



# ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHERE FAITH AND KNOWLEDGE MEET

**WEEKLY SCHOOL BULLETIN**

**December 18, 2015**

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## REMINDERS



**A NATIONAL SCHOOL  
OF EXCELLENCE**

St. Mark Catholic School is a two time recipient of the U.S. Department of Education "National Blue Ribbon Award." This means that our students consistently score in the top 15% in the nation on standardized tests.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

Follow us and stay connected!

**Monday, December 21-Monday, January 4:**  
-Christmas Holidays; No School For Students

**Thursday, December 24**  
-5:00 PM, Church: St. Mark Children's Choir Sings at Mass & 5th grade presents the Nativity Story

**Tuesday, January 5:**  
-Classes Resume

**Friday, January 8:**  
-8:30 AM, Church: All School Mass. The Mass is planned by the 8th grade. They will offer the Call to Worship, the Mass readings, and present the Communion gifts. All are welcome.

### NEW AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DALLAS NAMED

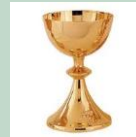
On Wednesday, Pope Francis announced in Rome that Dallas priest Monsignor John Gregory Kelly has been named a bishop and will serve as an auxiliary or assistant bishop for the Dallas diocese. He has been a priest in the Dallas diocese for nearly 34 years. He will be ordained as a bishop on February 11, 2016 at 2:00 PM at the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin Guadalupe in Dallas and will join Bishop Farrell and Auxiliary Bishop Deshotel in ministering to an ever-growing flock of 1.3 million Catholics in the Diocese of Dallas.

### PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

It's hard to believe how fast the first half of the school year has flown by! And what an incredible year it has been. We designated this the "Year of Kindness" in an effort to create a shared vision centered on Pope Francis' "Year of Mercy." I am so proud to say that our students have stepped up to the challenge in the most amazing ways.



### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LIONLAND



#### Vocations

**Chalice:** 8th grade was presented with the Vocations Chalice at the conclusion of today's All-School Mass. They will be praying for vocations during the upcoming week.



#### Generosity:

Teachers discuss the Virtue of the Month with students by using stories and activities to engage them into seeing the virtue in action. Ask your child what he/she is learning about "Generosity" this month. [Click here](#) for the full list of monthly virtues for 2015-16.



### LIFETIME LIONS

**Calling all alumni ... join Lifetime Lions, our official alumni network!** Keep up with former classmates, learn about mentoring opportunities, and volunteer for service hours. Click [here](#) for more information.

It started with a student-prepared "Kindness" assembly. Our community always exudes kindness, but since that assembly, we've seen it multiply. What an amazing bunch of young people!

We've heard so many positive comments from parents and staff members alike about the pervasive feelings of peace, hope and joy on our campus. It sounds like the spirit of Christmas is truly the culture at St. Mark Catholic School.

What a beautiful miracle!

May we all allow the miracle of Christmas to continue living in us long after the holiday trappings have been packed away. May we challenge ourselves to recreate our lives, making the peace, hope and joy of this holy season a reality in every season of the new year. And when you do this, do not be surprised to see others following you. After all, the spirit of Christmas is contagious.

From all of us at St. Mark, we wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

**Christmas Prayer**  
**Soundings, Vol. 2, # 12**

May the forgiving spirit of Him to whom we dedicate this season prevail again on earth.

May hunger disappear and terrorists cease their senseless acts.

May people live in freedom, worshiping as they see fit, loving others.

May the sanctity of the home be ever preserved.

May peace, everlasting peace, reign supreme.



## LIONS DEN

**Get your official LION gear here!**

Check in at the school office on Fridays from 7:30-8:15 AM and shop 'til you drop at the Lion's Den Spirit Store located in the Cafetorium.

Can't visit in person? [Place your order online anytime!](#)

This is a great place to stock up on St. Mark shirts for our Spirit Days, which are held on the first Monday of each month!

### APPLICATIONS FOR NEW STUDENTS NOW AVAILABLE

Do you know anyone interested in a Catholic education for their child? The 2016-17 application for new students is now available online at [www.stmcs.net](http://www.stmcs.net).



### SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The minutes from the November 19, 2015 School Advisory Council meeting are now available [online](#).

ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL



### NEWS FROM ATHLETICS

**\*DPL Swim Meet Date Set; Registration Open:** The 2016 DPL Swim Meet will take place on Friday, February 5 at North Lake Community

## EARLY DISMISSAL/AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Today, students will be released early at 12:00 PM. The After School Program will be available until 3:00 PM. Please make arrangements for timely pick up.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION: MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

**Attention Middle School Families:** Second semester (18-week) and third quarter (9-week) electives for grades 6-8 will be chosen the first week of January. We will once again use Sign-Up Genius for registration. Parents will receive the link to sign up through RenWeb on the day you are allowed to register ONLY. If you do not sign up on your slotted day, the school will place your child into a class of our choosing. If your child wishes to use an "Elective Free Choice Pass," please have him/her bring the elective list to Ms. Steinkirchner with the pass attached on Tuesday, January 5 ONLY.

\*8th grade will receive the Sign-up Genius link only on Wednesday, January 6.

\*7th grade will receive the Sign-up Genius link only on Thursday, January 7.

\*6th grade will receive the Sign-up genius link only on Friday, January 8.

**Remember, the day you receive your link is the only day you can register for your student's elective classes.**

The lists of elective choices were sent home with students this week, or you can access them through the links below:

[3rd Quarter Elective Choices](#)  
[2nd Semester \(18-week\) Elective Choices](#)

College located on MacArthur Boulevard in Irving.

Online registration is now open, and payments will be accepted at this time. **The deadline to register is today, December 18.**

Please visit the Swimming page on the school website and review the prerequisites for team registration. DPL Sports Physical Forms must be submitted to the school office, attn: Marlene Ehring, Athletic Director.



## JPII MINI BASKETBALL CAMP

JPII will be hosting a mini basketball camp for boys in grades 5-8 over the holidays. It will take place December 21-22 from 9:00 AM - 12:00 NOON and the cost is \$75.00. [Click here](#) for more details.

## DALLAS MAVERICKS/ CATHOLIC NIGHT

Join the Dallas Mavericks as they take on the Phoenix Suns during "Catholic Night" at the American Airlines Center on Sunday, January 31 at 6:00 PM. For more information and to purchase tickets, [click here](#). There will

## MIDDLE SCHOOL OPEN YOUTH HOUSE DATES

As a reminder, the popular Middle School Open Youth Houses with the NET Team will resume on January 15, 2016. There is no Open Youth House today.

## ST. MARK 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WITH PAST/PRESENT CLERGY

Join past/present clergy in celebrating St. Mark's milestone 50th anniversary on Friday, January 29, 2015 at 6:30 PM in the Parish Center. Share memories while enjoying appetizers, gourmet fire-oven pizzas and other Italian fare, wine, beer and desserts. [Click here](#) for further details.

## HALF DAYS ARE CANE'S DAYS AT ST. MARK!



**Eat at Raising Cane's**

**Today!** On each early dismissal day this school year, eat at Raising Cane's across the street from the school and a percentage of your purchase will be donated back to the St. Mark Athletic Department! **Visit anytime today between 10:00 AM and 11:00 PM.** **Simply mention St. Mark as you place your order.** Treat your family, and earn money for our school!

## PARISHIONER TUITION STATUS/PARISH DONATIONS

**Reminder:** In order to qualify for the parishioner tuition discount, the annual minimum parish donation of \$800 must be paid by **December 31, 2015**. You can pay by check (made out to "St. Mark Catholic Church") and submit it to the parish office. Or, you can use the church's electronic payment site by [clicking here](#). Recurring payments can also be set-up using this link. Please refer to page 11 of

also be a post-game free throw event.

## MS. WILLIAMS NEEDS BOTTLE CAPS

Art teacher, Ms. Williams, is still in need of **YELLOW** bottle caps only. If your child brings in a minimum of 20 caps at once, he/she will receive a "Caught Being Good" certificate!



HOLY TRINITY SEMINARY

St. Mark Catholic School has formed a special relationship with [Holy Trinity Seminary](#) and takes great pride in supporting our future priests. Following are upcoming opportunities to become involved:

**\*Join Us for Public Masses at Holy Trinity Seminary @ 9:15 AM:**

January - 24th, 31st  
February - 7th, 14th, 28th  
April - 3rd, 17th, 24th

Address: 3131 Vince Hagan Drive, Irving, TX 75062

**Questions about the Public Masses?** Call or text Agnes Denvir, VP of Vocations, President-Elect, Serra Club of North Central Dallas. Cell: 214-607-2391, [agnes.denvir@stmcs.net](mailto:agnes.denvir@stmcs.net) or [agnesdenvir@gmail.com](mailto:agnesdenvir@gmail.com).

the [Parent Student Handbook](#) for more information about the parish donation.

If you are unsure about your donation status, please contact Nadya Collard in the parish office no later than **December 23**, as she will be out of the office from December 24-January 4. You can reach her at 972-423-5600, x 258 or [ncollard@stmarkplano.org](mailto:ncollard@stmarkplano.org). Contributions made during Christmas week should be posted to 2015 contribution statements, as long as they are received by December 31.

### 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. Some of the companies that provide corporate matching include 3M, AIG, Abbott, BP Solar, Bank of America, Boeing, Chevron, Cisco, Conoco Phillips, Deloitte, GM, Gates Foundation, Honeywell, Intel, Liberty Agency, Lockheed Martin, Merck, Met Life, Microsoft, P&G, PepsiCo, Raytheon, Southwest Airlines, Texas Instruments, Verizon, and Walmart.

- 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, [click here](#).

### FRENCH MASSES AT CISTERCIAN

Mrs. Denvir extends an invitation to St. Mark French students, and any students/families who are interested, to attend the French Masses at Cistercian. There is an opportunity to do the readings, and to sample some French snacks at the end of every Mass. Masses take place at Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Abbey in Irving every 3rd Sunday of the month at 10:30 AM.

Upcoming dates: December 20, January 17, February 21, March 20, April 17, and May 15.

### 2016 ROE MEMORIAL

Bishop Farrell invites everyone in the Diocese to join him at the 2016 Roe Memorial on January 16. Please see the flyer below for more information and the schedule of events. Contact the Catholic Pro-Life Committee with questions at 972-267-LIFE or [www.prolifedallas.org/roe](http://www.prolifedallas.org/roe).

- If you would like to make a monetary donation to a particular department or program at St. Mark Catholic School (i.e. Athletics, Fine Arts), please [click here](#). 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. For every 10 volunteer hours, TI will make a contribution of \$125, up to \$1,000 per person/year. 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!

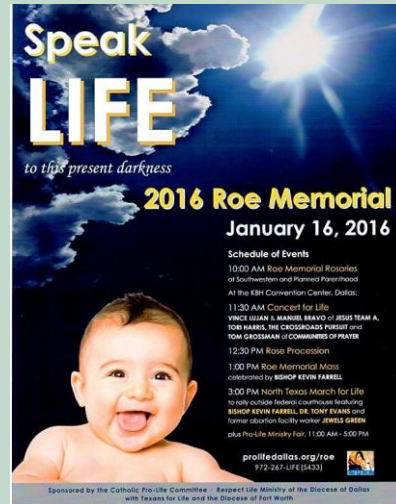


**KINDERGARTEN, 1ST & 2ND GRADE FAMILIES: SAVE THE DATE FOR YOUR CLASS JINGLE AND MINGLE PRE-AUCTION MIXER!** Meet classroom parents, join bidding pools for those large auction items, and learn more about the upcoming Sweethearts Gala on February 6, 2016. It will be a jolly good time as we enjoy the holiday and New Year season together as a St. Mark family.

Santa's Hosting Elves: The Russo & Battles Families

Date: Friday, January 8, 2016

Time: 7:00 PM



## IN ALUMNI NEWS ...

### Alums Succeed at Youth & Government:

Congratulations to 2015 alumni **Athena B.** and **Kate B.** who are heading to the Texas Youth & Government State Conferences in Austin in January. Both girls recently qualified as freshmen at Ursuline Academy of Dallas. Kate competed against 25 other high school students and was selected Outstanding Delegate, and participated in the Ambassador Program. Athena competed against 200 high school students in the legislative section and was selected as a Distinguished Delegate. Her interest in this program began right here at St. Mark when she participated in the Youth & Government elective in middle school with Mrs. Smith!

Location: 1042 Bandelier Drive, Allen, 75013

**SEATS ARE FILLING UP QUICKLY FOR ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S 29TH ANNUAL DINNER & AUCTION!**

When: February 6, 2016

Where: Marriott Hotel at Legacy Town Center in Plano

Couples Tickets: \$150 for 2 tickets

Individual Tickets: \$75

Sponsor A Faculty Member: \$65

Buy your auction tickets today at

[www.stmcs.net/auction](http://www.stmcs.net/auction).

**DON'T FORGET TO DONATE TO YOUR CLASS BASKET**

**January 8, 2016 is the deadline to contribute to your class auction basket!**

It is a tradition that each class donates a themed gift basket to be auctioned at the event. We ask that each family give one item, gift card or cash donation towards their class basket. [Click here](#) for your class basket theme. Collection boxes have been placed in each classroom. For middle school students, there is a collection box located in the Library.

Thank you to everyone who donated at last week's drop-off, and to all of our volunteers!

**We will hold another donation drop-off at the school on Friday, January 8, 2016. Volunteers will be available to take your donations in all AFTERNOON pick-up lines that day.**



**HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

**Alumni Visits:** Do you have alumni in your house who will still be home for Christmas break during the week of January 4? St. Mark students return to school on January 5 and we invite alumni to visit our campus from Tuesday-Friday that week. They can bring lunch to a sibling, say hello to former teachers, check out the enhancements we've made to campus, and take a look old composites. Be sure to check out our most recent alumni visits on the St. Mark [Facebook page!](#)

**LIONS MENTOR LIONS**

**2nd Grade Prays for Seminarian:** Our 2nd grade class received a special visit from Holy Trinity Seminarian Parker T. (St. Mark Class of 2011) on Wednesday. He came to talk with the students and answer questions about the seminary. In return, our students surprised him with a special poster they made for him and told them they had officially "adopted" him as their seminarian. They pray for him daily.

(photo removed)

We were also pleased to have Parker celebrate the All School Mass with us this morning.



## **THANK YOU**

Thank you to all those who helped with and/or donated to the Faculty/Staff Christmas Dinner. It helped make it a great night for our wonderful teachers and staff!

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

### **Paper-Pulling/Classroom Reading Coordinator**

**(1st & 2nd Grades):** HSA is looking for a Chairperson to organize Paper-Pulling/Classroom Reading for our 1st and 2nd grade teachers. Please contact Erica Rivera at [ebakerhrw@yahoo.com](mailto:ebakerhrw@yahoo.com) if you are interested and/or have questions.

**Library Helpers Needed:** The following classes are in need of a few more Library volunteers: Mrs. Young- TK (Tuesdays 9:00-9:30), Mrs. Thompson- K (Mondays 1:45-2:15), Mrs. Brooks- Grade 2 (Wednesdays 12:30-1:00), Mrs. Eisele- Grade 2 (Tuesdays 12:30-1:00), Mrs. McCormick- Grade 3 (Wednesdays 9:00-9:30), and Mrs. Mercado- Grade 4 (Mondays 10:15-10:45). Please contact Femina Pereira at [pfemina@gmail.com](mailto:pfemina@gmail.com) if you are available or have questions. The number of volunteers per class determines how often each volunteer is scheduled to help.

**Junior Achievement: Help needed!** We are in need of volunteers for Junior Achievement for the following teachers: Thompson, Crider, Mercado, Ostermann, and Ferri. 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 Kathleen Frye at [Kathleen.Frye@yahoo.com](mailto:Kathleen.Frye@yahoo.com).

## **SEEN & HEARD AROUND ST. MARK**

### **Christmas Pageant:**

Thursday evening brought another stellar Christmas Pageant. Our 5th grade students presented the story of the Nativity. It was narrated by Father Cliff. Students in Preschool-4th grade sang songs that supported the story. Thank you to all of our teachers, staff, students and parents for your hard work and support. Special thanks to Father Cliff for his direction and amazing costumes, and to Patty Corsi for her musical direction. What a wonderful way to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas!

(photo removed)

### **Teacher & Staff Christmas Dinner Thank You:**

The entire staff would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Teacher/Staff Christmas Dinner held Tuesday evening. It was a lovely event that included a fabulous meal prepared by Father Cliff, appetizers, beverages and dessert provided by HSA, wonderful company, and amazing HSA hosts. It is a pleasure to be able to come together as a staff to celebrate the holidays, and



### Auction Volunteers

**Needed:** Want to help plan this fun night? Contact Eric Librea

at [eric.librea@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eric.librea@sbcglobal.net), or Paola Colon at [paolabcolon@icloud.com](mailto:paolabcolon@icloud.com) for more information and volunteer opportunities.

### REMINDERS

#### **Helping Hands Committee:**

If you know any St. Mark families that are in need of help because of a sickness, death or any life changing event, please contact any of the following individuals on the Helping Hands Committee:

Chair, Liz Quarles: [Lizquarles97@hotmail.com](mailto:Lizquarles97@hotmail.com), 214-317-9568(m)

Committee:

Kathleen Frye, [Kathleenfrye@yahoo.com](mailto:Kathleenfrye@yahoo.com) Sandy

Theriot, [Theriot.family@yahoo.com](mailto:Theriot.family@yahoo.com) Angie

Baldwin, [abaldwin@huntoil.com](mailto:abaldwin@huntoil.com)

Valerie Gottschalt, [Valgottschalt@yahoo.com](mailto:Valgottschalt@yahoo.com)

Olivier Fidaire, [Olivierfidaire@yahoo.com](mailto:Olivierfidaire@yahoo.com)

Erica Rivera, [Ebakerhrw@yahoo.com](mailto:Ebakerhrw@yahoo.com)

Femina Pereira, [Pfemina@gmail.com](mailto:Pfemina@gmail.com)

**Attention Volunteers:** All volunteers must sign and return a "Volunteer Pledge Form" before the first day of volunteering. This form can be found in the [Volunteer Handbook](#). Also, volunteers must be Safe Environment trained. [Click here](#) for more details.

#### **Link Your Shopper Cards & Earn Money for**

**St. Mark:** Remember to link your Kroger and Tom Thumb cards to St. Mark. Kroger cards need to be re-linked every year. [Click here](#) for more details.

we are so grateful to everyone who helped make it possible. We are one spoiled staff!



**Band Concert:** The St. Mark Band entertained students and families alike on Tuesday at their Band Concert. They performed both popular tunes and Christmas songs, and they played them beautifully!

(photo removed)

**Orchestra Performance:** Our Orchestra students gave us a special performance after mass today and they did an outstanding job! Orchestra is new to St. Mark this year and we were so pleased to be able to see what our students have learned so far. Very impressive! A special thank you to Mrs. Druffner, our Orchestra teacher, who not only instructs our students, but also took time to accompany our 5th grade choir and our handbell students on the violin at today's All-School Mass.



**Box Tops:** Please continue to collect Box Tops and don't forget to put the grade level on the package before turning it in to Mrs. O'Connor.

### DON'T WAIT, PARTICIPATE!

**Welcome Race Fans -- Time for the Pinewood Derby!** Join St. Mark Catholic School's Cub Scouts of Pack 285 for an afternoon of racing on Saturday, January 30, 2016. You can join in the fun, even if you are not a Scout or have a Scout in your family. We will have Sibling Races and Outlaw Races where you can modify your car beyond the Scout rules for Pinewood Derby. You are welcome to register as many cars as you like.

The Cub Scouts will start racing around noon. After that, the Sibling and Outlaw races will commence, around 2:30 PM.

#### Cost To Race (per car)

Pack Members: Car + Entry Fee = \$0 + 1 Can of Food

Sibling and Outlaw: Car + Entry = \$10 (if Pack provides car) + 1 Can of Food, or \$5 (if Pack does not provide car) + 1 Can of Food

More details to follow in early January. If you are interested, please contact the Pack 285 Pinewood Derby Coordinator, David Brainard, at [davidcbrainard@msn.com](mailto:davidcbrainard@msn.com).

### STEM TAKES CENTER STAGE AT ST. MARK

**7th Grade Forensics Unit:** 7th grade spent time this week in all of their classes learning about forensics. Students were introduced to many topics through hands-on lessons including the importance of crime scenes, the reliability of

(photo removed)

**Christmas Parties:** Our students had a very MERRY send-off at today's Christmas parties! From Preschool through 8th grade, every class enjoyed a special party planned by our dedicated Room Parents. Pizza, treats, games, Christmas music, Santa hats, reindeer ears, and ugly Christmas sweaters were all part of the fun. Thank you to everyone who played a part -- our students kicked-off the Christmas break in style! Check out even more photos on our [Facebook page!](#)

(photos removed)

#### **5th Grade Helps 1st Grade:**

Our 5th grade students assisted our 1st grade students with finding photos and facts about the six different types of animals: amphibians, reptiles, insects, birds, fish and mammals using the Pic Collage app on the iPad.

(photo removed)

#### **Preschool Music &**

**Movement:** During their Music & Movement class with Mrs. Schell, our PreK-3 students acted out a poem about "Five Little Reindeer" playing in the snow. They

eyewitness testimony, how to determine height from bone length, fingerprints and their uniqueness to God, and solving crimes.

(photo removed)

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used "big" actor voices and they were all very good about sharing the Santa puppet during the class. Mrs. Schell was so proud of them!

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[www.stmcs.net](http://www.stmcs.net) | (972) 578-0610