



# St. Mary's Grade School



304 E. CLOUD | SALINA, KS 67401 | 785-827-4200

December 2020 St. Mary's Messenger

## Keeping Faith As We Seek Hope!

The biblical account of the wise men (or magi) found in Matthew 1 says they were men coming from the East. The exact number of wise men and where they specifically came from are unknown. The number three has often been noted due to the fact that they gave three named gifts to Jesus of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The wise men then traveled to Bethlehem and found Jesus and His family. They offered their gifts, items worth great value during their time. The wise men also bowed in worship. This was clearly sometime after the birth of Jesus, but it is associated with the Christ-Child.

Many applications can be made from these wise men for our lives today. First, they worshiped Jesus. Second, they humbled themselves before God's Son. Third, they gave their best gifts to Jesus. Fourth, they cared greatly for Jesus and those in His family. Fifth, they followed what they knew of God's Word.

Let us also be thankful with the gifts we have for each other. We all work for God's Kingdom, as we all pay homage to a Child.

Now, out of the night  
Soft as the dawn  
Into the light  
This Child  
Innocent Child  
Soft as a fawn  
This Child is born  
One small heart  
One pair of eyes  
One work of art  
Here in my arms  
Here he lies  
Trusting and warm  
Blessed this morn  
A Child is born



## INFORMATION PLUS

### NO SCHOOL

There will be no school December 18 through January 3. School will resume on Monday, January 4.

### LOVE 'N LEARN NEWS

December is a busy month; the children will be learning about Christmas and what it means. We will not have a gift exchange between children. We are asking that no gifts be brought for anyone at Love 'n Learn. We will be collecting items to donate to Smoky Hill Rehabilitation Center. Items include: Word search books, coloring books & puzzle books.

Love 'n Learn will be closed December 24th & 25th and December 31st & Jan. 1st.

Love N Learn has openings for children 3yrs old thru Kindergarten. All kids must be potty trained.

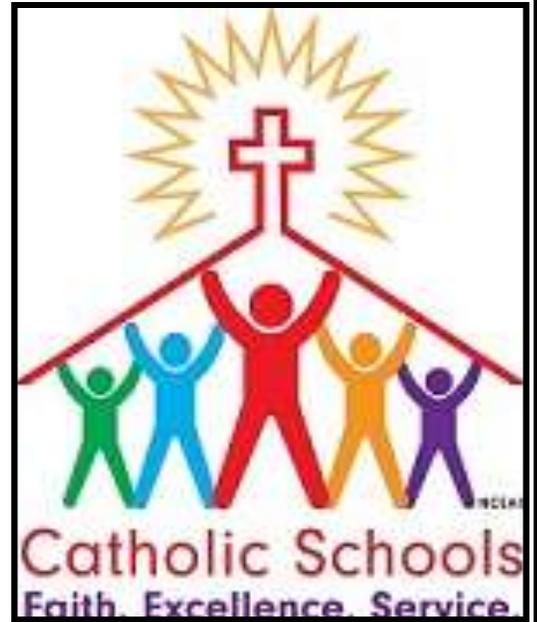
### FIRST RECONCILIATION

Congratulations to students and parents of those who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Special thanks and appreciation to their teachers.

### JOB CHANGE

If you have had a job change, increase in household size or a change in family income, you may qualify for free and reduced lunches for your children. Applications are available in the school office. These can be completed at any time during the school year. Please contact the office, if you would like us to send you an application. All information is kept confidential.

January 31st through February 6th, 2021 we will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week. Look for special events in next month's newsletter. The theme for this year's celebration is Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.



### Morning Drop Off

Thank you to all the families for a great job with morning drop off!! We appreciate everyone's cooperation during these times.

As a reminder, we ask that you not drop off until 7:30. Also, please do not wait until you get to the door to let students out. Students can exit 5 cars deep and walk along the sidewalk to the door. This helps to make the drop off line go quickly.



#### Fitness Tip:

Stay active even on a rainy day. Just **because your child can't play outside because it's raining doesn't mean it's** time to turn on the TV. Put on music and encourage your kids dance in the house, walk briskly in an indoor mall or take a trip to your community center and [swim](#) in the indoor pool (if there is one).

#### Healthy Tip:

Grocery Shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy and protein foods come from. Let your children make healthy choices.

## Annual Thanksgiving Day meal at St. Mary's:

Because we could not all sit together this year, classrooms enjoyed a family style dinner, in their rooms, together.

We even had a visit from the Bishop!!

Thank you to all the parents and students for making the first semester a great one!! Because of you, we have stayed in school!! Stay healthy and safe over Christmas break!!



Mrs. Sager's class pose for a picture after lunch in their classroom!



Above picture: Ms. Froomes class enjoys lunch in the classroom.

Below picture: The Bishop joined the kids at recess!



Recently we sent Cognia surveys to families asking why parents send their students to St. Mary's Grade School. According to the results of the survey, one can infer that parents want their children to receive the best education possible so their child will have a better chance of success as adults. Sixty-five percent of families responded to the survey.

Some of the primary reasons parents send their children to St. Mary's School include:

- Class size
- School reputation
- Catholic Identity (school mission)
- Teacher Staff Competence
- Personal Experience

### What Are Some Benefits a Child Can Receive from St. Mary's Grade School?

#### *Academic Excellence*

A Catholic education can provide students with a solid academic foundation. Students study mathematics, social studies, English, science, foreign language, art, and religion. In the Cognia survey, 98% of parents at SMGS agreed with this statement; "the school provides a good balance between academics and religious teaching and the staff responds to the needs of my child(ren)". Parents view staff as partners in the education of their child(ren), (99%). The staff responds to the needs of my children (98%).

According to research, students who consistently attend school do best academically. St. Mary's Grade School has a 97% average daily attendance, according to the Kansas State Department of Education.

#### *Catholic Faith and Values*

Catholic education teaches students core values to help them mature into Christ-like people. Students learn self-discipline, how to accept responsibility for their actions, and how to make good decisions based on the tenets of their faith. They also learn about commitment, respect of others, and service. According to the parent survey, 94% of the respondents agreed with the statement that children are learning a need for community service, while 95% agree the gospel message is evident in all areas of learning.

#### *Healthy Social Relationships and a Sense of Community*

When children go to a Catholic school, they develop a strong bond with their fellow students, their school, their church, and their home to create a strong sense of community. An overwhelming number of parents (98%) agreed with the statement that a good community spirit exists within the school. At St. Mary's School children treat each other respectfully (95%).

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **Tuition**

December is also a busy time for all of us and we urge everyone to keep vigilant with payments. We ask that all monthly tuition payments be made by **December 14**. Many families pay by semester and quarterly; **we would appreciate your payments early, if possible**. Thank you for your help!

## **Weather Advisory**

Should the need arise to cancel school because of bad weather, announcements will be made on local radio stations. It will also be posted on the school website: <http://stmarysalina.org>. We will use our text messaging system to notify families. Decisions are usually made by 6:30 a.m. If bad weather should occur during the school day, please listen to your radio for announcements and watch for a text message.

## **SCRIP**

Please keep in mind buying Scrip cards before you do your holiday shopping. These gift cards also make wonderful Christmas gifts. We have limited inventory in the office of these cards or you can order what you need—watch for order forms in the weekly Red Folders.

You can also purchase a Scrip voucher which allows the receiver to choose the card of their choice.

## **After School Pickup**

We really do appreciate everyone's cooperation in picking up their children at dismissal. With weather getting colder it is very important that students not be left waiting. In case of snow, please drive carefully. Snow banks sometimes leave single lanes to exit the parking lots. Children who are not picked up 20 minutes after dismissal will be taken to Extended Care.

## **St. Nicholas Day**

The Feast of St. Nicholas, patron saint of children, was December 6th. We celebrated this feast day by having students put their shoes in the hall on December 7th, hoping for an inspirational visit from St. Nick. This is a custom of many countries, believing that St. Nicholas will visit, and commemorating his generosity in giving to others. We hope this activity will instill into the children the true meaning of giving during this time. This year St. Nick gave each student a mask, as well as candy.



# AROUND THE SCHOOL



Students collected canned goods and boxed goods to donate to the Food Bank & Catholic Charities.

We collected a total of 1328 items!! We exceeded our goal of 1000 items!!



## Advent Project

*Each year, St. Mary's Grade School chooses an organization to bless during the Holidays.*

*This year, we would like to bless nursing homes around Salina. Each grade will choose a nursing home. The teachers will contact that place and ask what their needs might be. A letter was sent home with students requesting items to donate.*

## Used Uniform Sale

We are hoping to have a used uniform sale on Saturday, Jan. 16 from 10am-1pm in the SMGS All Purpose Room.

If you have uniforms you would like to donate or sell, please bring them to the school office on Friday, Jan. 15. Make sure you attach an envelope with family name & price. All unsold uniforms will be donated to the school unless picked up on day of sale.

This is subject to change due to regulations.

# Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

December 2020

St. Marys School



## Thoughtful Moments

### The Magi's Gifts

Children can get so caught up in receiving gifts for Christmas that they miss the significance of the holiday. To keep the focus on Christ, consider limiting the number of gifts to three in honor of the gifts of the Magi. Consider giving children one gift that is their heart's desire, a piece of clothing that is not just sensible, and one gift that will help them grow (a book or sports accessory, for example).

### Family meals

Families can help children become better socialized and more secure in as few as 60 minutes a week. Experts agree that gathering as a family even for just one meal a week can build a stronger family.



*"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things" (Philippians 4:8).*



## Celebrate an unusual Christmas with joyful traditions

This will be an unusual Christmas holiday for many families. At an unsettling time, it is important to renew or create family Christmas traditions to give children a sense of stability. Consider these ideas to keep the joy in your family celebration this year:

**Give Jesus the first gift.** At Thanksgiving, wrap a gift box for Jesus. Cut a slot in the top. During Advent have every member of the family write down how they showed love each day and drop these offerings in the box. Unwrap this gift first on Christmas morning and read the notes out loud.

**Make "Adorements."** Craft ornaments that illustrate names for Jesus, "Bread of Life," "Light of the

World," "King of Kings," etc. Hang them on the tree.

**Mark a milestone.** Give each child a new ornament marking an event in his or her spiritual life from the year. Celebrate the receipt of a Sacrament, learning a new prayer, or acquiring a virtue.

**Celebrate cultures.** Learn how to say "Merry Christmas" in different languages. Serve up new foods at dinner, such as potato latkes or pasteles.

**Light out of the darkness.** Some cultures around the world place candles and paper lanterns in their windows to symbolize Christ bringing light out of the darkness. Place a candle or lantern in your window on Christmas Eve.



## Why Do Catholics Do That?

## Who do Catholics believe was born on Christmas?

This month we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. We are able to share in God's divine life through Jesus's life, death and Resurrection.



In his gospel, St. John explained that the birth of Jesus fulfilled a promise God made. *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14).*

## Lessons from the Magi

On the January 6 feast of the Epiphany, we celebrate the visit of the magi, or wise men, to the newborn Savior. There are two lessons families can learn from this visit:

**Look for a sign.** Through study and investigation, the magi figured out that something big was going to happen and waited for a sign to tell them which direction to take. God often gives us signs to point us to the right path. Help youngsters weigh options and pray for direction



when facing big decisions.

**Travel in faith.** Once the magi started their journey, they asked for help when they got stumped and believed it would come.

*"Behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage'"* (Matthew 2:1-2).

Teach your child to follow his "star" and rely on God for help. The key is to be like the magi

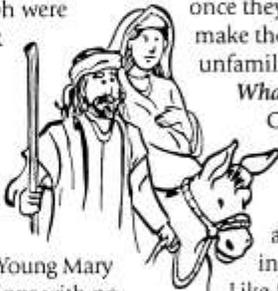
and have faith that something marvelous will happen.

### Scripture LESSON

**Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23, God chooses each of us in a special way.**

We often think of Jesus' birth as an idyllic scene. The reality was quite different. Mary and Joseph were forced to travel in the last stages of her pregnancy from Nazareth to Bethlehem. On foot or donkey, it was a dirty and exhausting journey. Once there, they had no option for decent housing and had to stay with animals. Young Mary gave birth in crude conditions with no friend or family to help.

After a short time, they fled to Egypt with their newborn to escape threats from the government, and stayed there



for several years. There were no friendly faces to greet the family once they arrived and they had to make their own way in an unfamiliar land.

**What can a parent do?**

Catholics have a special charge to protect those who are vulnerable: children, elderly, the poor and those fleeing violence in their home countries.

Like Mary's and Joseph's, God has a special place for each of us in his plan of salvation. Prayerfully ask God what he wants you to do for him and his kingdom.

### Feasts & Celebrations

**Dec. 6 – St. Nicholas (350).** St. Nicholas had a generous heart and gave away most of his fortune. He is credited with saving three girls from being sold into slavery to pay their father's debt. His anonymous acts of generosity helped him become the patron of children.

**Dec. 9 – St. Juan Diego (1548).** A simple, humble Native American who became a faithful Christian, St. Juan Diego was visited by the Blessed Virgin at Tepeyac Hill in Mexico. She asked him to have the bishop of Mexico

build a chapel for her, and had him carry roses to the bishop as a sign. When the roses fell from his tilma (cape) before the bishop, it retained the Blessed Mother's image.

**Dec. 12th - Our Lady of Guadalupe (1531).** The Blessed Mother appeared as a young Native American maiden to St. Juan Diego, also Native American. By choosing to appear in that image, she was identifying with the poor and down-trodden of the land to give them hope.



### Parent TALK

Our family Christmas last year was awkward. For no real reason, my youngest brother drifted from the Church, saying he doesn't feel

"connected" to God.

Now that he coaches his daughter's soccer team on Sundays, Mass is out of the question. So Christmas for his

family is no longer about Christ.

When our family met at my parents' house for Christmas dinner, David's kids were grumpy. In contrast to the rest of the happy cousins, David's three had long faces and moped. "Santa didn't come through for them," David apologized. He said each child only got a few items off long Christmas lists and were disappointed. In my opinion, without Christ as the focus, Christmas will always disappoint.

This year, I have invited David and his family to Christmas Eve socially-distanced caroling at our parish followed by the Vigil Mass. That will give his family's Christmas the best start.

#### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
Success Publishing & Media, LLC  
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(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax  
<http://www.partnersinfaith.com>

(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)

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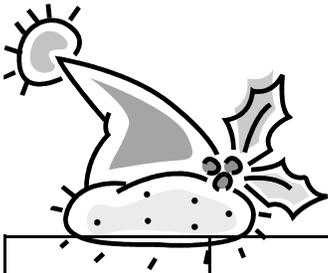
# Merry Christmas



Ceri Snook  
Cindy Compagnone  
Jeri Beck  
Julia Stephens  
Dawn Groom  
Lash Torres  
Dawn Chapin  
Fran Kinkelaan  
Theresa Ertti  
Kim Gahan  
Kayla Roberts  
Camille Straub  
Pat Kleanda  
Cheri Acker  
Olinda Tower  
Melissa Smith  
Jennifer Bunn  
Jofa McIntyre  
Megan Stein  
Peggy Sager  
Monica Gaurin  
Nick Angione  
Coco Montoya  
Mandy Cranmer  
Shirley Zinke

From: St. Mary's Staff

Laura Weiss



# December 2020

School Resumes-  
Monday, Jan. 4th.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 1st Reconciliation 10:00am
6	7	8	9	10	11 DARE graduation	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 Christmas Break No School	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Christmas Break—No School						
27	28	29	30	31		
Christmas Break—No School						
<b>REMINDER: Per our school dress code : Shorts cannot be worn December, January &amp; February. Shoes can be tennis or athletic shoes only -boots may not be worn in the building during school hours</b>						

## CHRISTMAS PARTIES

There will be a time to share with classmates the inspirational spirit of giving. Students will exchange gifts that will benefit the child in the school setting—items such as new markers, crayons, pens, etc., which are often depleted by semester time. The exchange is still in the spirit of giving, and yet has a practical application. Teachers will be sending home a note with any special suggestions for the grade level. The price limit will be \$3.50—\$4.00. Parties will be held as follows.

- December 16th — MWF Pre K AM (3yr old)
- December 16th— MWF Pre-K AM (4 yr old)
- December 17th— TT Pre-K AM (3yr old)
- December 17th — M-F Pre-K AM (4 yr old)
- December 17th— K AM, K Full Day, Grades 1-6

Lord, summon angels– day & night  
To bring miracles and sheer delight  
Toward all our friends near and abroad  
Bless them with all you can laud  
Grant them good tidings, dreams and health  
And moments of kind natured wealth  
Let everyone know they are held dear  
And fill their heart with Christmas cheer

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*United In Christ - Body, Mind and Spirit*



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St. Mary's School  
304 E. Cloud  
Salina, KS 67401

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

