4th Annual Wine Tasting

An evening of specialty wines, brews, hors
d'oeuvres and music.

Saturday, February 14, 2009

6pm-9pm

St. Mary's High School Gymnasium

\$30.00 per person

Hosted by: Westfield Spirit Shop

Sponsored by: Westfield Bank

Being honored this night are the

Distinguished Alumni of the Year

Mr. David Amanti and Mrs. Mary O'Neil



From the Advancement Office

Are you a Florence Savings Bank customer or know someone who is? If so, the Advancement Office can use your help. The Customer's Choice Community Grant Program allows Florence Savings Bank customers to vote for an organization of his/her choice to receive up to \$5000.00 in grant money. We are asking you to vote for St. Mary's Schools Advancement program if you are a customer. If we are granted any money it will be distributed evenly between the two schools. If you would like to nominate us, please contact Kristin Hagen (413) 568-1160 or go to the bank's website: www.florencesavings.com to cast your vote! Thank you.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Constant Contact® Email Service

We have received very few responses. Please read and follow the directions below.

In the next month our school will begin using Constant Contact®, an online email service, in order to send notices to parents such as the monthly newsletter. This will allow the school to save hundreds of dollars in postage throughout the year, and become more eco-friendly. If your email address is in our Edline system you have been automatically signed up. If not, you can email Mr. Lepage at rlepage@stmaryhs.com in order to join. Since this is a professional email service, if you choose not to receive emails from Saint Mary's, there is an unsubscribe link in every message sent. Also, we have created different lists so that emails are sent only to those parents that are affected by the notice. For example, an email explaining the senior retreat will only be sent to parents of seniors. Along with Edline® and ConnectEd®, we're hoping our use of Constant Contact® will further ease communication between school and home. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Lepage.



STUDENT RECOGNITION

On Friday, January 30th, Saint Mary's students ended Catholic School's Week by recognizing the achievements of their peers at the Winter Pep Rally. In particular, two students were recognized for their extraordinary achievements.

Junior, John Ference was recognized for his contributions to the basketball team and the records which he is currently holding in Boy's Basketball Division III Tri-County: #1 Field Goals Made, #1 Field Goals Made Per Game, #1 Free Throws Made, #1 Free Throws Made Per Game, #1 Points, and #1 Points Per Game.

Senior, Billy O'Neill was honored with the first annual Saint Vincent DePaul Service Award for his various community service projects, most especially Project Homeless.

Congratulations John and Billy! We are so proud of you!