



Spring Newsletter

Dear SMS Families,

As the Kindergarten Religion teacher, I have been edified this Lent by “going into the desert” with the Kindergarteners. Each class, the students and I go to our “desert spot” on the carpet where we pray: “Holy Spirit, you are invited here. Holy Spirit, you are expected here. Holy Spirit, you are welcome here. Holy Spirit, I love you.” I then set a timer for 3 minutes and we close our eyes and are silent.

Asking the Kindergarteners WHY we are going to the desert this Lent, they will tell you: “Because Jesus went into the desert for 40 days and fasted. He went to listen to His Father. He went to be filled up with the Holy Spirit. He did this to get ready to tell people about the Kingdom of God.” We go to our desert spot to listen to the voice of the Father with Jesus and to be filled up with the Holy Spirit!

“But, Miss Zgonc,” they say, “we don’t hear anything.” It’s then that I get to tell them that just as a doctor puts us to sleep to perform surgery on people who are sick, and they don’t know or realize what is happening to them, so too does God do very powerful work in us when we are still and quiet. The most beautiful things grow in silence.

I encourage you to make time the rest of this Lent to go quietly into the desert with Jesus to listen to the voice of the Father and be filled with the Holy Spirit yourself. God has great and awesome work for you to do and longs to prepare you for that mission!

CATHOLIC LIBERAL EDUCATION THE EDUCATION THAT SETS US FREE!

I am very excited to announce that St. Michael School will be partnering with the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education (ICLE) - <https://catholicliberaleducation.org/> - starting this Spring! ICLE has been partnering with Catholic schools across the United States to support a refreshing new revival and renewal of Catholic education – going back to our roots of what made Catholic education so effective and vibrant: the importance of story and wonder!

The “Liberal” in Catholic Liberal Education has nothing to do with political leanings, but comes from the original Latin meaning of the word *liber* which means free. Christ came to lead us to the Truth, which sets us free. Partnering with ICLE will allow our teachers and me to be formed so that we and our students can be formed and grow in faith, wisdom, and virtue.

According to ICLE, “the Institute has served thousands of Catholic educators who are now transforming their schools with the ideas and the tools that bring the Church’s vision to life. Their success is evident not just in surging enrollment, but in the joyful communities of faith and learning that result when “Catholic identity” extends throughout the school culture, curriculum, and pedagogy.”

SECULAR EDUCATION

- Ordered toward material, temporal ends
- fragmented, industrialized
- focus on practical skills
- emphasis on information
- ignores the moral imagination
- one mile wide, one inch deep
- lectures + testing = passive learning
- susceptible to indoctrination

CATHOLIC CLASSICAL LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION

- Ordered toward eternal happiness
- integration of subjects, knowledge, faith
- restores meaning and purpose
- awakens wonder
- nurtures the moral imagination
- cultivates the habits of rigorous thinking
- constant discussion = active learning
- develops intellectual freedom

Mark your calendars for these upcoming events!

Kindergarten Registration/Re-Enrollment

Kindergarten Registration will be open the week of March 20! Packets are going home with all current PreK4 families. Kindergarten screenings will take place late April/early May to those who register.

Re-Enrollment forms will also be going out to all current families the week of March 20, inquiring about intent to return for the 2023-2024 school year.

If you know of any other family who is looking for a solid Catholic education in our area, please send them our way!

School Masses

Each Friday, a different class is in charge of providing readers and greeters. For the remainder of March and April, the following classes will be in charge of Mass parts:

- March 24: 3rd Grade
- March 31: 4th Grade
- April 14: Teachers
- April 21: 2nd Grade
- April 28: 6/7th Grade.

Students love when their parents or other family members attend Mass! Please know you are welcome and wanted at ALL MASSES!

March and April Jeans Day

The following Thursdays are Jeans Days for the remainder of March and April:

- March 23
- March 30
- April 13
- April 27

Please follow the dresscode in our [handbook](#) for what is permissible for Jeans Days.



Visit our website!

Stations of the Cross and Shadow Stations

Each Tuesday in Lent, I'm taking a different class over to the church to pray the Stations of the Cross. On the Tuesday of Holy Week, April 4, you are ALL INVITED to pray and experience Shadow Stations with us at 1:00pm in Lateran Hall. Thanks to the generosity of the time, talent, and direction of Mrs. Maggie Shaughnessy, St. Mike's parishioner and mother of three SMS alumni, we are able to once again offer Shadow Stations. The actors in it will be our 6th and 7th Graders. It is a very powerful experience. All are welcome!

Stations of the Cross are also prayed every Friday in Lent at St. Margaret's in Jamestown at 6:30pm and at St. Michael's Church starting at 7:00pm.

Feeling Fishy?

The long-standing tradition of Lenten Fish Fries is back! Dine in at the Greenville Knights of Columbus on Friday March 24 and March 31 from 4:00-6:30pm or call 724-588-9911 for take out orders from 4:00-6:00pm. Visit our parish [website](#) for the menu!

Casual for a Cause

Thursday, March 16, was our Casual for a Cause for a local Pregnancy Center. We raised \$160! On Thursday, April 20, our Cause will be our own Knights of Columbus. Please see page 21 of our [Handbook](#) for what is permissible on Casual for a Cause days. In order to participate, students and staff need to bring in *at least* \$1 toward our adopted Cause for the month.

Hot Lunch

Thank you to the parents who made our Salad Bar and Brownie Hot Lunch on March 9 such a great one! Thursday, April 13, is our Meatball Sandwiches, Celery, Carrots, and Grapes Hot Lunch!

Yard Signs

If you or someone you know can put up an SMS yard sign on their property or business, please contact the office and let us know! Help us spread the word about SMS!

Little Dribblers

Little Dribblers made it's 2023 debut on Friday, March 17. Little Dribblers is open to all SMS students in PreK3 – 8th Grade. Practices will be held each Friday until 3:30pm from March 17 until May, when we will again host a Green and White Event to show off all the skills the students have learned. Coaches will be Mr. Dorio, Mrs. Dorio, and Mrs. Endicott. To register, please complete and return the form that was sent home. The form is also found on our website. Pick up at 3:30 will be from the back door of Lateran Hall.

Report Cards

The last day of the 3rd Grading Period is Wednesday, March 22. Report cards will be going home the week of March 27.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Every Monday through Saturday in March and the first week in April (Holy Week), Fr. Brandon will be offering time to hear Confessions to prepare hearts for Easter. Please take advantage of these times and this awesome Sacrament! Check the church [website](#) for the schedule. On Friday, March 24, students in Grades 3 and Up will have the chance to go to Confession during school.

SMS PTO Sponsored Events!

The next Open PTO Meeting will take place at 6:00pm in Lateran Hall on Tuesday, March 21. All parents are invited to attend.

There will be a **Bunny Breakfast** at Lateran Hall Sat March 25th from 9-12 to support the SMS PTO. Breakfast is \$10 for Adults, \$5 for kids, and free for 2 & under. Pancakes with topping bar and sausage. Visit with the Easter Bunny and kids activities. Volunteers are welcome!

Easter Egg Hunt will be held after Palm Sunday 11am Mass on April 2nd in the school playground, (rain location: Lateran Hall). All school and parish families are welcome! We will gladly accept donations of Easter Eggs, candy, and treats that can fit inside eggs. If you stuff your own eggs to donate, please indicate what is inside the eggs so we can distribute to the appropriate age

group. Last year was great fun! We hope for a great turn out this year as well!

SMS PTO Spring Craft & Vendor Show will be in Lateran Hall on Saturday April 15th from 10am-4pm. More than 40 vendors will be available and concessions. Admission will be \$1 per person. Basket Raffle and 50-50 will also be available!

Any questions? Email: pto@smike1.org

Easter Break

In honor of the Holy Triduum and the great celebration of Easter, our Easter break will begin with a NOON dismissal on Wednesday, April 5 and continues through Wednesday, April 12. Classes resume again on Thursday, April 13.

Science Fair Open House

SMS will be hosting a Science Fair Open House on Tuesday, April 25, at 6:00pm in Lateran Hall, which will showcase Science projects done by our students. All are welcome! More information will be forthcoming! Stay tuned!

SMS Alumni Reunion

For any adult who attended SMS (and significant other) at any time, you are invited to the Saint Michael All Alumni Reunion on Saturday, July 1, 2023 at the Knights of Columbus at noon. From 12:00-5:00pm, there will be Food Trucks (Minuteman Woodfired Pizza, Independent Taco, and The Whole Sh'Bang). The "Grant Street Acoustic Trio" with Terry Dach (St. Joseph 75' Alum), Charlie Fischer, and Mark Hubicz will be performing from 2:00-6:00pm. There will be a cash bar – no outside food or drinks permitted.



Scan here to join the St. Michael Alumni Facebook page.

Cost is \$15.00 per person to cover entertainment, grounds, and tent rentals. Please register by May 15. Scan here for the VENMO code for reservations and payment.



venmo

In the News and Shamrock ShoutOuts:

- ♣ A BIG IRISH WELCOME to our new students and families! We are pleased to welcome Aurora Black, Bentley and Maelene Bunce, Emma Hipps, and Layla Vahaly along with their families to SMS!
- ♣ Our news is our new way of giving Shamrock ShoutOuts! St. Michael School is partnering with Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV to bring PBIS (Positive Behavior Incentives and Support) to our school. Mrs. Maloney, Mr. Neral, and I have been participating in extensive and ongoing training throughout this year to roll out our *Irish Ideals* to be **Saintly, Mindful, and Safe**.

Students started receiving Shamrock ShoutOut stickers and certificates during Catholic Schools Week. These are given by teachers and staff to students we catch living out the Irish Ideals in a powerful way. At the end of each day, students who have received a Shamrock ShoutOut are able to draw a number for a chance to win a BINGO!

Once 5 students are in a row on our BINGO board, those students receive a *Mystery Motivator*. These have been lunch with the principal, movie theater candy, keychains, a Minute-to-Win-It basketball shoot-out, and a Pajama Day! Students may also work up to class and school rewards!

Thank you to Mr. Neral's daughter, Samantha Neral, for designing our beautiful logo!

- ♣ Thank you to all who have volunteered in the past year, most recently for making the St. Patrick's Day Glow Dance a reality and such a fun experience! I loved seeing so many school families there!



Reminders:

- The drinking fountains at school are turned off, but we do have water bottle filling stations with filtered water. Please double-check each day to make sure your child has a refillable water bottle.
- When packing lunches for your child, please be sure to pack appropriate utensils. We are going through our backup store of plastic spoons like water!
- As per our dress code, all students in Grades K-8 need to have their shirts tucked in. Belts are required for students in Grades 4-8 when wearing pants or shorts with belt loops.
- Toys should not be sent/brought into school. The exception will be by special permission/request from the teacher (i.e. a show-n-tell project).
- You are an awesome, amazing person and your child is too! We are so blessed to have you at our school this year!

Our foundation is JESUS! Our goal is to help each other get to heaven! To be Saints!

St. Michael, pray for us!

Grace and Peace,

Emily Zgonc ☺

Principal

"Open wide the doors of your heart to Christ! Do not be afraid!" - St. John Paul II