

# St. Mary's Messenger



A newsletter of St. Mary's Catholic School



A ministry of St. Mary of the Assumption Church



We hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable summer! St. Mary's School is full of the joy and energy of the students once again. We would like to welcome back our returning students and welcome all of our new families as well. We are proud to share our second volume of St. Mary's Messenger with you!

# Letter from the Principal

*Dear Friends,*

*I had the occasion to go to Catholic Central High School recently to see a football game. And as I stood watching the game, I saw a number of young ladies and gentlemen who attend CCHS now and are alumni of St. Mary's School. Each one of them stopped to talk with me, updating me on the many things they have going on. With each conversation, I felt more and more proud, not only of each of them, but of St. Mary's School. Each of these young men and women was articulate, energetic, and involved! Their outgoing demeanor and enthusiasm was evidence of what catholic schools, and St. Mary's in particular, is working to foster and nurture.*

*As we begin this new school year, the faculty and staff of St. Mary's gladly continue our mission; to help our students develop into compassionate, lifelong learners who are critical thinkers and leaders for the future. The young adults I recently saw at CCHS convinced me, overwhelmingly, that we are carrying out our mission well. Know that your child or children will mature, through our combined efforts as parents and educators, into those compassionate and well spoken leaders of the future! My prayers this season are with each of you for a successful and rewarding school year.*

*Prayerfully yours,*

*Mary Rushkoski*

## **A Very Special Thank You**

In 1969, a young girl named Cathy Brown attended St. Mary's School, then a relatively new school, open just 16 years. Cathy was a beautiful, little 9 year old, in the fourth grade, and an avid reader. That school year, the Lord chose to take Catherine home, after she contracted Rye Syndrome. She passed away while a student here at St. Mary's. In the years since Catherine's passing, the Brown Family has continued to remember this school community, not only in their thoughts and prayers, but with financial contributions as well. In 1999, Albert and Susan Brown made a sizeable contribution in order that the school library could be renovated. A plaque bearing Catherine's name can be found outside the library. This past June, The Brown's again reached out to St. Mary's with a very generous donation. This time, their contribution enabled us to repaint the school and re-carpet the library. As you visit the school in the coming month's please stop down to see the library and take notice of the newly painted classrooms. What a difference it has made! The words 'thank you' hardly seem adequate to express our gratitude for all the Brown Family has done for St. Mary's School. We are truly blessed to have their support.

## **Improving the Learning Environment**

Keeping our learning environment clean, safe, and cheerful is one of our priorities and over this past summer St. Mary's School was hard at work improving our building and facilities. This summer, the classrooms, hallways, library, and cafeteria were all freshly painted. We are very grateful to the parents and volunteers who took the time to help paint each classroom. You will also notice new carpet in the library and Mrs. Green's kindergarten classroom. St. Mary's School also improved many essential facility systems that no one usually sees but are necessary for the proper working of the School: new main water valves were installed, roofing improvements were made, plumbing fixtures were updated and the heating system was modernized. All of these improvements show that St. Mary's School is ready to educate not only our current students but also the next generation of students who will be attending.

## In the Classroom

**K** September is sure to be an exciting month in Kindergarten! It is a month filled with new beginnings- new surroundings, new friends, new experiences and new skills. The children will be working on a friendship quilt to be displayed by the end of the month.

**1st** The first grade is excited to welcome caterpillars into their classroom. We will be watching them grow and change and can't wait to watch them transform into butterflies!

**2nd** The second graders are eagerly anticipating their First Holy Communion, which will be celebrated on May 14. They arrived on the first day of school with many questions about receiving this sacrament. We will be preparing for this very special event in their young lives throughout the school year.

**3rd** Third grade will be experimenting with incubation and embryology of baby chicks. Through our participation in a 4-H program, students will experience the incubation, development, hatching and brooding of chicks!

**4th** The fourth grade students will be learning about New York State history this year. There are many fascinating topics that we will be covering this year including the Erie Canal, Native Americans and our New York State Government.”

**5th** Grade 5 students will be making a model of an earthworm habitat. The students will have a front row seat to watch the worms at work!

## **Middle School**

Many of our 8th graders are the first class at St. Mary's to participate in Regents Level class work. Upon successful completion of the year they will enter high school having already earned one science credit toward their diploma. Students in grades 6 and 7 are participating in enrichment work recently added to the curriculum that will prepare them for advanced work in the future. Students in Middle School have been busy planning some first quarter community service projects. The seventh graders have been working hard cleaning the field, canal walkways and other areas near our school. The eighth graders are excited to be planning a Charity Softball game in October.

## **Swinging into action in Support of St. Mary's**

This past June, St. Mary's School hosted the 8th Annual L. Scott Cuomo Golf Tournament. We were blessed with beautiful weather and the support of a record number of golfers. 132 friends of St. Mary's School teed up at Van Patten Golf Course in support of our school. Parents, parishioners, sponsors and faculty came together for a day of laughter and enjoyment which raised nearly \$10,000 for school and the Scott Cuomo Scholarship Fund. We were pleased to have our first HOLE IN ONE WINNER! Ron Gillispie of Waterford (pictured, far left) hit a hole in one to win two prizes, one being a \$500.00 gift certificate to Price Chopper, which he donated to the St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry. This tournament was yet another example of how the many members of our community work together to help St. Mary's faculty carry out our mission of Catholic education. Thank you to the countless people who helped make this event such a success.



## **Parents Give Time and Talent through PTO**

The students at St. Mary's School are very fortunate to have such a dedicated and involved Parent Teacher Organization. The parent volunteers who give their time to help with lunch preparation, fund raising, grade parents, recess help, uniform swap, teacher appreciation luncheon, special events, and other activities deserve special thanks and recognition for all the support that they give to St. Mary's School. St. Mary's School welcomes and encourages parents, and grandparents of all grades to participate in the PTO. The time and talents you share with the School are time and talents that you are really sharing with a child. Thank you.

## Good Luck to our Graduates

The St. Mary's School eighth grade graduation mass that was held on Friday, June 18th marked the academic and spiritual successes of our recent graduating class. The thirteen graduates, many of whom have attended St. Mary's School since pre-K, were dressed in their academic caps and gowns for the 53rd commencement. These students stand ready to advance to their next challenges in life confident that the academic, spiritual, and personal preparation they received at St. Mary's School will guide them to make good choices. While St. Mary's School is confident in the academic rigor and preparation each student has received, we often receive feedback from public and private high schools that St. Mary's graduates enter high school more prepared than other students. As our graduates leave St. Mary's School, they not only have the academic skills necessary to succeed, our graduates have also been taught the spiritual skills needed to make good moral choices. Finally, the St. Mary's School focus on the individual learner means that each graduate leaves St. Mary's with a clear sense of themselves as an individual. These three gifts – academics, spirituality, and sense of self – are the best gifts that St. Mary's School can give to each student that graduates.



## St. Mary's School is Growing

We would like to offer a warm welcome to all of the new families at St. Mary's School. From the pre-K, to the kindergarten, to the elementary grades, and the middle school, new students and families have become part of the St. Mary's Family. We thank these new families and our returning families for choosing St. Mary's School. We believe that St. Mary's School offers a positive academic and values based experience in a safe environment that is not found anywhere else. It is very humbling to know that so many families have selected St. Mary's as the right school for their child or children. Thank you for choosing St. Mary's School.

### Coming up...

September 23, 6-7:30: Open House

October 29<sup>th</sup>: October Feast

November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9:30 am: Thanksgiving Mass. Join us!



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