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Microphone

St. Mary's Catholic School

A Letter From Sister Marianella

Dear Parents,

Hopefully, everyone had a restful and peaceful Thanksgiving Holiday. The weather was certainly on our side. However, at the time I am writing this letter it seems that WINTER might be paying us a visit and is fast approaching.

The remaining 15 days before Christmas Vacation will most likely prove to be busy ones. The following events are some that we anticipate will cause a certain amount of "Busy-ness":

Christmas Play——Friday, December 11th at 7:00pm. Children are to arrive earlier. Schedule will be sent home very soon.

Children's Christmas Mass —Friday, December 18th.

December 8th, Feast of Immaculate Conception—Mass at 9:15 (No Mass on Wednesday)

Semester testing——will be administered during the week of either December 7th and the week of December 14th. A few extra days are scheduled as we want students to have enough time to study. Because of the Christmas Play we wanted to make certain of ample time for testing. It is absolutely necessary that all the children get enough time to study.

There are some students who are now studying for the Spelling Bee and the Geography Bee. In addition to this we will start studying for the Religion Bowl very soon.

If Progress Reports and Progress Folders have not been returned please do so by tomorrow, Thursday, December 3rd. Thank You.

The Holy Spirit was moving through all those students who participated in raising money for the sick children of St. Jude Children's Hospital. Our school theme this year is "Receive the Power" and the Holy Spirit did indeed move us in a very powerful way. Our school raised an amazing

\$5,447.11. A very big thank you to all of the students and families who participated in raising money for the children's hospital. The students and families who participated in the program learned to do more than just math problems; they also learned the importance of helping children who are less fortunate than themselves. We are very proud of all those who helped in this extremely generous campaign. Our goal was to reach \$5,000.00. Sister Marianella has agreed to a "jean" day in appreciation of all the hard work. This will be on Friday, December 4th. Jeans must not be tattered, torn, too tight, or too loose. They may be worn with their spirit shirts (tucked in). Thank You!

There is a large Christmas tree in the elementary main floor hall. The this tree enjoys a rather interesting and fascinating history. The Sister of Charity celebrate their 200th anniversary of being founded by Elizabeth Seton. Catholic Charities sponsored a "Tree of Lights" in which trees were auctioned and proceeds go to Catholic Charities. The Sister of Charity desires to both educate people about their history, and also to help Catholic Charities, took time to decorate a tree for this auction. Every ornament was hand painted, little history folders were sort of "ornamentalized" and a doll portrayed as Mother Seton elegantly protects the tree from its very heights. All hand-made ornaments and ceramics are extremely artistic. This tree is truly a special "historical tree" in addition to being just an ordinary Christmas tree. Please stop by to see it. We will have in "all lit up" so full effects can be enjoyed. The person who bid the highest and "WON" the tree donated it to the school. For this we are truly grateful!

Thank you and God bless you,

Sister Marianella, S.C., Principal

Catholic Identity

Christmas Traditions for the Whole Family



It is never too late to start a Catholic family tradition in your home. The Spirit moves in lots of different ways and who knows, what you do today, your grandchildren might also do tomorrow. Here are a few Catholic Advent traditions:

1. **Advent Wreath:** Set four candles on a circle of evergreens: three purple and one pink. The circle stands for God's unending love and the evergreen stands for hope and life. The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. Each day light a candle and say a prayer together as a family. The pink candle is lit on the third Sunday because pink stands for joy and we are happy that Christmas is almost here.
2. **Straw for the crib:** Set out an empty crib. Each night the children place a piece of straw (yellow yarn or paper) in the crib for every act of kindness that they have done for the day. On Christ-

mas the figure of Jesus is put in the cradle and welcomed by all the acts of kindness.

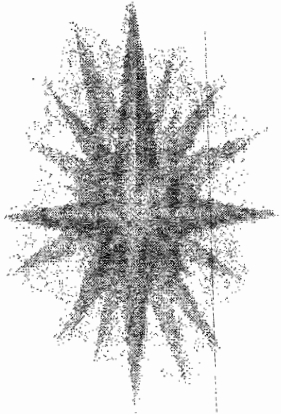
3. **Kris Kringle:** Family members draw names and they will secretly do acts of kindness, favors and prayer for that person. In this way they prepare for Jesus by showing love.
4. **A Waiting Chain:** Have the children make a chain out of construction paper with enough loops for each day of advent. Each loop should contain a bible verse and/or a good deed that needs to be done that day. (ex. I will clear the table today.) Each day of Advent a loop is cut off and read and the good deed is done.
5. **Journey to Bethlehem:** During the last week of Advent have the kids reenact the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem singing Christmas Carols as you go.

6. **The Story of the Candy Cane:** It is said that a candy maker created what we know today as the Christmas candy cane. It was made to be a symbol of Christ's life. The candy maker decided to make it hard to stand for Jesus as the rock, the foundation of the church. He began with a stick of pure white to symbolize that Jesus was without sin. The shape he chose was a cane because it looks like the staff of the Good Shepherd who lovingly looks after those that stray. In addition if you turn the candy cane upside down it forms the letter "J" for Jesus the Savior. The candy maker decorated the candy with red stripes which symbolize the blood shed for us as well as his love for us. This may or may not be a true story but nonetheless it will remind us of the wonder of Jesus who made our lives sweet again by the gift of eternal life. Perhaps you can decorate your tree with a few candy canes!

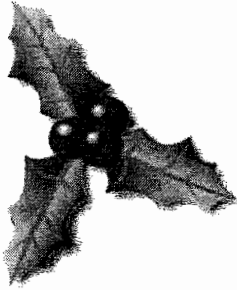
December Masses

Parents are always welcome to celebrate mass with us. The following liturgies are planned for the month of December:

- ◆ Wednesday, December 2 @ 9:15am: **Theme:** Advent: St. Nicholas
Prepared by: 1-1, 3-1, 4-3
- ◆ Tuesday, December 8 @ 9:15am: **Theme:** Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Prepared by: Mr. Cardenas and mid-school Spanish classes
- ◆ Friday, December 18 @ 9:15 am: **Theme:** Advent: Preparing for Jesus' Birth
Prepared by: Mr. Cardenas and mid-school Spanish classes
- ◆ Wednesday, January 6 @ 9:15am: **Theme:** Feast of the Epiphany
Prepared by: 5-1, 5-2, 5-3



Help Us Spread Warmth This Winter Season!



This year St. Mary's is continuing with the tradition of collecting gloves, mittens, scarves and warm woolen hats for those who otherwise would not be able to keep warm this winter. We need these items in a variety of sizes, so we are asking that students donate items that are their own size. Items will be donated to children and families who are in great need of these items. Students can bring their donations of hats, scarves, or gloves to their homeroom teachers or drop them off in the elementary building. A drop off box will be located next to our beautiful new Christmas tree. So please help St. Mary's share the warmth of our giving hearts this holiday season!

St. Mary's Students Give During the Holidays

St. Mary's families have once again proven just how giving they are. This year we were able to supply more than thirty families with food boxes and a turkey at Thanksgiving. This would not have been possible without the kindness of all of our students and their families. Thank you to everyone who was so willing to give of themselves as we enter this holiday season!

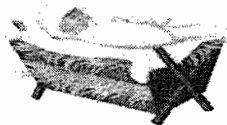


Student Service Council News

Hot Chocolate!

Everyone's favorite hot chocolate is back! Come in, keep warm and enjoy a 25 cent cup of hot chocolate served by the Student Service Council. Hot chocolate will be served Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7:30-8:00 in Mrs. Thorson's room.

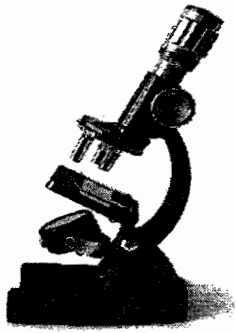
"But you, O' Bethlehem...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel whose origin is from old, from ancient days"



Micah

School News

Science Fair News



Science Fair Judges Needed

The middle school science fair will be Thursday, January 28th. We are looking for judges for this event. If you or somebody you know is interested please contact Mrs. Lanigan in the middle school office. Judges would need to be available from 9:00am to about 11am. The hours would qualify for the Families in Service Program. It is always wonderful when the students have an opportunity to talk about their science fair projects with the judges. They appreciate it and so do we!

Science Fair Boards

The middle school has some extra science fair boards available. They are \$4.00 each and they come in red, black, white, green, blue and yellow. If you are interested please contact Mrs. Johansen @ 338-1744 or Ms. Hatok @ 338-1745. First come first served!



Students To Participate in the Annual Geography Bee



St. Mary's will be hosting our annual Geography Bee on Thursday, January 7, 2010 in the school gym. Students from grades 4-8 will be competing for the chance to represent St. Mary's in the New Mexico State Geography Bee.

Every year, individual schools hold their own Bee in order to determine a school winner. Prior to the school bee, students must take part in a preliminary competition in order to narrow the field down to 10 students., the maximum we can have in the school bee. The preliminary competition will take place after school on December 8, 2009 in Mrs. Morgan's classroom. The preliminary competition is closed to observers. Following the preliminaries students will participate in the school bee. During the school competition, students are asked a number of geography based questions, such as: "Known for its production of Alpaca wool, Arequipa is a major commercial and tourist center in what country just south of Ecuador?" The winner of the school bee must then take a test to qualify for the state competition. The tests are submitted to the National Geographic Society and the top 100 students from each of the 50 states, as well Washington D.C., Department of Defense Schools, and the U.S. Territories are invited to compete at the state level. State winners go on to compete at the national finals in Washington D.C.

So come and cheer on St. Mary's bright young minds January 7th, as they compete to see whose geography knowledge will prevail this year!

St. Mary's Catholic School

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Phone: 505-242-6271

Thank you to all who contributed to this
months newsletter: Sister Marianella and
Mrs. Carol Johansen.

We're on the Web:

www.saintmaryscatholicsschool.com

Mid-School Holiday Dance



St. Mary's mid-school students will be attending their second social of the year on December 17. The social will be in the St. Mary's school gym from 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Tickets for the dance are \$2.00 and all proceeds will go to a local charity. Due to this fact, we can not provide snacks for the children with out your assistance. The 7th grade is in charge of the Christmas social but **if any parents would like to earn school service hours this is a great opportunity.** Parent chaperones are greatly needed. If you are able to chaperone please let your child's home-room teacher know. Any snacks can also be brought to the student's homeroom as well. Thank you for your support. As a reminder, all students need to be picked up by 5:00pm. Please pick your child up on time!

Thank you to all of the students who attended the Halloween social, we raised \$237.00 for Barrett House!
Thank You!



"St. Mary's World Series of Math Baseball"

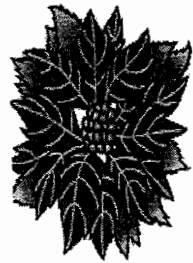
On Monday, January 25, 2010, St. Mary's math teachers will be hosting our annual "St. Mary's World Series of Math Baseball." Students from grades K-8 will be participating. Students should be practicing their math facts in preparation for the big event! Don't forget to practice favorite songs like "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." All are welcome to come cheer on our St. Mary's mathletes. The "game" will begin at 1:45pm.

St. Mary's Spelling Bee

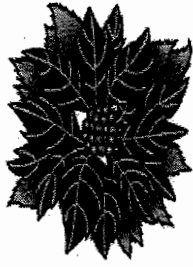
St. Mary's annual Spelling Bee will tentatively be held on Thursday, January 8, 2010. The bee will begin promptly at 1:00pm. Students in grades 4-8 will be testing their spelling skills as they compete for this years top spelling prize. So come and join us as we cheer on all of our excellent spellers!



*Merry Christmas!
May you and your family
have a very blessed and
joyous holiday season!*





December 2009



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 1:00 pm Dismissal	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 Christmas Play at Kiva Auditorium 7:00pm	12
13	14	15	16	17 Mid-School Social 3:30-5:00	18 11 am Early Dismissal	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 Merry Christmas!!! 	26
27 Christmas Vacation	28	29	30	31	1 	2 Happy New Year!!

***All Dates and Times Subject to Change