



# SAINT MARY

## STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL

Spring 2018

### Dear Friends of Saint Mary Star of the Sea School,

Greetings from Saint Mary Star of the Sea School! Jesus said, "As the Father loves me, so I love you" (John 15:9). This past year, the students learned the Father's love through the many blessings given to them at St. Mary's. And they in turn, have shared that love with others.

In this newsletter you will see many examples of God's blessings and many ways in which the students have shared that love with others. We recently received a special Certificate of Appreciation from Catholic Relief Services for our participation in the annual Lenten Rice Bowl collections for raising \$725. On their own initiative, our 5th grade students organized a lemonade and limeade sale for the Rice Bowl project. The President and CEO of Catholic Relief Services wrote:

*"I am encouraged and inspired by the beautiful way your students have reached far beyond the classroom, community and country to provide life's basic needs to people so desperate for food, shelter, medicine and clean water. I am very pleased to present you with a Certificate of Appreciation for your selfless and tireless Rice Bowl fundraising efforts of the fifth grade students of Saint Mary Star of the Sea School. You can be very proud of your efforts to raise money for the poor. Your contribution proves you have already learned to love and care for one another. You have already honored yourselves, your families and your school in a magnificent way."*

As you read the articles and view the pictures, know that you have helped make a difference in the lives of these young people as they in turn, learn to do that for others. From science to math, from social studies to art, the blessings from learning show God's love. And with the dedication of teachers like Mrs. Law and alumni like Francis McDonald, we see the fruits of God's love experienced through St. Mary's teachers and students. "As the Father loves me, so I love you".

Your loving support continues to sustain St. Mary's. Thank you for your faithful prayers and generous financial support. May God bless you abundantly!

**In Our Lady, Star of the Sea,  
Sister Mary John, O.P.  
Principal**



### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK: AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN, SERVE, LEAD AND SUCCEED!

Catholic Schools Week focuses on the important spiritual, academic, and societal contributions provided by a Catholic education. This year's theme was, "Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed." As Bishop George V. Murry, SJ, of Youngstown, Ohio, chairman of the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Catholic Education said, "Catholic schools provide an invaluable service to young people, their families, and our nation by helping to form women and men with the sharp intellects, broad perspectives and big hearts who bring their best to communities near and far."

At Saint Mary Star of the Sea School, the students are challenged every day to "learn, serve, lead, and succeed." This year our students demonstrated their leadership and commitment to serve their communities in various ways. Our 5th grade students organized a lemonade sale in which they raised \$725 to support the Annual Rice Bowl project during Lent. Our students' efforts extended throughout the school year with a pet drive, a sock drive to help the less fortunate in Hampton, a food drive to help the Little Sisters of the Poor feed the elderly for Thanksgiving, an out-of-uniform day to help victims of Hurricane Maria, and many more activities. During Catholic Schools Week, our students were also leaders in the faith family discussions that took place with our younger students, the craft projects that reminded our young of the love Jesus has for us, and the music to praise our Lord. Students also led a 'hats-off day' to thank their parents for the effort they make to send them to Saint Mary's. What a great reminder to our students of how fortunate they are to have their parents and Saint Mary Star of the Sea School to support them!

## First Grade Students Hatch Chickens to Learn about Life Cycle

First grade students incubated and hatched chickens in class as they learned about the life cycle. Mrs. Drew set up an incubator in class and the students candled the eggs to watch the babies throughout the growth process. This was a first-hand view of life, one that the students will certainly never forget!



## SOCIAL STUDIES FAIR DRAWS FAMOUS HISTORIC CHARACTERS



The annual Social Studies Fair brought some famous historical characters to Saint Mary's. Students in 5th grade chose from topics about the American Revolution, while 6th grade students chose topics starting with the Civil War up to the early 1900's. The students researched their topic, wrote an essay, created a large display board, a display model, and dressed up in a costume for their oral presentation to a panel of judges. The award for the most creative project went to Hollie Morris (6th grade) who brought a pony to school to feature the Pony Express, a mail service delivering messages, newspapers, and mail, beginning in 1859. Other projects included the Wright Brothers, the Battle of Gettysburg, Florence Kelley, the Clash of Ironclads, King George III, and the Battles of Lexington and Concord, just to name a few!

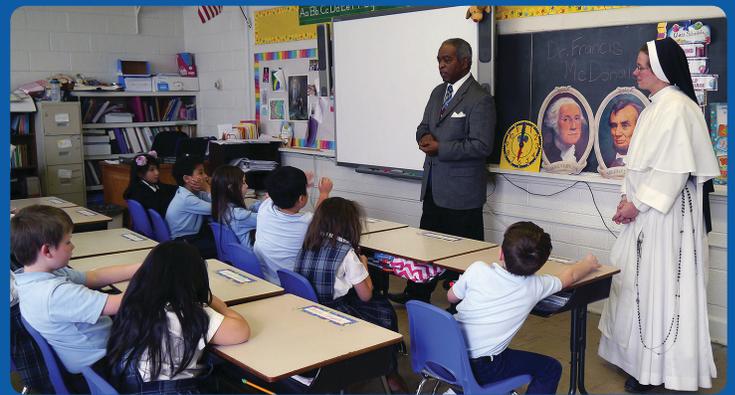


### FIRST VOCABULARY PARADE DRAWS SOME CREATIVE COSTUMES!

Pre-kindergarten through 4th grade classes celebrated their love for words and reading by taking part in Saint Mary's first Vocabulary Parade! The students came dressed in costumes to represent the power of words. The Vocabulary Parade also provided a fun and academic focus for dressing up in creative homemade costumes!

### Alum Recounts Life in the Time of Segregation

In honor of Black History Month, Saint Mary's welcomed guest speaker and alum, Dr. Francis McDonald, who spoke to our 2nd grade students about his experiences growing up during the time of segregation. In 2nd grade, students had been discussing racial equality during their Social Studies lessons, so they were captivated by Dr. McDonald's vivid stories about those days. At Saint Mary's, we learn that every child is created in the image of God, and thus all must be treated equally!



### ICE CREAM PARTY ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO MEMORIZE THEIR MULTIPLICATION FACTS

To master memorizing their multiplication facts, 3rd grade students in Ms. Tara Gilliam's class worked hard from January until May to earn toppings for their Multiplication Ice Cream Party. Each week, students took a timed quiz for multiplication and division. For each "A" earned on one of the quizzes, the students colored in a box on a chart. Every two boxes, students earned a topping for their ice cream. Toppings ranged from whipped cream, gummy worms, and caramel syrup to mini Oreos, brownie bits, and a cherry. The students enjoyed earning their toppings and memorized their facts in a delicious end of the school year party!



### In Fine Arts, Students End the School Year with a Splatter Painting Party

Saint Mary's 5th grade students celebrated the end of the school year in Fine Arts with a Splatter Painting Party. Fine Arts teacher, Mrs. Elise McGorrey introduced our students to artist Jackson Pollock who was famous for his drip and splatter paintings. Each student then chose their own color combination to create their own piece of art. What a great way to finish the year with some creative and messy fun!





**IT IS ALL ABOUT SCIENCE WITH MRS. SOFIANEK**

Mrs. Victoria Sofianek, Saint Mary Star of the Sea Science teacher kept our 8th grade students busy while they worked on a variety of hands-on projects to support their units of study. The students researched earthquake-resistant structure design and then built and tested structures able to resist a simulated earthquake with a seismographic app that measures the "magnitude" of the earthquake. This activity supported a unit of study on plate tectonics. At Saint Mary's we provide students with lessons to apply science to engineering.

**IT WAS AN EVENING OF POETRY, POISE & PRAYER**

The 8th grade students and their parents met at Saint Mary Star of the Sea Church for a celebration of the Mass followed by dinner and poetry recitation. This cross-curricular event is facilitated by our teachers to enrich the learning experiences of the students. This year, Sister Anne Elise focused on proper table setting, table etiquette, and appropriate conversation. With Mrs. Heather Potchatek, the students were immersed in poetry reading and memorization. Each student chose a poem which they recited for the parents. At Saint Mary's, we feed the mind and the spirit of our students!



**BUTTER MAKING GETS STUDENTS TO COMPARE COSTS IN MATH CLASS**

Students in the 6th grade Math class shook cream to the tunes of some fun music to make 'school-made' butter. Mr. Williams planned this lesson so that students could compare the cost of the school-made butter vs. store-bought butter... and do it in a fun way! First, students looked up the cost of butter and determined the cost per ounce. Then, they looked at the cost of the heavy cream needed to make butter. The butter was then weighed and they obtained the cost for an ounce of school-made butter. It turned out that the store-bought butter was more cost effective... but did it taste better?





## CIVICS TO BECOME PART OF MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

This August, Saint Mary's 8th grade students will take Civics as part of the middle school curriculum. The course will prepare our students to become knowledgeable and proactive members of a democratic society by teaching them how to be a responsible citizen and to understand how their government works. This spring, all of Saint Mary's students took part in a Civics lesson as they participated in a Flag Retirement Ceremony led by the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and the SMSS Girl Scouts. Students learned the steps to dispose a damaged flag honorably; first cutting the stripes and then burning the individual pieces. Thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Jackson (parents of Kenneth and Thomas) for leading the ceremony!

## Saint Mary's Students Live the Gospel through Community Service

We live the Christian Gospel, the Good News! Jesus Christ gave us the two great commandments of loving God and loving our neighbors. He also told us that at the end of our lives we will be judged on how well we lived out those commandments of love. Saint Mary's students had the opportunity to tangibly live these commandments during this year by doing service and by centering their service hours on the works of mercy. Students in 8th grade were required to complete six hours per semester, 7th grade, five hours per semester and 6th grade, four hours per semester. With the support of the school and their families, we are proud to report that our 34 middle school students completed more than 500 service hours this year. The community service projects in which the students were involved included servicing the church, the community, or working directly with the poor.



### At the end of this year, the following students were recognized with Top Outstanding Service Awards:

**8th Grade:** Bryant Green, over 35 hours, which included serving and reading at Mass and helping out with Church activities.

**7th Grade:** Taylor Mowery who completed over 40 hours of service. This included many hours helping out at Bible School and serving at Mass.

**6th Grade:** Ayana Johnson who completed over 70 hours of service, mostly by raising awareness with different organizations of the Sickle Cell disease. She also helped with school and church events.

### The following students were recognized with the Outstanding Service Awards:

**8th Grade:** Parker Cruz

**7th Grade:** Hunter Roberts, Rose Fallon, Hallye Potchatek, and Anthony Tran

**6th Grade:** Emery D'Urso, Dallas Grant, Brayden Green

*With God's mercy, all children will continue serving the less fortunate throughout their lives as Faithful Christians.*

## Michelle Law Retires After 22 Years of Service to Saint Mary's



For 22 years, Michelle Law has given her time and talent to Saint Mary's by giving hundreds of students a great start to their academic lives.

daily example of prayer for her students as she always visited Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in the school chapel with her students and fostered their love and respect for parents, family, priests, Sisters, and one another.

Besides her teaching responsibilities, Mrs. Law has also taken many leadership roles at school, coordinating the May Crowning Ceremony and participating in several important school improvement committees. She has also been very supportive of new educational programs and participated in professional development opportunities. For other teachers, she has also been an invaluable resource as she was always 'there' to help them in the varying and unpredictable needs of their students and the changes in the daily schedules. As Saint Mary's Mentor Coordinator, Mrs. Law has also trained and mentored new Catholic school teachers for many years.

Mrs. Law wrote that, with Jesus Christ as her model teacher and the ultimate

example, her instruction in every subject has encompassed the Catholic values. "I have strived to treat each student as an individual with God-given talents that require careful nurturing and attention. I have taught with the belief that all students can learn and that as a Catholic educator, it is my calling to teach them to believe in themselves and the abilities God has bestowed upon them." With this philosophy in mind, it is not hard to understand why her former students who still attend Saint Mary's pass by her classroom each morning to greet her as well as the alumni who make a point to see her when they return to visit the school.

"My prayer each morning as I enter the classroom has been the same throughout my teaching career... that the Holy Spirit will allow me to be for each of my students what they need me to be for them each day."

We thank Mrs. Law for her dedication and commitment to her students and to Saint Mary Star of the Sea School!

At the end of this year Mrs. Law has decided to retire to spend more time with her family, especially her newly born grandchild.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Law has demonstrated exceptional commitment to Saint Mary's and the mission of our school by preparing her "little muffins" both academically and in their faith. Undoubtedly, it has been very gratifying for our parents to hear those little muffins read fluently at the end of the year ceremony or come back home with their first pieces of written work. Mrs. Law's commitment to her students goes beyond the classroom. She has been a

## MARINE SCIENCE CLUB STUDENTS COLLECT DATA TO HELP CITY OF HAMPTON



Marine Science Club students met with Christine Ausink from the Hampton Clean City Commission who talked to them about the City of Hampton Assessment to Reduce Trash (CHART) program.

The program analyzes trash collected under the supervision of engineers working for the City of Hampton. With the help of parent volunteers, and under the direction of Ms. Ausink, the students learned how to safely collect data (trash on the shoreline). The data collected is used by the City of Hampton to develop programs to protect the shoreline in Hampton Roads and reduce trash. In the fall, the club will examine the results, meet with Ms. Ausink, and discover how the data was used by the City of Hampton!

## Science Curriculum Writer Nancy Larson Visits Saint Mary's



Science curriculum writer, Nancy Larson visited Saint Mary's to talk to our students and teachers about her program, what they were

learning in science, and what they liked best about Nancy Larson Science. The students were really excited to meet Nancy Larson in person since they knew she created the hands-on science lessons and the interactive science booklets. Saint Mary's has been using the Nancy Larson Science program since 2014 for kindergarten through 4th grade. In 2016, the program was also adopted for 5th grade. The Nancy Larson Science is in line with the school's mission to provide children with a challenging STEM curriculum.

### DONATE THROUGH THE TAX CREDIT PROGRAM AND DEDUCT 65%!

This past academic year (2017-18), 78 students, or 49% of the student population at Saint Mary's, received over \$211,000 in scholarships from the Education Improvement Scholarship Tax Credit Program, Parish sharing, and Saint Mary's funds. The financial assistance that our families received reduced the tuition costs so that families were able to continue to send their children to our school where they are provided with a challenging, faith-based program in a safe and nurturing environment. We are extremely thankful for your support of the EISTC Tax Credit Program which with your support now stands at: \$154,404 for the 2018-19 school year. Donors have until December to participate in this year's program. Start planning your giving through the EISTC Tax Credit Program and claim your 65% tax credit in your April 2019 taxes. Your forms and approval letters must be submitted to the school before December 15, 2018.

- DONOR** → Complete the Pre-Authorization Request form & the Letter of Intent ([www.saintmarystarofthesea.com](http://www.saintmarystarofthesea.com) under "Support.") Mail to the McMahon Parater Scholarship Foundation (MPSF), (Diocese of Richmond, 7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, VA 23294.)
- MPSF** → Files the Pre-Authorization Request with the Virginia Dept. of Education (DOE).
- DOE** → Receives tax credits & mails an approval letter to the donor.
- DONOR** → Upon receipt of the approval letter, sign the letter & send to the MPSF with the donation within 180 days.
- MPSF** → Sends signed Approval letter & Proof of donation to the DOE & sends a donor acknowledgement letter.
- DOE** → Sends the Tax Credit certificate to donor to claim in their taxes.

### Auction Nets 37,000 for Saint Mary's Needs!



Thank you to all who supported our school Mardi Gras Auction & Casino Night, which took place last March. We once again had a successful event that raised \$37,000. The success of the auction is the result of the hard work and collaboration between parents, teachers, and students who put together the class baskets, the class projects, and help secure donations. We also express our gratitude to the Knights of Columbus Council 511 for providing the Casino Games and to Mr. Kyle Hause who served as our auctioneer in the

live auction. Appealing to the generosity of our attendants, Mr. Hause also raised \$9,000 for a floating dock that will complete our waterfront classroom project.

A special thank you to our event sponsors: Pomoco Auto Group, Gately Communication, Jennifer Roberts from Towne Bank Mortgage, and Gladys Spady of Custom Shutter Interiors.

We also want to thank those who purchased 50/50 raffle tickets. Proceeds from the raffle ticket sales will help pay for a new intercom and telephone system.

### ALL STAR RAFFLE IS COMING BACK IN SEPTEMBER

The All Star Raffle, a fundraiser that raised \$17,000 for Saint Mary's last year, will return in September. Tickets will be sold for \$10 each from September 1, 2018 through October 31, 2018. The raffle will take place every day in the month of November, including weekends and holidays. We will be giving away \$100 every day to a lucky winner. On the last day of the month, Friday, November 30th, we will draw a \$1,000 winner! If you are interested in purchasing tickets or helping us sell booklets of 10 tickets, contact Maritza Davila at [m.davila.smss@gmail.com](mailto:m.davila.smss@gmail.com) or visit our website. A Request for Ticket form will be posted in August.





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## Mission Statement

Saint Mary Star of the Sea School provides a Christ-centered Catholic education to PK3 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students of all faiths under the leadership of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. The spiritual, intellectual and social development of all students is provided in a safe and disciplined environment. With a solid foundation in academic and moral excellence, the students are prepared for success in high school and beyond.

- Find us on  : [facebook.com/SaintMaryStaroftheSeaSchool](https://facebook.com/SaintMaryStaroftheSeaSchool)
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- Look for us on  : [Saint Mary Star of the Sea Catholic School](https://www.youtube.com/SaintMaryStaroftheSeaCatholicSchool)
- **Saint Mary Alumni!** We want to hear from you. Please go to our website [saintmarystarofthesea.com](http://saintmarystarofthesea.com). Click on the Alumni tab and fill out two surveys: “Tell us about yourself.” and “How did we do?”
- To receive our newsletter regularly please email us at [development@saintmarystarofthesea.com](mailto:development@saintmarystarofthesea.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday, October 6, 2018  
The Woodlands Golf Course

#### LOW COUNTRY BOIL

Saturday, October 13, 2018  
Saint Mary’s Convent Lawn

#### ANNUAL AUCTION & CASINO NIGHT

Saturday March 2, 2019  
School Gym