



# St. Mary's Messenger

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



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



### **Three Cheers for Catholic Schools!**

The students at St. Mary's always enjoy celebrating Catholic Schools Week. This year was no different! The talent show was a big success. Students got a chance to showcase their talents for an enthusiastic and supportive audience. Other Catholic Schools Week celebrations included Hat Day, a Spelling Bee and Special Persons Day, when children got bring someone to school to celebrate Mass and some special time in the classroom.

## *Letter from the Principal*

*Dear Friends,*

*Recently I traveled to Vermont with my son to visit a small Catholic College there. As the admissions director guided my son and me on a tour of the campus, I noticed that he addressed each student we passed by name. He had obviously taken the time to get to know each one of them. This reminded me of another small, Catholic school environment, St. Mary's School. Like that little college nestled in the Green Mountains, St. Mary's is the perfect size and fit for any family looking for an environment where their child is truly known, cared for and respected. Consider this as you prepare your re-registration packet, which is much more than a piece of paper. It is a commitment to continue the relationship your child and family has with all those who are part of the St. Mary's family.*

*Lent begins this month and so we begin preparing our students for the Passion, death and resurrection of our Lord. They will hear more about God's enormous love for us, a love so great He gave us His only Son. Whether parents realize it or not, it is truly a gift to provide your child with a faith filled educational experience. Of all the gifts you will give your child this year, the gift of a Catholic education is perhaps the greatest. Though they will not thank you for it now, they will thank you for it someday.*

*I wish you all, parents, grandparents, friends and alumni, a joyous Easter Season. May you and your family enjoy all the blessings our Lord can bestow upon you, the greatest being love.*

*Prayerfully yours,  
Mary Rushkoski*

### Successful Open House and Learning Fair!

The halls of St. Mary's were filled with energy as 30 prospective families toured the school at our annual Open House on Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup>. It was exciting to see new faces visiting the classrooms and parish hall and getting a chance to speak with teachers and parent volunteers. Visitors included the families of students entering Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.

As evidenced by the number of visiting families, and due to the collaborative effort of the many organizers, the event was a true success. Many members of our community were involved including faculty and staff, PTO members, marketing committee members, and parent volunteers. They worked together to make this a worthwhile event. This effort exemplifies the spirit of St. Mary's as a close-knit community that unites for the benefit of their school.

Our doors were open again to our families and friends on the evening of March 24<sup>th</sup> for our annual Learning Fair, which was held from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Parents and friends came to see all the wonderful projects the students have been working on.

# In the Classroom

**K**indergarten classes are learning about nutrition unit. They will be introduced to the food pyramid and learn what foods help the various parts of their body develop. They will also be learning various exercises to help them become physically fit.

**1st** grade celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday! They read Bartholomew, Oobleck (and made some) and Green eggs and Ham (and ate some)!

**2nd** grade worked hard to prepare for the Learning Fair on March 24<sup>th</sup>. They published a wonderful book entitled God Made me So I must be Special. These budding authors displayed their published work along with special projects they completed on the 50 states.

**3rd** grade will be welcoming some new members into their classrooms this month; baby chicks! Through the incubation process students will learn the essentials of proper care for the eggs to..ensure..hatching!

**4th** graders are creating projects that pertain to the early Native Americans and European settlers in New York. They are writing about the impact that they had in our state. They are also creating a diorama, poster or model that depicts a scene from this time period and shows how they lived and worked.

**5th** grade students are working on their State Report. They are busy practicing their research skills to find out more about mining and agricultural resources, state history, interesting facts, recreation and state flag, flower, tree and bird.

## Middle School

Sharing recently learned skills and knowledge is the focus of Middle School Science at this time of year. Grades 6 and 7 have been applying their recent coursework to some modeling activities. Grade 6 has constructed plate tectonic and volcanic activity models, while Grade 7 has focused on using recent work in genetic modeling to create a suggested world of the past. Grade 8 is taking their combined science, technology, and oral presentation skills to task. They will be competing in an Oratory Contest on March 24<sup>th</sup>. This requires research into an advanced area of biology, chemistry, or physics, oral presentation of the findings, and a supportive technology presentation.

Middle school students were excited to celebrate Pi Day. On March 14 (3/14), students in grades 6, 7, and 8 were involved in various Pi-related activities and competitions. Pi, which is approximately equal to 3.14, is an important number to mathematicians - just ask our budding mathematicians in the middle school.

## What's your preschool wish list?

*More than just child care  
A classroom setting within a school  
Qualified, experienced, dedicated early learning professionals working with my child  
A curriculum that supports social-emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual development  
An environment that sets the foundation for future success*

*Small class size*

*A variety of class options to fit my family's needs*

*A sense of belonging to the greater school community*

*Aftercare available*

*Convenient location*

*Affordable tuition*

*A well respected program with a proven track record of developing great young people*

If these are the things you value for the preschooler in your life, then St. Mary's School is the place for you. The early

childhood educators at St. Mary's understand that there is a great variety in the needs young children and families. That's why we offer several options for 3 and 4 year olds. Come and experience the difference St. Mary's can make in your child's life.

## Father Daughter Dance!

Spring is just around the corner, and in keeping with tradition, so is St. Mary's Father-Daughter Dance. The annual event is sponsored by St. Mary's PTO, and is an evening of dancing and fun for fathers and daughters. This year's dance will be held on Saturday, April 30 from 7:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. A DJ and photographer are present, the hall is decorated and refreshments are served. A good time is had by all. More information will be coming home soon with the students prior to the spring school break.



## Congratulations!

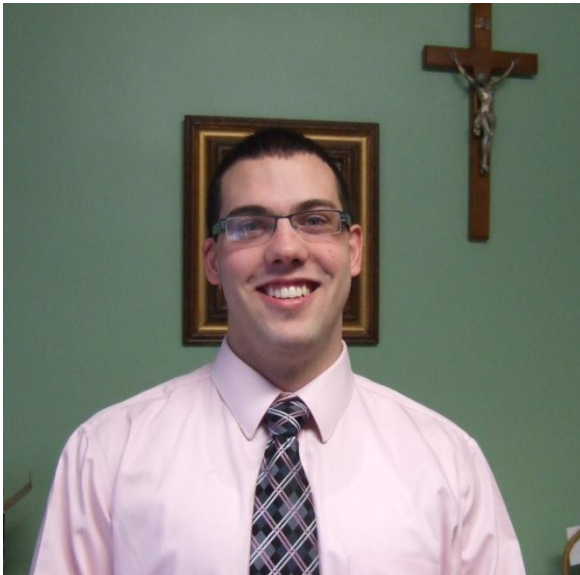
To the boys and girls of St. Mary's CYO basketball on another great Crusader season!

## Character Counts!

The faculty and staff have designed a school wide character building project to help the students learn valuable lessons. The purpose of the program is to publicly recognize students who demonstrate behaviors that represent positive character traits and by doing so, teach each other. The traits we will focus on are Self control, Caring and Respect and Honesty and Responsibility.

The program is simple. As students are observed exhibiting good character, teachers and staff will award them a small colored heart. The heart's color will correspond to a particular character trait. Each Friday morning during Lent, we will hold a brief assembly in the cafeteria before heading to our classrooms. We will acknowledge the students' good choices and add the earned hearts from the past week to a wall in the cafeteria. Our school goal is to build a rainbow of good character. As a further incentive, each student earning a heart during the week will be entered into a drawing for a personal dress down day. The weekly winner will be announced at the assembly. We are looking forward to the wonderful rainbow of hearts that will be created on our cafeteria wall as a result of the exemplary behavior of our students.

## New Teacher profile: Meet Mr. R...



New to our St. Mary's community this year, Mr. Matt Rucinski is our Middle School Social Studies and Religion Teacher. Mr. Rucinski is not new to Catholic schools though. A graduate of St. Pius X in Loudonville, Mr. R. went on to obtain his Bachelor of Science in Education from the State University of New York at Geneseo. He has also been involved in the faith formation program at St. Pius. In fact, Mr. R. has always been an active member of his community, whether as a Eucharist Minister in his parish, a Class Officer in college or organizing our community service initiatives here at St. Mary's. So far this year, he has challenged our middle school students to find new and inventive ways to assist others in our community.



12 Sixth Street  
Waterford, New York 12188  
(518)237-0652

[www.smswaterford.org](http://www.smswaterford.org)

