

November 18, 2016



Dear Parents,

Since next week is a short week with only two and a half days, this blue letter will serve as blue letter and Thanksgiving week message. There will be no blue letter next week.



The end of the church year is upon us, as **Advent** is ushered in on **Nov. 27th**. This new liturgical year the cycle of readings is Year A. Each of the three years of the Lectionary cycle has particular themes related to the meaning of the season. The Gospel on the First Sunday of Advent speaks of the Lord's coming at the end of time. We hear Jesus telling His disciples to stay awake for the coming day of the Lord. Paul's message in his letter to the Romans urges all disciples to break away from the power of darkness into the light of day. He encourages them to live a message of justice. Reconcile with your neighbor, let go of jealousy. Break away from the things that block the light. Paul believed that the coming of the Lord in judgement was imminent. There was no time to lose in following the way of Christ. So this first week of Advent clearly states: the time is now, be ready, rejoice and stay awake! So we begin our journey to Christmas and we walk God's path to salvation. Let us keep this Advent season of preparation a holy and special time to proclaim Christ's message of hope and Good news to all we meet. Let us be the light of the Lord to others.



Our school is going to work on a kindness campaign during Advent. It will be called, "Lend a hand, Lift a heart"! During the season of Advent, I will be asking every child to come up with an act of kindness that they will do each day. We will distribute blank calendars and every day they will write something they can do to show kindness and help someone on that day. Perhaps you can help them make a list over the Thanksgiving break. For the younger children it can be something as simple as holding the door for someone without being asked. Doing the dishes for mom tonight, reading a book to a sibling before bed. Get the idea? Try to make the children come up with the ideas. My guess is Pre-K to Grade 2 might need help making the list. By third grade they can print it up easily. They then bring the list to school on Monday Nov.28th, and every morning they select something from the list for that day. They can be school or home related acts of kindness throughout the entire Advent season. I remember many years ago hearing a wonderful saying. It was **"the person who does not have Christmas in their heart, will never find it under the tree"**. I shared that saying with the children one day recently when explaining the importance of preparing their hearts before Christmas. We may not be able to donate money to every charity or keep giving things to others all the time, but what we can do is act kindly toward one another, help with the family chores, keep peace with our siblings etc. to make Christmas day turn out to be something special. Giving of our time will bring great blessings. **Lending a hand will lift the heart of those we are helping.** We don't need too much under the tree, just peace in our hearts and homes. Let's make this a school-wide and family-wide project for Advent.



Our Annual Christmas program will be Dec.21st at 6:30 pm. This year we will have the entire school participate as Angels in the program "Angel's Aware"! This is a long-time favorite that



we performed back in 2010. This year it will have a little different twist!. It was so enjoyable, that we've decided to repeat it again and make some changes to make it our own! All children will be asked to come to school that evening dressed as Angels. The older students can get creative. Everyone does not have to have gowns and wings and halos. For the lower grades, the traditional costume works. Whatever you want them to have.

For the lead parts, Mrs. Xeller will be giving more specific instructions as to what they need to do or have for costuming. Thank you to all the families for cooperating in this whole school activity. Participation is NOT optional. This contributes to part of the music grade, and it is important that all parents and students are aware of this policy from Grades K-8. Only Pre-K does not have to be in it, but we highly encourage the parents to try and have them participate.



So please mark the date for Dec.21st your calendars now! Our children are blessed with so many talents, I am sure you will enjoy the program.



IMPORTANT: LAST VIRTUS TRAINING FOR THE 2016 YEAR, HERE AT ST. MARY, NOVEMBER 22ND FROM 6:00 PM TO 9:00 PM AT THE PARISH CENTER. IF YOU HAVE NOT HAD THE TRAINING, PLEASE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY!



School Pictures have arrived! They are in this week's envelope. Please note: **retake day** is Monday Dec. 5th. Any parent wanting their child's photo re-taken must return the original package on re-take day. If your child was absent on the original photo day, this will be the only other day to have the school photo taken.

B I N G O				
7	25	44	57	62
15	22	40	50	70
11	30	FREE SPACE	46	74
2	28	37	55	68
10	27	39	59	75

Lastly, I hope many of you will join us at Bingo tomorrow night! It starts at 5:30 pm. Please find the complimentary Bingo cards in this week's envelope as promised. More cards will be available at the door. Bring some friends!

Have a great weekend and wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving Day next week!

Sister Anette

Happy
Thanksgiving