



# SAINT MARY

## STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL

Summer/Fall 2021

### *Thank you, Sister Mary John!*



Looking back over my eight years as principal, I can proudly attest to the incredibly special place that is Saint Mary Star of the Sea! The sense of peace and family atmosphere that is palpable here is noticed by visitors, alumni, current families, faculty and staff. The Lord's presence and the protection of the Blessed Mother is the reason and the faculty, staff

and students have embraced this reality and allowed it to shine through their words and actions. I am deeply grateful for the time God has given me to serve as principal these years. I will hold many special memories in my heart.

Thank you, beloved family and friends, for your wonderful support to me and to the mission of this school. It is very evident that you value the impact that the school has on the lives of children and their families. It has been a blessing to be a part of this wonderful school community. I leave the school in the creative hands of Sister Mary Cecilia as she begins the administration of the school for the 2021-2022 school year. I know you will welcome her and enjoy her leadership in the coming years.

Please be assured of my prayers for the school and all who support the work of the faculty, staff, and students. May God be with you all in a special way as together we follow the shining example of Saint Mary, Star of the Sea, as she continues to guide us towards her Son Jesus Christ!

With gratitude,

**Sister Mary John Slonkosky, O.P.**  
**Principal (2013-2021)**

### *St. Mary Star of the Sea School Community,*

What a privilege and joy to be assigned to serve here! I'm so grateful for those who have served here previously, as well as the support and love of all of you for this school. With only a few weeks of school behind us, the truth, goodness and beauty that is present here each day is amazing. As we move closer to celebrating 100 years of St. Mary's, I look forward to meeting you and experiencing all the good that God has planned for us.

**Sister Mary Cecilia, O.P.**  
**Principal**

### **Eight Years of Life-Giving Improvements!**

- Gym floor was refurbished with the logo painted on the floor and the Sentinel Mascot painted on the wall. A logo was also painted outside the gym.
- Marine Science Waterfront Classroom and floating dock
- \$500 Marine Science Scholarship for High School Graduating Alumni
- Pathway to the Pier - memorial brick path from the Mary grotto to the waterfront pier
- Marine Science Club
- New windows replaced the windows of the 1923 convent and the 1955 primary building
- Tax credit scholarship program which provides tuition assistance to over 30% of students
- Technology infrastructure upgrades in all of the school buildings
- Student Chromebooks added.
- Partnership with the Youth Sailing program on Ft. Monroe
- Pre-Kindergarten Montessori and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd support programs for 3 and 4 year olds
- Acquisition of the waterfront parking lot property for future development
- 'Purple Star' recognition for being a Military family friendly school



Former SMSS principals, Sr. Marie Blanchette and Sr. Mary John with new principal, Sr. Mary Cecilia.

## 3RD GRADE STUDENTS BUILD OWN MOUNT RUSHMORE!



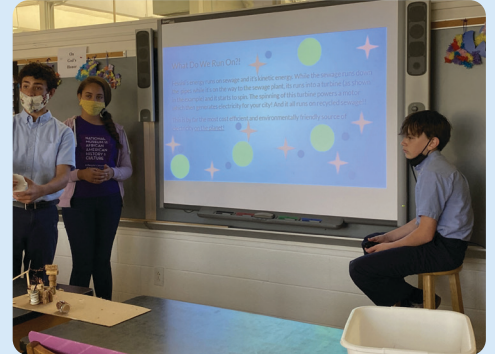
Our 3rd grade students became 'engineers' as they participated in a STEM activity to build their own Mount Rushmore using straws, tape, scissors, and the four cut-outs of former U.S. presidents. Working in groups, the students planned and discussed their designs before they got to work. Awards were given to the tallest and the widest Mount Rushmore.

## Pre-K 4 had a BLAST learning about outer space!

PreK (4) students made stomp rockets using paper towel tubes and launched their rockets by jumping on a homemade rocket launcher created by Mrs. VanHorn. The students also learned how special our planet Earth is, as it is God's creation!



## 8th Grade Student "Scientists" Become CEOs & Researchers to Create and Sell their Own Energy Companies



Science teacher, Mrs. Vicki Sofianek challenged our 8th grade students to research the advantages and disadvantages of renewable and non-renewable resources. The students then created their own energy companies and became CEOs as they convinced potential shareholders Sister Mary John and Deacon Reeves to buy their companies.

## Science Expo Engages 7th and 8th Grade Students in Hands-on Scientific Research

For our Science Expo, students identified a scientific problem of their own interest, performed research, and then designed and carried out experiments to corroborate or dismiss their hypothesis. Their projects ranged from mathematical models of economics and geometric constants to building models and prototypes to solve scientific problems, ranging from clean energy, electromagnetic pulses, and drone technologies to cures for cancer from natural substances and organisms in the environment. Congratulations to our young scientists!



## IN MARINE SCIENCE STUDENTS DISSECT AN AMPHIBIAN

Our students took a big dive into marine science to learn about amphibians and how they adapt to their aquatic environment by dissecting a frog. Our 8th grade student leaders who had been trained by Mrs. Sofianek led the activities for each of their assigned groups.





## 7TH GRADE STUDENTS LED LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS



In commemoration of Holy Week, our students gathered in the gym to take part in the Living Stations of the Cross. Our 7th grade students illustrated each of the 14 stations of the most significant moments of Jesus Christ's last day.

## Lego Bible Story Competition Fosters Creativity & Faith!

Our first Lego Bible Passage competition gave our families an opportunity to strengthen their love for Jesus by building a scene depicting a bible passage with Legos. We received 35 entries from elementary and middle school students. Bishop Knestout, who visited Saint Mary's, helped us select a first place winner.



## Living Rosary Brings Prayer to Life!

We brought the rosary to life by hosting our first Living Rosary, a way of expressing our devotion through individual



persons representing the beads of the rosary. After each prayer, a person takes the position of the rosary with a rose or a flower as a sign of their life and their prayer offered to Jesus through Mary. Fr. Raner prayed the Living Rosary with our students and the school community!

## Community Service: One of the Four Pillars at Saint Mary's!

Saint Mary's 8th grade students helped feed the homeless by preparing more than 150 lunch bags with a sandwich, chips, dessert, and a drink. The lunch bags were distributed to those in need during these difficult times through Link of Hampton Roads.



## WELCOME, FATHER TOM LAWRENCE!

We are excited to introduce Father Tom Lawrence who has been assigned to be our School Chaplain. Father Lawrence was ordained for the Diocese of Richmond and as a priest of Jesus Christ on June 5, 2021 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond.

"I am overjoyed to be assigned to St. Mary Star of the Sea School as a chaplain. I enjoyed my brief time visiting the summer program during my stay in 2016. I look forward to taking an active part in the life of the school and its families. It is such joy to be in the service of the Lord. I want all of our students to know that a life aligned to the Lord has been the best decision I've made, bringing the most peace and purpose out of anything I've done. I'm so very glad that such a road has brought me here to serve you in this community."



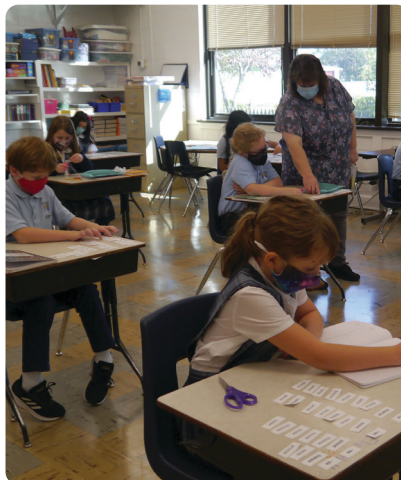
**Pre-K STUDENTS CAST BALLOTS FOR FAVORITE FOOD & PET**

As millions of Americans voted for the next U.S. president our Pre-K (4) class learned about the voting process too. They filled out their ballots and

cast their votes for their favorite food and pet. The votes were counted quickly and the results showed that our pre-kindergartners love ice-cream and dogs. Many thanks to Mrs. VanHorn for organizing this mock election to teach her students about the importance of voting!

**WE THANK OUR VETERANS FOR THEIR SERVICE & SACRIFICES**

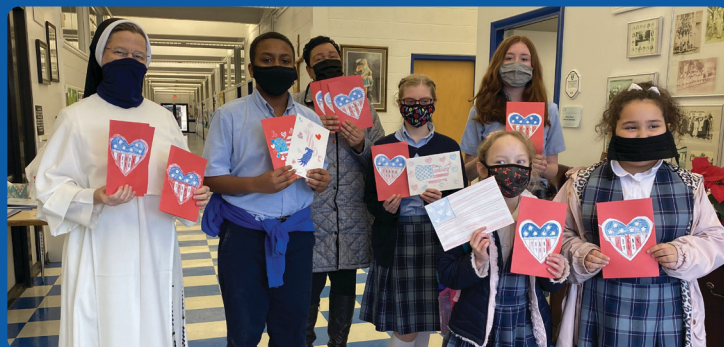
Saint Mary's students took the time to thank some of our own veterans who serve as teachers and role models at our school. While Mr. Williams shared his military story with our students, our Pre-K students made cards to send to our Veteran parents, and Mr. Territo showed his helicopter to our students. We recognize the sacrifices that our military families make for our country's freedoms!

**Word Sorting Helps 4th Grade Students Memorize Spelling Words of the Week**

Students in Mrs. Covert's 4th grade class learned their spelling words using sorting activities; separating the words to fit specific categories. These engaging and hands-on activities teach students phonics skills and tap into the power of word families, making it easier for them to memorize their spelling.

**SAINT MARY'S STUDENTS CREATE VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS FOR OUR MILITARY MEMBERS**

Members of our military received best wishes for St. Valentine's Day with the cards created by our students. Ms. Tammy Edwards, School Liaison Officer for Langley Air Force Base delivered the cards to our military members. What a great way to show we love our service men and women in our military forces!

**The Sentinel Sound Band Presents First Concert!**

With athletics being canceled due to Covid-19, Saint Mary's launched the Sentinel Sound Band to help students learn to read music and to play a musical instrument of their choice ranging from guitar to drums, to flute, to violin. In May, under the direction of Mr. Tallent, our students presented their first concert which was live-streamed to our parents. We are so proud of our students and their musical efforts!







## SAINT MARY'S CELEBRATES RICHNESS OF FAMILIES CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Throughout the school year, Saint Mary Star of the Sea School recognizes and celebrates the uniqueness of our families with countless activities to highlight the traditions and values of our culturally diverse student population. Our students were thrilled to celebrate some of their classmates' heritage!

*Here are some of the activities that were planned this year to celebrate our school's diversity:*

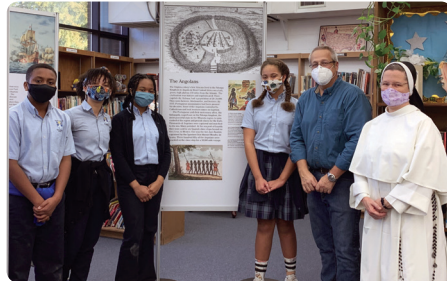
- During Hispanic Heritage Month, our elementary students learned about Peru through Angela Dominguez's book, *Maria had a Little Llama*. Students learned the country's location, the language spoken, its traditional dances, and even took home their own Maria and her llama.



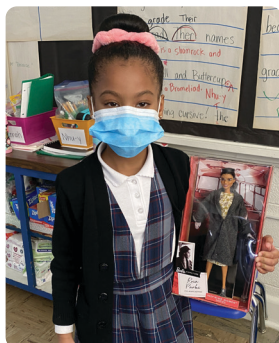
- Kindergarten students celebrated Chinese Lunar New Year by watching a video where they learned how this holiday is celebrated in China, tasted Chinese food from Panda Express, and made their own Chinese red lantern as they learned that the color red in the Chinese culture brings happiness, wealth, and prosperity by warding off bad luck.



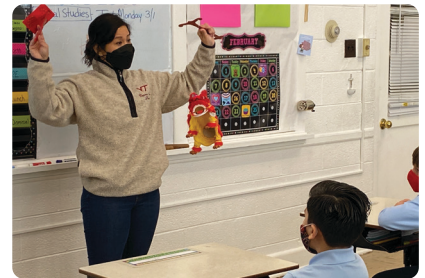
- Black History Month brought our 8th grade students the opportunity to lead the school over the morning announcements with a historical fact about an African American saint, scientist, astronaut, and many other significant roles which have been part of the history of America. Also, Mr. Allen R. Hoilman, Curator at the Hampton History Museum and creator of the 1619 Exhibit brought his exhibit to the school and shared his research of US African-American history.



- In 2nd grade, our students learned some incredible stories of sacrifice and love of black Catholics who are on their way to sainthood. Also, to highlight two African-American women who have inspired so many girls to achieve their dreams, our student, McKenzie Hudson, (pictured here), shared the life-stories of Rosa Parks and Katherine Johnson with her classmates.



- Our 3rd grade students finished a unit of study on ancient China with a special presentation of the ancient Chinese Lion and Dragon dances by our own Mrs. Barbara Flores.



- In April, to celebrate Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage month, Mrs. Flores visited our Pre-K (4) class to read a book called *Cora Cooks Pancit* which is a Filipino noodle dish. She showed the children items from the Philippines including a fan, money, a toy jeepney, and a small statue of Santa Nino. Thanks to Mrs. Flores, the children even got to taste pancit.







### EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT HONORS FORMER STUDENT, CONNOR MCCALL

We are so thankful for Quinconnor Baron and St. Bede Troop 1932 for carrying out their Eagle Scout project at Saint Mary's. The boys in the troop added rocks to the top of the living shoreline and planted special grass to create a shoreline barrier. They also spread mulch donated by Signature Mulch in Williamsburg. St. Bede

Troop 1932 selected this project to honor Scout Quinconnor Baron's uncle, Connor McCall who attended our school from Kindergarten through 6th grade and was a member of Saint Mary's Pack9. Sadly, Connor passed away in 1991 when he was in 6th grade. Thank you to Jeff Jorgensen for supervising this project and assisting Troop 1932 to complete this project. Our living shoreline looks awesome!

### STEM Scholarship Awarded to Xavier Harris, Class of 2017



We congratulate Xavier Harris, Class of 2017, who was the recipient of the STEM Scholarship. This fall, Xavier will be attending Coastal Carolina University to pursue a degree in Marine Science.

The STEM Scholarship was established by the Class of 2013. Since then, each graduating class has contributed annually to award a \$500 scholarship to a Saint Mary's graduate pursuing a degree in a STEM-related field.

### SUPPORT OUR PATHWAY TO THE PIER

You can help support SMSS and honor your loved ones with an etched paver placed on our new Pathway to the Pier.

Our new Pathway to the Pier runs from the lower building to our Waterfront classroom. The Pathway was spearheaded by memorial gifts from both the Minetti and Kearney families, both strong supporters of SMSS and tireless civic leaders to the Hampton community at large.

A paver on the Pathway to the Pier may contain up to three lines, with fifteen characters per line. Bricks are \$100 each. Your enduring gift will help us to continue to meet our fund-raising goals and your support will be seen by students, families, staff, and guests for years to come. Pavers are tax-deductible.



## Low Country Boil is Back!

*Saint Mary's*  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual

LOW COUNTRY  
BOIL & BBQ

*Please Join Us!*

Proceeds to benefit the scholarship fund at Saint Mary Star of the Sea School!

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 23

APPETIZERS & BEVERAGES  
ON THE PIER AT  
SIX O'CLOCK

DINNER UNDER  
THE TENT AT  
SEVEN O'CLOCK



\$70 PER PERSON

*Register online by October 9, 2021 at*

[OURFUNDRAISER.EVENTS/SMSSLOWCOUNTRYBOIL](http://OURFUNDRAISER.EVENTS/SMSSLOWCOUNTRYBOIL)

*Adults Only. Casual Dress.*

 SAINT MARY'S  
STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL  
(757) 723-6358  
DEVELOPMENT@  
SAINTMARYSTAROFTHESSEA.COM

*On the Menu:*

BOIL: MUSSELS, SHRIMP, CLAMS,  
SAUSAGE, CORN, POTATOES  
BBQ: PULLED PORK, BEANS,  
COLESLAW, CORNBREAD  
WINE & BEER

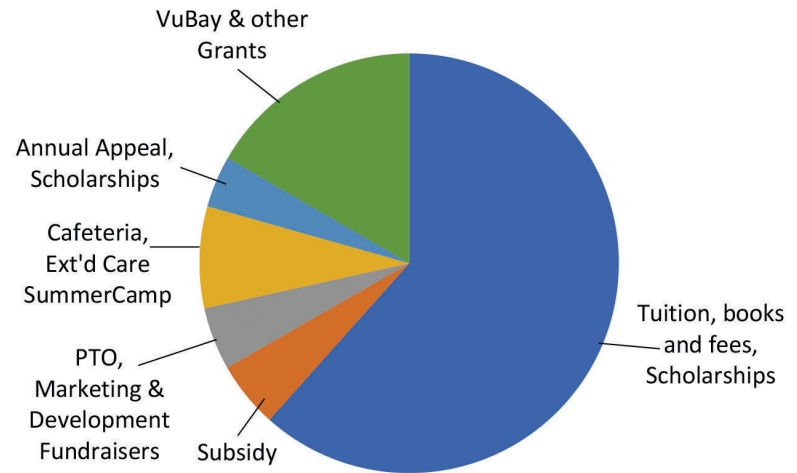
*Catered by  
Harpoon  
Larrys!*

[ourfundraiser.events/smsslowcountryboil](http://ourfundraiser.events/smsslowcountryboil)



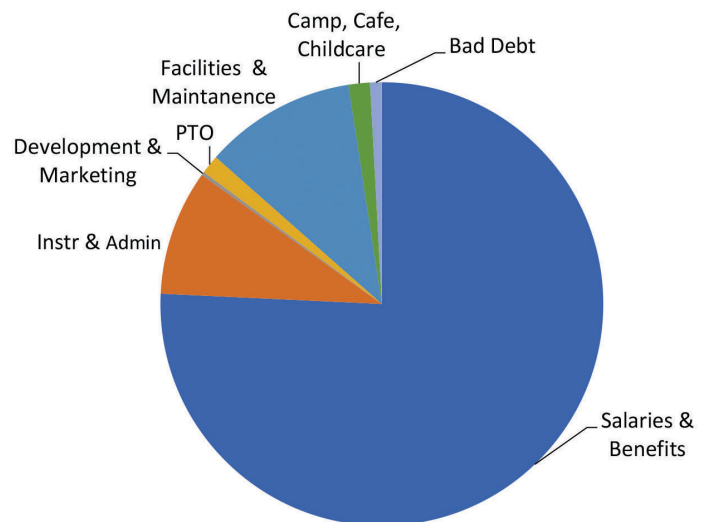
### INCOME

1 Tuition, Books and Fees, Scholarships	943,244
2 Subsidy	78,231
3 PTO, Marketing & Development Fundraisers	73,948
4 Cafeteria, Extended care, Summer Camp	119,943
5 Annual Appeal, Designated Scholarships	60,864
6 VuBay and other Grants	254,813
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,531,043</b>



### EXPENSES

1 Salaries & Benefits	1,065,410
2 Instructional & Administrative	128,744
3 Development and Marketing	3,408
4 PTO, Fundraisers	19,389
5 Facilities and Maintenance	155,755
6 Cafeteria, Extended care, Summer Camp	22,016
7 Bad Debt	12,011
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,406,733</b>



## Saint Mary Star of the Sea School Advisory Board 2020-2021

**Mr. Mike Foley**  
Chair & Development Chair

**Mr. Dusty Rhodes**  
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**Mrs. Jocelyn "Josh" Mueggenborg**  
Secretary

**Sister Mary John Slonkosky**  
Principal

**Father Raner Lucila**  
Chaplain

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**Mr. Jeff Jorgensen**  
Facilities Co-Chair

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Marketing Chair

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**LIVE LINK:** Use the following Live Link to **Donate** or **Make your Reservation** for the Low Country Boil  
<https://ourfundraiser.events/smsslowcountryboil>  
or go to [www.saintmarystarofthesea.com](http://www.saintmarystarofthesea.com).  
757-723-6358








You can read more online at  
[mcmahonparater.org/EISTC](http://mcmahonparater.org/EISTC)

## EISTC Tax Credit Program – We rely on your help!

Have you considered donating through the McMahon Parater Scholarship Foundation EISTC Tax Credits program? This foundation provides scholarships to schools within the Diocese of Richmond and you can designate the school of your choosing. Donations made through this program receive a Virginia tax credit equal to 65% of your contribution. In addition to the state tax credit, you may also receive a deduction for a charitable contribution.

The EISTC Tax Credit Program is our biggest source of funds for our families and students most in need. Over 30% of our student population receives tuition assistance through this program. If considering a donation to SMSS, please consider this worthy program.

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-  Saint Mary Star of the Sea Catholic School
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- **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 the **Alumni Information Section**.
- To receive our newsletter regularly please email us at [development@saintmarystarofthesea.com](mailto:development@saintmarystarofthesea.com)



## STAY IN TOUCH

If you'd like to keep up-to-date on development updates, special events, and school updates please sign up for the development

email list. We don't share your email with anyone else and try to keep the emails to a minimum while still letting you know if something important is going on at SMSS. Won't you join us? Send me an email at [development@saintmarystarofthesea.com](mailto:development@saintmarystarofthesea.com) with your interest and I'd be happy to add you to these email updates.