



ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

WEEKLY SCHOOL BULLETIN

February 3, 2017

Prayer for the 2016-17 School Year

Lord, help us to come together as a community to support one another, encourage one another and show each other kindness. Amen.

St. Mark Mantra

Every day we treat others as we would Jesus Christ with all our hearts, mind and soul.

REMINDERS

TODAY, Friday, February 3:

-5th grade received the Vocations Chalice at today's All School Mass. They will be praying for vocations during the upcoming week.

-12:00 PM, EARLY DISMISSAL. The After School Program will be available until 6:00 PM. Students will have eaten at the Tasting Faire so there is no need to send a lunch with ASP students unless you feel they need additional food.



-10:00AM-11:00 PM: Half Days are Cane's Days at St. Mark! Place your order, mention St. Mark, and a percentage of the sale goes to the Athletics Dept.

Saturday, February 4:

-8:00 AM - 6:00 PM: Confirmation Retreat #1

Monday, February 6:



A National School of
Excellence

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

Follow us and stay
connected!



QUICK LINKS

[Calendar](#)
[Lifetime Lions Alumni](#)
[Admissions](#)
[Lunch Menus](#)

-St. Mark Free Dress Day for all Students: Wear any "free dress" clothes to school. Refer to page 25 of the [Parent Student Handbook](#) for guidelines.

-Intel Cyber-Security Video Shoot

-8:00 AM, Room 142: Community Prayer Team Meeting. Join us in praying for our school. All are welcome. Praying out loud is not required.

Tuesday, February 7:

-6:00-7:30 PM, School Library: Open House for Prospective Families

Wednesday, February 8:

-Free Dress Day for students who attended any Mass in uniform at any parish on January 28 or 29 AND for students who chose a "Free Dress Day" blue slip as a "Caught Being Good" prize on Student Appreciation Day.

-Popcorn sale benefitting Middle School Yearbook (details below)

Friday, February 10:

-8:30 AM, Church: All School Mass presented by the 5th grade. All are welcome.

Saturday, February 11:

-Confirmation Retreat #2

Tuesday, February 14:

-St. Valentine's Day/Wear Red Day: Wear as much red as you can and show just how much LOVE there is at St. Mark! Refer to page 25 of the [Parent Student Handbook](#) for guidelines.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families: I often tell parents who are considering our school that, if given an opportunity, I could brag for hours extolling the virtues of St. Mark Catholic School. This month, I'm going to use this column as my opportunity to remind us all just why St. Mark continues to enjoy a reputation of excellence (though I promise not to go on for hours). It's no secret that our program is second to none, but sometimes we lose sight of the reasons behind that fact.

Faculty and Staff

At the most basic level, the answer boils down to our faculty and staff. I always say that "bells and whistles" and a "shiny

[Safe Environment](#)
[Lion's Den Spirit Store](#)

FAITH IN ACTION



February Virtue - Prudence:

Teachers discuss the Virtue of the Month with students to engage them into seeing the virtue in action. [Click here](#) for the 2016-17 virtues.



February All-School Service Project: Laps for Leukemia

Each student will walk laps during P.E. class. Students may obtain donors to sponsor them and raise money for LLS. Use the [Pledge Form](#), or visit the [LLS website](#) for online donations.

Catholic School Teaching:
Life and dignity of the human person.

Who Benefits?
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

Due Date:
Pledges are due February 17.

EXTRA, EXTRA! ST. MARK IS MAKING NEWS!

new building" are nice, but if you don't have excellent teachers and staff supporting students, nothing works.

Both Ms. Steinkirchner and I perform continuous classroom observations, so we truly experience what your children experience on an ongoing basis. During my many years in education, I have worked with numerous master teachers, and I can tell you without the slightest hesitation that St. Mark teachers exceed that standard every day. They could teach in a *shack* and students would still rise to excellence. The level of thought, planning, and execution that they perform in their daily lessons is exemplary. And it's not just us who recognize this fact.

Over the years, our teachers and staff members have been honored on the local, state and national levels. Many of our teachers are sought after for tasks such as rewriting Diocesan curriculum. Other schools send their teachers to St. Mark so they can observe masterful educators in action. In just the past two years, we have had requests for four teachers to present at national-level conferences on technology, as well as on engaging lessons. And I myself was asked by our Superintendent to lead the Diocesan S.T.E.M. initiative this past year. Our staff members have received The Catholic Foundation's Work of Heart Award 44 times since it began in 2005. Second grade teacher, Ms. Carolyn Eisele, was named Diocesan Teacher of the Year in 2016. Our teachers are all state-certified, many with specialized certifications, and more than one-third hold advanced degrees. They come to St. Mark and stay at St. Mark. Not all schools can claim such a low teacher turnover rate, which is something to be immensely proud of. This speaks directly to the positive and professional environment that St. Mark fosters.

Our Students are Motivated to Excel in All Areas

Two National Blue Ribbon Awards and a rare third Blue Ribbon qualification in recent years confirm that our students consistently score in the top 15% in the nation on standardized tests, which means that classroom lessons are meeting their mark. Beyond the classroom, students who participate in our enrichment and extra-curricular programs constantly EXCEL. These include Spelling Bee, History Bee, Geography Bee, Quiz Bowl, PSIA, Robotics, Catholic Math League, Math Counts, Youth In Government, and the Diocesan Speech Tournament, just to name a few. In most competitions, St. Mark students typically earn a spot (or spots) on the winners' podium. And we're not just competing against other Catholic schools; many times we are competing against non-Catholic private schools and we continue to succeed. In addition, the number of our students who qualify

St. Mark was recently named the #2 favorite private school in Plano (2nd only to John Paul II High School, which we'll take any day!) by the readers of the *Plano Star Courier*.

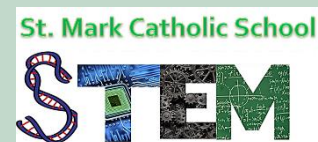
The Dallas Morning News also just published an article about the new SmartLab coming to our campus.

[Click here](#) for the articles.



Calling All "Dads of Great Students": [Click here](#) to reserve your spot during the month of March, or for more information about our Watch D.O.G.S. program. Sign-ups are due February 15. Half days and full days are available. Please remember, you must be [Safe Environment](#) trained to volunteer.

SAVE THE DATE: 2ND ANNUAL S.T.E.M. FAIR! MAY 5, 2017



You know how fun last year's S.T.E.M. Fair was...this year's event is going to be even bigger and better! **Mark your calendar for Friday, May 5 from 5:00-8:00 PM** and get ready for more robots, experiments, and much, much more! We've expanded the fair to two gyms this year in order

for advanced academic programs such as the Duke University Talent Identification Program and the Diocesan DECATS program continues to impress. While the main goal of our athletic program is to foster friendly competition that encourages teamwork and physical fitness, our teams consistently take it to the next level, racking up at least a few DPL championships every year. Just consult some of our most recent "[Weekly School Bulletins](#)" and our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for the many awards and accolades our students continue to earn in these areas and more.

High School Acceptance & Success

Our Catholic high school acceptance rate is virtually 100%, and we always have an impressive number of St. Mark students who receive high school scholarships amounting to tens of thousands of dollars. We meet periodically with the high school admissions departments, and the #1 question we get from them is, "How do we get more St. Mark students to come to our high school?" Our students enter their freshman years fully prepared with excellent work and study habits, a commitment to excel in their studies, and a true spirit of community service in their lives. Believe me, it doesn't go unnoticed among the larger community, and hasn't gone unnoticed for many, many years. Even our students who go on to public high schools typically qualify for honors-level and other advanced academic programs, and some choose to pursue an International Baccalaureate. Each year, they are among the students who earn spots on the high school Honor Rolls, the academic competition teams, and many other accelerated opportunities.

Alumni Success

Our alumni continue to succeed in high school and beyond. St. Mark claims numerous high school Valedictorians and Salutatorians. Former students boast accomplishments that span the worlds of academics, athletics, and much more at the collegiate level and in their professional careers. (I encourage you to read our "[Lifetime Lions Alumni Newsletters](#)" to see their amazing accomplishments for yourself).

The truth is, I could go on for hours. It makes me, and our entire staff, so proud to call St. Mark home. As you prepare to write your deposit check for the 2017-18 school year, I hope I've given you a renewed sense of why a St. Mark education is the best possible education you can give to your child. Beyond that, you have my word that we will continue to strive to make tomorrow even better than today.

to accommodate all of the participating companies and individuals. It's an evening where our entire community can learn and play together -- don't miss out!

Are you or your company interested in hosting a booth at the S.T.E.M. Fair? It's free of charge, and a great way to interact with hundreds of families. Simply contact [Pam Steinkirchner](#).

OPEN HOUSES



Open House is coming up and we can use your help to get the word out in several ways:

*Know anyone interested in a cutting-edge education for their child that is rooted in our Catholic faith? Pass along our Open House date:

***Tuesday, February 7, 6:00-7:30 PM**

Interested families may visit www.stmcs.net to register for an Open House.

Open House and School Tour Referral Incentive:

Simply send someone you know to visit our Open House or take a school tour. Once they attend in person and indicate you as a referral, we'll send you a \$10.00 gift

Patricia Opon

Patricia Opon
Principal

2017-18 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

To assist you with planning for next year, the [2017-18 Academic Calendar](#) is now available.

ENROLLMENT TIPS

Re-enrollment for the 2017-18 school year runs through Friday, February 17. Click the link on the homepage of the [school website](#) for complete instructions.

Registration Fee

You will be prompted to pay the registration fee at the end of the enrollment form. Unlike prior years, the fee payment is embedded into the form and you cannot submit the form without paying the fee. Please do not pay the fee via the school website as it will not link to the enrollment form in RenWeb.

Additionally, please be sure to only click "submit payment" once. If you double-click too quickly, the fee will be charged twice. If this happens, please contact the school office.

Late Enrollments

The enrollment form is hard-coded so that if you miss the enrollment cut-off date of Friday, February 17, 2017, then you will be charged the \$100 late fee. If you have extenuating circumstances preventing you from enrolling by the cut-off date, please contact the school office.

FACTS TAX STATEMENTS

It's that time of year again...everyone is scrambling to gather their tax information. In order to help, FACTS has enhanced their system to allow families to print their payment history by calendar year. Please follow the instructions below to view/print your payment history for the current year, or [click here](#) for an informational flyer. Questions? Call 866-441-4637.

- Step 1: Sign into FACTS at <https://online.factsmgt.com>.
- Step 2: Click on "View Details."
- Step 3: Select the "Payments" tab.
- Step 4: Select "View Printable Payment Summary."
- Step 5: Select the year you need and then "Print."

certificate to the Lion's Den Spirit Store...it's that easy!

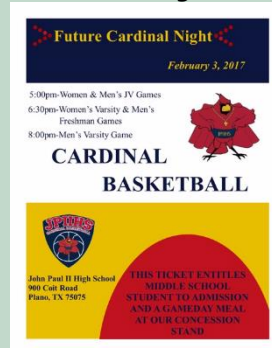
* Do you participate in a neighborhood blog or website such as www.nextdoor.com, or a neighborhood Facebook page? If so, please post our Open House dates (see above)! If there is room for more details, simply email [Debbie Reed](#) and she'll send them to you for posting.

***And don't forget our Referral Thank You Program:** Refer a new family to St. Mark and you could receive a \$500 tuition credit. [Click here](#) for details.

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING
TO SPREAD THE WORD
ABOUT OUR WONDERFUL
SCHOOL COMMUNITY!**



JPII Basketball Night:



Future Friar Night at BL:

SUMMER & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM UPDATES

Summer Program Update

Due to the construction that will take place on our campus this summer for our new SmartLab, St. Mark will not be hosting the Kidventure summer program. As an alternative for parents who need childcare during the summer months, we have met with the directors of the Primrose and Carpe Diem schools in both Plano and Allen, and would recommend them as an option. Both schools offer holiday drop-in and special summer programs for school-age children. We chose these two schools because of the wonderful things our parents have said about them, and we were duly impressed with their programs as well.

After School Program Update

Some of you have also inquired about the future of our After School Program due to the SmartLab taking over its current location. ASP at St. Mark will continue (and always will!), though its location will change due to the SmartLab. While we have not yet made a final decision on its new location, please know that we will share this information with you as soon as it is finalized.

POPCORN SALE BENEFITTING MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARBOOK

The Middle School Yearbook elective will be selling popcorn to all students (PK3-8th grade) next week. Popcorn orders will be taken during class time Monday, February 6 through Thursday, February 9. Popcorn bags are \$2.00 each. Choose from Butter, White Cheddar, Vanilla, or Salsa. Order extra bags for gifts or snacks. Exact change is appreciated. Payment must be made during the order process. The popcorn will be delivered to students during school on February 14. If your child would like to enjoy a bag of popcorn, be sure that he/she pre-orders and pays between 2/6-9. Please help support the middle school yearbook elective and enjoy a tasty treat!



HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

2016-17 Preschool-5th Grade Memory Book: Memory books are now available for pre-order! To place your order online, simply visit www.yearbookforever.com and enter "St. Mark



Basketball Season: [Click here](#) for game schedules. Come out and cheer on your LIONS! And don't forget to visit the Lion's Den Spirit Store during home games for all of your St. Mark gear!

Registration is Open for Spring Sports: The deadline to register is February 28. [Click Baseball/Softball](#) or [Track & Field](#) for details.

Download Game Photos: Check out the [Dallas Parochial League Smug Mug photo site](#). View and purchase photos from recent events.

Coach Safe Environment Training: All volunteer coaches for Baseball, Softball, and Track must submit their [Safe Environment](#) certification to [Marlene Ehling](#) as soon as possible.



Monsignor Smyth Golf Classic: This annual event is scheduled for May 19, 2017.

Catholic Lower School" when prompted. You may also order your memory book by filling out the order form that was sent home last week. You may submit cash or check to Rene O'Connor in the front office. Checks should be made out to *St. Mark Catholic School* and on the memo line please indicate "memory book." The cost of the memory book is \$25. Quantities are limited. **The deadline to order has been extended until February 10.** Please contact [Beth Salava](#) or [Aisling Peden](#) with questions.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Hospitality Co-Chair: This is a great way to contribute and be part of the our school family community. A description of this position is available [here](#). Please contact [Ashley Ternan](#) with any questions.

PK3-2nd Grade Readers/Paper Pullers Needed: The HSA would like to extend our appreciation to our Classroom Reader and Paper Puller volunteers for their gift of time. We still have available spots this year. If you are interested or have questions, please contact [Jill Dourty](#).

30TH ANNUAL GALA & AUCTION

2 weeks and counting until the 30th Annual Gala and Auction! We are at 80% capacity.....time to [click here](#) and buy tickets.

LAST TICKET INCENTIVE:

Anyone who purchases tickets between now and February 10 will be placed in a raffle for a free night stay at the Marriott Legacy Town Center to be used the night of the event or prior to the end of 2017 AND two bottles of wine at their table the night of the event. If you have previously purchased a ticket and would like to be entered into this drawing, you may purchase additional tickets for friends or faculty members. Also note, anyone who purchases a table (10 tickets totaling \$750) will receive two bottles of wine at their table the night of the event.

Your kiddos will get in on the ticket purchase incentives too:

*Students whose parents attend and are from the class with the best parent turnout, will get an ice cream party at Sweet Firefly! **The current frontrunner is Mrs. Brooks (64%) followed closely by Mrs. Helm (63%) and Mrs. Ferri (59%).**



We are looking for volunteers to head various committees. Please email [Marlene Ehring](#) if you are interested.

ST. MARK CELEBRATION OF LOVE

St. Mark presents the annual "Celebration of Love," an evening of love, laughter, dinner, dancing and marriage enrichment on Saturday, February 11 at 6:45 PM in the St. Mark Parish Center Great Room. [Click here](#) for details.



All Are Welcome! Join Holy Trinity Seminary for an upcoming Public Mass on February 5 at 9:15 AM at 3131 Vince Hagan Drive, Irving, TX 75062.

JOHN PAUL II RAFFLE

John Paul II High School is conducting a raffle for FREE tuition or an \$18,000 Visa Gift Card! It will take place April 1 at the JP II Gala. Each ticket is \$10.00. Purchase online or contact [Kelly Petruy](#). All proceeds benefit the Tuition Assistance Program at JP II.

SEEN & HEARD AROUND ST. MARK

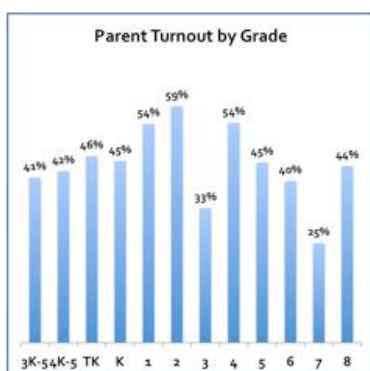
A few scenes from this week. To learn the stories behind these photos, visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages!

Catholic Schools Week:

*Students whose parents attend and are from the grade level with the best parent turnout, will get an afternoon of bowling, bounce houses, etc. The current frontrunner is 2nd grade at 59% followed closely by 1st and 4th grades at 54%.

Check out the turnout by class and by grade level so far:

Turnout by Class			
Rank	Grade	Teacher	%
1	2	Mrs. Stephanie Brooks	64%
2	1	Mrs. Patty Helm	63%
3	5	Mrs. Krissy Ferri	59%
4	4	Mrs. Christina Flores	58%
5	2	Ms. Carolyn Eisele	57%
6	3K-5	Mrs. Megan Oliver	55%
6	MS	Mrs. Becky Johnson	55%
7	2	Mrs. Victoria Crider	54%
8	4K-5	Mrs. Rosemary Coursey	53%
8	4	Mrs. Helene Mercado	53%
8	4	Mrs. Sarah Samples	53%
9	1	Mrs. Eileen Bongiovanni	50%
9	1	Mrs. Erin McCormick	50%
9	MS	Mrs. Patti Orchowski	50%



We are still accepting donations...How to Donate:

Do you own a business that would like a 2017 tax deduction? Contact [Ann Rossigno](#) for more information on sponsorship packages. Deadline 2/15.

Do you or your company want to donate product, services or money? Contact [Chandi Owen](#) for more information. Deadline 2/15.

Purchase tickets for faculty and staff. It is a great way to show appreciation for the amazing job they do in educating our children. Deadline 2/15.

Event Assistance Needed: The Auction Committee needs your help before, during and after the auction on February 18.

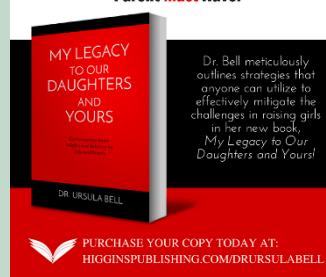


Boy Scouts Catholic Award:



School Parent Releases Book:

The Book That Every Girl And Parent *Must* Have!



Dr. Bell meticulously outlines strategies that anyone can utilize to effectively mitigate the challenges in raising girls in her new book, *My Legacy to Our Daughters and Yours!*

PURCHASE YOUR COPY TODAY AT: HIGGINSUBLISHING.COM/DRURSULABELL

7th Grade Plants Seeds:



Kindergarten Marble Runs:



6th Grade Greece Unit:

Please take a look at the following activities and then click here to volunteer:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050c48adaf2ea46-auction>

- 1) Transportation of auction items from St. Mark to Marriott
- 2) Transportation of unsold/unclaimed auction items from Marriott to St. Mark
- 3) Auction items setup at venue
- 4) Check-in Hosts/Hostesses
- 5) Check-out Hosts/Hostesses
- 6) Runners / Checkers

We appreciate any time you can spare to help make this year's event a big success!

2017-18 Auction Committee: If you are interested in joining the Auction Committee for 2017-18, please contact Rebecca Battles. It is a fun and exciting way to be involved, and to meet new parents!

ST. MARK COMMUNITY PRAYER TEAM

February's Prayer Intention for our School:

For other schools in the diocese, the high school our children will attend, as well as those they may never enter.



3rd Grade Reads about Humphrey:



2nd Grade Pumpkin Chunkin':



Join Our Mailing List

Forward To A Friend

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