



ST. MARK
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
WHERE FAITH AND
KNOWLEDGE MEET

Weekly School Bulletin December 12, 2014

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Virtue of the Month – Hope

Teachers discuss the Virtue of the Month with students by using either stories or activities to engage them into seeing the virtue in action. Ask your child what he/she is learning about "Hope" this month.

Vocations Chalice

2nd grade was presented with the Vocations Chalice at the conclusion of today's All-School Mass, and will be praying for vocations during the upcoming week.

Reminders for Next Week

Tuesday, December 16, 4:30 PM, Parish Center: Teacher Christmas Dinner Hosted by Father Cliff & HSA

Wednesday, December 17: Fall Enrichment Clubs End

Wednesday-Thursday, December 17-18, School Office: Scrip Gift Card Pick-up

Thursday, December 18, 2:30 PM, Cafetorium: Holiday Band Concert

Thursday, December 18, 6:30 PM, Church: Christmas Pageant

Students in Preschool through 5th grade participate. See more details below.

Friday, December 19: All School Mass

Our All-School Mass will be held at 8:30 AM in the church. All are invited to attend. This Mass will be presented by the 2nd grade. They will perform the Call to Worship, the Mass readings, and present the Communion gifts.

Friday December 19: Class Christmas Parties & 12:00 PM Early Dismissal

The After School Program will be available until 3:00 PM. Also, wear a Christmas hat! See more details below.

Christmas Pageant

The annual St. Mark Christmas Pageant will be held on Thursday, December 18 at 6:30 PM in the church. Grades Preschool through 5th participate. Students must report to their classrooms no earlier than 6:15 PM and students may be picked up from their classrooms at the conclusion of the program. The invitation that was emailed by Mrs. Opon last week is attached, including details about dress code, proper conduct, etc.

Show your Christmas Spirit - Wear a Christmas Hat on December 19!

Everyone, including students and staff, is encouraged to wear a Christmas hat on Friday, December 19 to add to the feeling of Christmas. Show your creativity and your Christmas spirit! Please note that hats may not be worn in church during our All-School Mass. As always, please keep them tasteful, and free of inappropriate slogans or logos.

Announcing NEW Lion's Den Spirit Store Hours – Shop 'Til You Drop!

Announcing the return of the Lion's Den Spirit Store, which sells a variety of St. Mark spirit gear for your shopping pleasure. There are many great Christmas gift ideas to choose from!

We're introducing BRAND NEW merchandise with the NEW St. Mark logo including blankets, beanies, scarves, sweats and more.

In addition, St. Mark Letterman jackets will be offered on a preorder basis. Only those students in 5th-8th grades who have participated on a St. Mark sports team or in Band, and have received a chenille "SM" letter, are eligible to purchase a Letterman jacket. St. Mark pays for and provides the chenille letters and accompanying activity pins for each student who earns them. Show them off in style on your St. Mark Letterman jacket!

Simply stop by the school during morning drop-off, check-in at the front desk, and head to the Lion's Den store located between the Cafetorium and the Bacot Gym. Special hours for next week are:

Wednesday, December 17 - 7:30 – 8:15 AM

Thursday, December 18 - 7:30 – 8:15 AM

Friday, December 19 - 7:30 – 8:15 AM

After the holidays, the Lion's Den will offer regular weekly store hours -- stay tuned for more information. In addition, the Lion's Den is ALWAYS open during basketball home games, so be sure to check the [DPL Basketball game schedule](#) which will be released soon.

Reminder - Parishioner Tuition Status

In order to qualify for the parishioner tuition discount, the annual minimum parish donation of \$800 must be paid by December 31, 2014. Please refer to page 7 of the Parent Student Handbook for more information. Checks (made payable to "St. Mark Catholic Church") may be placed in the weekly collection basket, or [click here](#) to submit your electronic payment to the parish and/or set-up recurring payments.

Make Sure Your School Payments/Fees Are Current

A reminder to please make sure all of your school payments (this includes cafeteria and the After School Program) are up-to-date and all school fees are paid by Friday, December 19. Any unpaid balances will affect reregistration eligibility.

End-of-Year Giving

If you are considering an additional end-of-year donation, St. Mark Catholic Church and School are non-profit organizations that allow for you to make tax deductible donations. As the end of the year approaches and you review your tax-deductible donations, please consider donating to your own St. Mark community. Please also check with your company to determine if matching funds are available.

- To make a donation to St. Mark Catholic Church, [click here](#).
- To make a donation to the St. Mark Catholic School Gap Fund, [click here](#).
- To donate towards St. Mark Catholic School's technology fund through the Digital Wish website, [click here](#).
- If you would like to make a monetary donation to a particular department or program at St. Mark Catholic School (i.e. Athletics), please [click here](#). Please enter the amount under "Miscellaneous," and specify the program in the "comments" section.

Your Volunteer Hours Could Pay Off Again for St. Mark

Did you know that some companies donate money to nonprofit organizations based on the number of hours their employees volunteer with that organization? For example, the Texas Instruments Volunteer Incentive Program (VIP) makes grants through the Texas Instruments

Foundation -- \$250 for every 20 volunteer hours, and employees can submit up to four applications per year for a total matching donation of \$1,000. Be sure to check out your company's policies. We all volunteer at St. Mark in some capacity. Make those hours pay off again by requesting a matching corporate donation to St. Mark!

Cafeteria Menu Change – December 15

Please note the cafeteria menu change on Monday, December 15: Homemade spaghetti with meat sauce will be served instead of turkey tetrazzini.

After School Program Reminders

Attention all ASP Families: The After School Program will close at 3:00 PM on Friday, December 19 (the regular school day will end at 12:00 NOON due to early release for Christmas vacation). A snack will be served. Students will also have been served pizza at the class Christmas parties, but if you feel your child will want something extra, please send a lunch.

After School Program Openings: The After School Program has limited space available for 7th and 8th grade students. If interested, please [click here](#), complete the registration form, and submit it to the school office.

Subs Needed For All Grades & After School Program

Substitute teachers are needed for all grade levels and for the After School Program. These are paid positions with flexible hours. If you would like to be placed on the sub list, or have additional questions, please contact [Toni Jobes](#) regarding Preschool and the After School Program, and [Rene O'Connor](#) regarding grades Kindergarten through 8th grade.

School Sweaters – Lost & Found

Our stash of school sweaters in the Lost & Found is overflowing. Many students rely on this stash of forgotten sweaters to get into compliance for Mass on Friday. Beginning in January, this will no longer be an option, as all sweaters in the Lost & Found will be donated to the Used Uniform Sale at the end of December. Please encourage your child to stop by the receptionist's office and go through these forgotten items, or feel free to stop by yourself. We'd love to return them to their rightful owners!

Games/DVDs/Craft Items Needed

As you're cleaning out closets and making room for this year's Santa deliveries, please consider donating your gently used board games (specifically checkers and chess), DVDs, and craft items to the school. Please contact [Toni Jobes](#) with any questions.

More Bottle Caps Needed

The Art Department needs more bottle caps in the following colors: yellow, green, and lime green. Students who bring at least 5 bottle caps to Ms. Tammy will receive a "Caught Being Good!"

Don't Wait: Participate!



“Laissez les bon temps rouler -- let the good times roll!”

Our Annual Mardi Gras Auction & Dinner is fast approaching:

**Saturday, January 31, 2015
The DoubleTree Hotel – Richardson**

Let's all work together to make this year's auction a grand success. Remember, auction proceeds benefit our school technology fund. Our goal is to put a personal device into the hands of each student by the end of this school year – the more we raise at this year's auction, the sooner our students will be working with iPads in the classrooms!

Here's what you can do to help:

1. Have you RSVP'd for the Mardi Gras Auction & Dinner yet? Please take a moment to read through the letter and invitation that you received last week, and be sure to watch the DVD. Remember, each event ticket you buy puts you one step closer to **free tuition for a year!** Simply fill out the reply card that accompanied your invitation and return it to the school office. Tables are already beginning to fill up, so don't wait!
2. Please continue to send in your class basket items to your child's classroom. Don't recall what your child's class is collecting? [Click here](#) for the list.
3. In addition to the class basket item, we invite each family to donate a bottle of wine (value of \$10 or more), or a gift item or gift card (value of \$25 or more) to the auction. It could be anything from a week at your timeshare, to a wine tasting event at your home, to a year of cookies, to a handmade gift item. **As an incentive, each family that donates a bottle of wine or an auction item will receive a "Free Dress Pass" or a "5 Points on a Test Pass" for each one of their students.** All donations should be sent to the attention of Ms. Lipscomb.
4. The Auction committee is still in need of volunteers to help spread the word, sell tickets, make solicitations, perform data entry, and assist with venue decorating and set-up. If interested, please contact Auction Co-Chair Raju Kattady at rajukattady@hotmail.com.



Calling all Watch D.O.G.S. Dads! So far, the first half of the school year has gone extremely well, and as we near the Christmas break, we ask that you look at your calendar for an opening to serve at the school in 2015. The deadline to sign-up for the month of

January is next Monday, December 15 – we still have several openings available. To schedule your day on the calendar and to learn more about the program, please [click here](#).



Digital Wish Technology Donations: St. Mark is now accepting technology-specific donations through Digital Wish. [Click here](#) to help equip our students with iPads and iPad carts, and feel free to share this link with family, friends and associates who want to help.

Home & School Association (HSA) News



Scrip Gift Cards: Thank you to everyone who purchased Scrip cards. We raised more than \$900 for St. Mark! Congratulations to our gift card winners (they each received a Target gift card for ordering the most cards through the Scrip sale): Kristin Mason, Paula Allgood, and Theresa Meyers.

If you ordered plastic gift cards, they will be ready for pick-up in Rene O'Connor's office December 17-18. If you need to make alternate pick-up arrangements, please contact our Scrip Card Coordinator, Miki Heiss at StMarkScrip@outlook.com.

Remember, ScripNow eCards can be ordered online year round, so continue to stock up for the holidays and beyond! [Click here](#) for instructions.



Teacher and Staff Christmas Dinner: The annual Teacher and Staff Christmas Dinner is coming up on Tuesday, December 16 at 4:30 PM. This event, hosted by Father Cliff and the HSA, is a way to show our appreciation for our amazing teachers and staff. Father Cliff will be providing the main entrée and sides. HSA will provide the hors d'oeuvres, desserts, beverages, and tokens of appreciation. We are still in need of hors d'oeuvres, monetary donations, and assistance with set-up. [Click here](#) for the Sign-up Genius. Thank you for helping to make this year's dinner an extra special evening for our wonderful St. Mark teachers and staff!

Box Tops: Please keep sending in your Box Tops. Remember to place them in a plastic bag labeled with your child's grade level and teacher name. We will have another grade level competition in February!

Used Uniform Sale: Please consider donating your gently used uniforms to the Used Uniform Sale. This sale will take place in January and the funds generated will be put towards HSA activities. Donations can be dropped off anytime in the school office.

Paper Pulling/ Reading: Help Needed! We are currently in need of additional volunteers for Paper Pulling/Reading in two of the first grade classrooms: Mrs. Bongiovanni and Mrs. Hazzard. If you can help, please contact Erica Cremar at erica.cremar@gmail.com.

Junior Achievement: Help Needed! We are in need of volunteers for Junior Achievement for the following teachers: Helm, Bongiovanni, Eisele, Ostermann, and Pennartz. JA classes span five weeks, and each class is 30 minutes long. All teaching materials are provided. The volunteer works directly with the classroom teacher to schedule sessions that are convenient for both. If you have questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Julie Rogers at julie.rogers@chase.com.

Movie Night Thank You: Thank you to everyone who made this night such a success! It was so nice to spend time with fellow St. Mark families. We also had lots of coats donated to the coat drive and they have been delivered to the St. Vincent Paul Store. Thank you for your generosity.



HSA General Meeting: Thank you for joining us at our quarterly HSA General Meeting this week. If you were unable to attend, our meeting minutes will be posted on the school website.

In Alumni News...

Piano Success: A round of applause for Uyen L., St. Mark Class of 2014, who recently won third place in the Dallas Solo Piano Competition.

Cistercian Student Heads Math Counts: St. Mark Class of 2013 alumnus and current Cistercian Preparatory School sophomore Chris B. is coordinating the Math Counts program for St. Mark. He conducts weekly practices to prepare middle school participants for the national math competitions affiliated with this program.

Seen & Heard Around St. Mark



HOLY TRINITY SEMINARY St. Mark's Bond Continues with Holy Trinity Seminary:

As you know, our middle school has developed a very special relationship with the Holy Trinity seminarians this school year. They pray for each other daily, thanks to Mrs. Denvir's encouragement. A few weeks ago, we told you about one seminarian, Ivan Torres, who is making rosary bracelets for our middle schoolers. Mrs. Denvir took delivery of the first round of bracelets this week. They are beautiful, and we are so appreciative of Ivan's kindness! A special thank you to the Denvir, Librea, and Bartz families who donated the twine for these bracelets.

Ivan is continuing to make bracelets over the Christmas break and hopes to have one for all of our middle school students soon. Along with the bracelets, he sent a lovely letter that Mrs. Denvir read to the classes this week, and we thought you would enjoy reading it as well. Read Ivan's kind words attached.

In addition, there is now a "St. Mark" table in the seminary dining room devoted solely to displaying messages from our students. That dining room table is the seminarians' favorite stop when they gather for meals. Our students have also suggested that they become "Secret Santas" with the seminarians. They will each choose a name and write a Christmas card.

Many of our students and their families have been attending the public masses and events at Holy Trinity. We know a trip to Irving takes up valuable weekend time, but if your student is asking to attend, please try to go. This magnificent, prayerful relationship is truly making a beautiful impact on all involved. These young men need our prayers and our support as they pursue a life devoted to God's service. Their next public mass will be held on January 25. All are welcome, and everyone is encouraged to attend. Please visit their website for more information – www.holytrinityseminary.org, and stay informed about St. Mark's interaction with the seminary on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.



Math Enrichment Club Uses Technology & QR Codes for Scavenger Hunt: The Math Enrichment Club recently did a scavenger hunt using tablets and smartphones. QR codes were linked to math problems and placed around the classroom. Students used their tablets/phones to scan the QR codes, and their brainpower to solve the math problems. Answers were also displayed around the room and students had to hunt for them. The use of technology made this exercise fun for the students and created excitement about math in a whole new way. Don't know what a QR code is? See the example below. If you have a QR code reader on your smartphone or tablet, simply scan it and see where it takes you!



First Grade Makes Tilmas: First grade learned the story of Juan Diego and how the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared on his tilma (cloak). They each made their own tilma during religion class this week.



Lion Pride

Just a few of the many reasons we're so proud to be St. Mark Lions....

Spelling Bee: The St. Mark Spelling Bee was held on December 9. Congratulations to our winner, 7th grader Sarah H. and our runner-up, 6th grader Audrey P. Sarah will move on to the Diocesan Spelling Bee which will be held on January 9 at Christ the King. If she is unable to compete, Audrey will take her place. We also congratulate all of our students who were chosen to participate in this year's Spelling Bee – everyone did a great job!

Students Excel at Speech Tournament: The Diocesan Speech tournament was held on Saturday, December 6 at St. Rita. St. Mark students did quite well and brought home a number of awards. Julianna S., Megan T. and Becca W. earned a blue ribbon and a trophy for a perfect score in TV Commercials. Danielle A., Annabella M. and Emma Q. earned a blue ribbon in TV commercials. Julia V. and Erin B. earned a blue ribbon in TV commercials. Grace B., Hannah F. and Izzy C. earned a blue ribbon in TV commercials. Hannah P. earned a red ribbon in Poetry Interpretation. Anthony F. earned a blue ribbon in Poetry Interpretation. Minh-Tuan P. earned a blue ribbon in Original Oratory. Congratulations to all of our competitors!