



# St. Mary's Messenger

*A newsletter of St. Mary's Catholic School*



*A ministry of St. Mary of the Assumption Church*

## A Beautiful First Holy Communion

Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup> was a beautifully warm and sunny day. It was a perfect day for our second graders to celebrate their First Holy Communion at a special 10:30 Mass with their siblings, parents, grandparents, and friends assembled in the congregation. The children have been working hard all year, preparing with Ms. Norton and Mrs. DelSignore for this joyous day. This was a big step forward in the Catholic Faith for these beautiful children of God! Over the course of the year, the children learned about the Sacraments, focusing first on the meaning behind their own baptisms some seven or eight years earlier. All of the children did a wonderful job and any observer could see the respect they have for their Church and that they truly understood the privilege of receiving the Eucharist. The children got a second chance to celebrate the following Thursday at the First Holy Communion Breakfast. Father Kelly congratulated each child with their First Holy Communion certificate and the students had their picture taken as a class in their First Holy Communion outfits. The children and their families then enjoyed a special breakfast together and the second graders got to go home for the day!



*Dear Friends,*

*It has been a wonderful and eventful year here at St. Mary's School. I've hardly noticed the time go by but in fact we are nearing the year's end. As I recollect the many events that took place this past year, my greatest satisfaction comes from those events that brought us together as a community: The Annual Ziti and Meatball dinner, The Christmas and Spring Concerts, First Holy Communion and the middle school's Drama Production. I also must convey my pride in your children who represent our school so well, as was the case when three of our students, Andrew O'Donnell, Sophia and Sarah Phillips, were chosen as Semi Finalists in the Capital District Invention Convention. 100 area students attended this event at the Schenectady Museum but only 25 were chosen as semi-finalists, so these students are to be commended for their effort and accomplishment.*

*We will conclude our year, fittingly, in prayer as we gather as a community for Mass on June 23rd at 11:00. Please feel free to join us that day.*

*Perhaps my favorite event all year will be our 8th grade graduation on Friday, June 18th at 7:00 p.m. It's difficult to explain why this event is so special. Perhaps it is because it combines all the elements that make St. Mary's the special school it is: the tradition, the reverence of the Liturgy, and the sense of pride we all have in this accomplishment; pride on the part of students, parents, and faculty.*

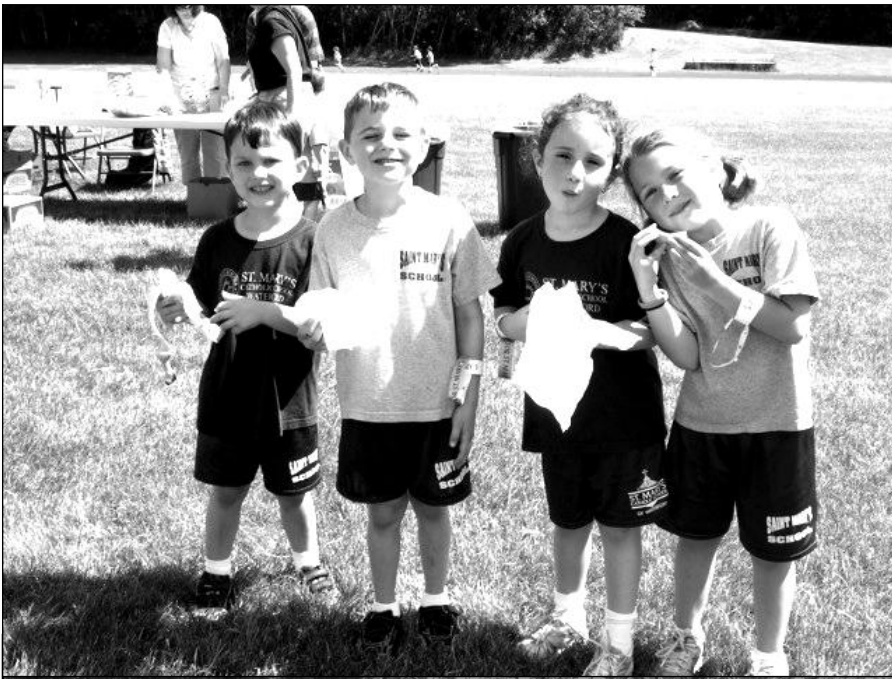
*As always, my prayer is for you to have a safe and enjoyable summer with your family. May God's choicest blessings be upon you.*

*Faithfully,  
Mary Rushkoski*

### **Leading By Example - Learning By Example**

There is no doubt that the students at St. Mary's are held to high academic standards. In addition to the academics, they are held to a high moral standard. In many schools the upper grades are separated from the lower grades but, at St. Mary's, students in all grades are encouraged to interact. The students in Pre-K through Eighth grade pass each other in the hall throughout the school day. This occurs without worry to parents as all students are considerate of one another and set a positive example for their younger schoolmates. The older students respect and nurture the younger students. They learn these traits very early as they are offered responsibilities throughout their school career. These responsibilities include participating as a Reading Buddy to younger students beginning in 3rd grade, assisting Kindergarteners at recess and lunch as 4<sup>th</sup> graders, working milk duty at lunch and walking Kindergarteners to their buses. The "big kids" at St. Mary's are always available to offer a hello or a high five to their younger counterparts, helping to groom the next generation of supportive "big kids".

As a result of these opportunities afforded to our students they earn a sense of pride, compassion, and gain confidence, while learning the importance of nurturing those that look up to them. St. Mary's students lead as positive role models for those learning by example.



## Sprint For Saint Mary's

The third annual Sprint for Saint Mary's was another success! Our students gathered plenty of pledges then ran their hearts out to help their school! It was a beautiful day. Thank you to all the parents that volunteered to help and those that came to cheer us on!



## Big School for Little Kids

It's never too early to be a part of something special, even if you're only 3 or 4. The Pre-K program at St. Mary's is the perfect place to start. Students begin to establish bonds from the moment they enter the doors that very first day; bonds with a caring teacher, a friendly classroom assistant, and plenty of other excited new friends. Suddenly their community includes students from other grades, and before you know it you hear "that's my school". As preschoolers graduate to Kindergarten, that community continues to mentor and guide them with the help of upperclassmen. Feeling a part of something special within a caring community is an everyday experience for all of our students.

## L. Scott Cuomo Golf Tournament

Our golf committee has been working diligently to prepare for one of our largest fundraisers, the 8th Annual St. Mary's School~ L. Scott Cuomo Golf Tournament. It will be held at Van Patten Country Club in Clifton Park on June 24th. The day is another opportunity to gather as a community in support of this wonderful school and the Scott Cuomo Scholarship fund. More than half the field of golfers has signed up but more are welcome and registrations are still being accepted. Non-golfers are welcome also! If you would like to join us for our banquet and auction at the conclusion of the tournament, please do. Please go to our website for a sign-up form.

# Spring Concert

## Planning Leads to Growth at St. Mary's

The strategic planning process St. Mary's School began two years ago has led to enrollment growth and improvements at the school. As a result of the strategic planning process and the parents, teachers, board members, and community leaders who participated in creating and implementing the strategic plan, the future of St. Mary's School is secure. The strategic plan encompasses Catholic Identity, Enrollment, Curriculum, Faculty, Technology, Governance, Finance, Facilities, and Community and is designed to broaden awareness and support of St. Mary's School. This increased awareness and support is demonstrated by the increased elementary school enrollment, an expanded pre-K program, and advanced science and math courses now available for the eighth grade. As the strategic planning process continues in upcoming years, further improvements and enrollment growth are expected to continue at St. Mary's School.

## Help a Student Attend St. Mary's School

If you value a Catholic education you can offer help to other families who also value a Catholic education but may need some financial assistance. Contributions to the St. Mary's School Financial Aid Fund can help families fulfill the dream and promise of a Catholic education – values based education with a strong academic emphasis. You may have experienced a Catholic education as a child and remember the moral code and academic skills that helped prepare you for your life experiences; you may have experienced the haven that a Catholic education provides from pressures of this modern society; or you may know a child who has benefited from the type of structured educational experience found in a Catholic school. If you are able to make a difference in the life of a child we ask that you consider a financial gift to the St. Mary's School Financial Aid Fund. No gift is too small to make a difference. Please send your gift to the school office.



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