



# SAINT MARY

## STAR OF THE SEA SCHOOL

Spring 2019

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

Greetings from Saint Mary Star of the Sea School! Our prayer motto for this past school year was "Jesus, I believe in your love of me". With the knowledge and experience of Jesus' love, students learn and thrive in an educational setting that promotes and provides the opportunities for this to occur. At Saint Mary's, this has been possible through the sacrifice of time, treasure and talent of so many faithful faculty, staff, parents, volunteers and donors like you.

This year Saint Mary Star of the Sea School educated 167 students under the loving and educational care of 30 faculty and staff members. In the background, the school was wisely counseled by 13 School Advisory Board members. Extended spiritual, academic, resource and financial support was provided by the pastors of our local Churches, Hampton Public Schools Title I services, Hampton University Speech Therapy services, Hampton Public School Speech services, over 25 donors who gave \$140,000 in tax credit scholarships and the 78 donors who contributed over \$32,000 to the Annual Appeal Fund. Daily and weekly in-school assistance came from the countless time and efforts of volunteers like Mike Foley, Deborah Viviani, and Jocelyn and Tom Mueggenborg, who have supported many of our students in Math and Language Arts. In addition, our parents provided hours of support with the Parent Teacher Organization events, the fundraising mailings, class parties, planning the Low Country Boil, the Auction, the Golf tournament and other school events, club events, and field trips. Through all of these efforts, the students experience the love of Jesus and know He is taking care of them through the education received at Saint Mary's.

As you read the articles in this newsletter and view the pictures, know that you too are a hidden channel of the love of Jesus for these young people. Your loving support continues to sustain Saint Mary's. Thank you for your faithful prayers and continued financial support. Every donation assists us in providing for the needs of the school. We are currently replacing the lighting in the classrooms as well as renovating the girls' bathrooms in the 1955 elementary buildings. Your contribution to these summer projects would be most appreciated.

May God bless you abundantly!

In Our Lady, Star of the Sea,

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

### FORMING LEADERS ONE GRADE AT A TIME!

Recognizing the significant responsibility that Saint Mary's has in developing future leaders with ethical, collaborative, supportive and a strong sense of community service, our middle school students are provided with a myriad of formal and informal opportunities to take leadership roles throughout the school year.



The activities begin early in the school year when the 8th grade students participate in a Leadership Mass commissioning them as role models for the younger students. Throughout the school year, they work with younger students as prayer partners, assist teachers with special classroom activities, read in special celebrations, serve at Mass, are greeters at special events, and spearhead community service projects such as the food drive for Little Sisters of the Poor. Younger middle school students, however, also have opportunities to enhance their leadership skills. This year, thanks to a new initiative of Science teacher Mrs. Victoria Sofianek, middle school students in the Marine Science Club met a day in advance of the official club meeting day to train for peer leadership. The following day, each middle school student led the club activity with the younger club members; in one opportunity dissecting a perch! The Forensics Club allowed our middle school students to prepare for a public speaking competition and travel to the competition site with their mentors, 8th grade teacher, Ms. Margaret Zelinka and former parent, Mrs. Jackie Yau. Sister Mary Augustine coordinated an opportunity for 5th grade students to hand out free breakfasts to those in need at Saint Joseph Church. In 6th grade, Leila Ricks represented Saint Mary's at the radio talk show, "Breakfast with Bacon" where she did an outstanding job sharing with all listeners her experience at Saint Mary's.

At Saint Mary's, we believe that developing the leadership potential of our students is vital. Our students are tomorrow's leaders in their own families, at their workplaces and in the communities where they live. Together, we can form the best leaders!

### 3,2,1... Blast Off to Space!

There is just something about Outer Space that gets children excited about learning. In Pre-K, Mrs. Seely and Mrs. Van Horn planned a full week of space activities. The children were excited to see a glow in the dark diorama and learned a fact about each planet. During the week they also learned about the important job of an astronaut and how much training and hard work it takes to become one! The children had fun building rockets using shape recognition. Will we see these children traveling to Mars?



### RAISING BUTTERFLIES IS A GREAT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE



The educational experience of raising butterflies is something children will never forget. In 2nd grade, students in Sister Marie de Lourde's class learned about the life cycle of the butterfly as they watched the day to day transformation of the small caterpillar state all the way through the metamorphosis to a butterfly. Each morning, students arrived to class eager to see how far along their butterfly was in its stages of development. They observed how the caterpillar ate and moved, and how it changed features and even color as it grew. Students watched carefully, and when the time was right, released the adult butterflies on our convent lawn. Our 8th grade student leaders were there to support the activity!

### STUDENTS CELEBRATE READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY WITH GREEN EGGS & HAM!

In March, our Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st grade students celebrated *Read Across America Day* with a full week of Dr. Seuss' daily readings. In honor of Dr. Seuss, our kindergarteners also cooked and tasted green eggs and ham with Mrs. Jacobson, Saint Mary's new kindergarten teacher. *Read Across America Day* is an initiative to promote reading that was created by the National Education Association in 1997. It is held on a day closest to March 2, the birthday of Dr. Seuss!





## Pen Pal Program Facilitates Communication Across Generations

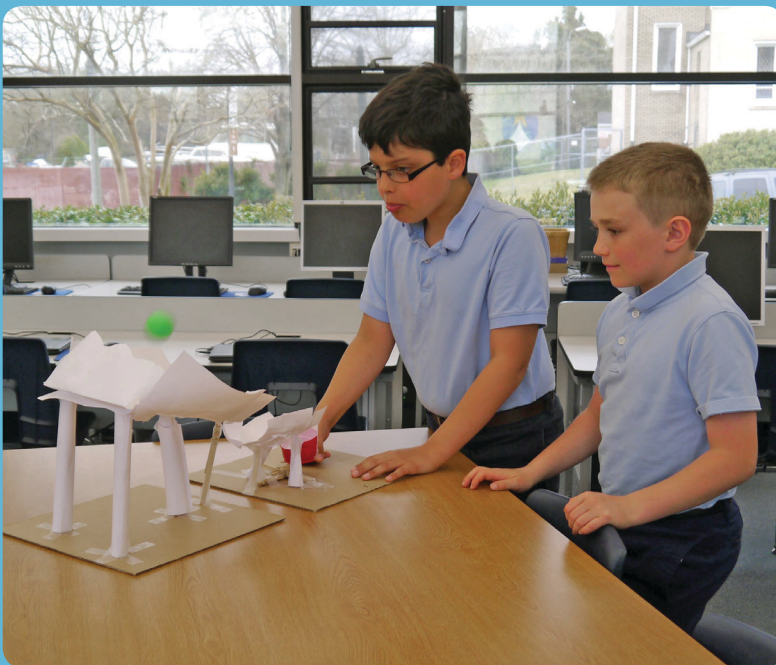


Third grade teacher, Ms. Tara Gilliam organized a Pen Pal program between her 3rd grade students and the residents of the Chamberlin, a retirement community on Fort

Monroe. Students wrote letters to their pen pals once every six weeks and visited them twice during the school year to enjoy cookies and face to face visits. This experience allowed students to practice their letter writing skills. "Writing handwritten notes is a lost art and it's nice to see our students still valuing that skill," said Ms. Gilliam. Strong friendships and loving relationships across generations have formed and many plan to keep in touch with their special new friends!

## Students in Physical Education Class Learn all about their Muscles!

In Physical Education this year, students not only focused on sports and games, but on their bodies and how they work. Each week, for 15 weeks, the students learned one major muscle or muscle group and how it worked in making everyday movement possible. Through music, fun activities, and repetition, even our kindergarteners have learned to identify muscles such as latissimus dorsi, sternocleidomastoid and of course, gluteus maximus! The objective is for the students to develop awareness of their bodies, building a sense of self-worth and responsibility for God's amazing creation!



## LIAM OROZA, TOP WINNER IN FLUOR ENGINEERING COMPETITION

Congratulations to 4th grade student Liam Oroza, who won the top score at the 2019 Fluor Engineering Challenge Contest with his volleyball machine, *The Decomposer*. Fluor challenged students across the world to build a volleyball machine that could launch a ping pong ball over a net and return the ball. Students could only use common materials such as plastic cups, rubber bands, cardboard, paper, wooden sticks and tape. Liam competed with more than 4,300 students from more than 10 countries. His score was the best across all age categories (6—18). Five other Saint Mary's students submitted their projects to the competition. Science teacher, Mrs. Sofianek

guided the students through their projects. Based in Irvine, Texas, Fluor is one of the world's largest engineering, procurement, fabrication, construction and maintenance (EPFCM) companies, providing innovative and integrated solutions to government and private sector clients in diverse industries.



### STUDENTS MEET WITH MONSIGNOR BARRETT DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In February, during Black History Month, Monsignor Barrett met with our middle school students to talk with them about the influence of African Americans in the Catholic Church and in the Diocese of Richmond, including his personal experiences. Monsignor gave examples of many African influences in the liturgy. When he opened the floor for questions, the students asked him about his most memorable moments as a priest. Our students left with a sense of the true beauty of the faith preserved through difficult and trying times for those of African American descent.

### ART PROMOTES STRONG LEARNING

A growing body of studies suggests that exposure to art education promotes self-directed learning, improves school attendance and sharpens critical and creative skills. At Saint Mary's, our 5th and 6th grade students studied Pop Art as inspiration for their printmaking project. They chose a subject from modern culture to draw and create a series of four individual prints, in the style of artist Andy Warhol. The 7th and 8th grade students did printmaking with Rotational Symmetry design. They created a final picture made up of four individual prints rotated around a central axis. Thank you to our art teacher, Mrs. Rosenbaum, for sharing her talents with our students!



### Middle School Students Take Younger Students on Mini-Pilgrimage with the Stations of the Cross

As we approached Holy Week, the 6th and 8th grade students took our kindergarten and 1st grade students on a mini-pilgrimage across the 14 Stations of the Cross to commemorate Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. The readings of the 14 Stations of the Cross helped our younger students understand the meaning of Easter, the sacrifice Jesus Christ made to save us, and the events of Jesus Christ's last day, beginning with his condemnation. This activity helped us thank God for his love for us and celebrate His resurrection with greater appreciation for His sacrifice on the cross.







### THROUGH THEATER 8TH GRADE STUDENTS SHOW DEDICATION & COMMITMENT!

Saint Mary's 8th grade students once again demonstrated their commitment, dedication and leadership as they performed *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*! Research shows that the benefits of participating in theater are greater development of physical, emotional, and social skills, and is one way to encourage students to develop an appreciation of culture and the arts. We thank Ms. Elizabeth Wigley and Ms. Margaret Zelinka for preparing the students for this presentation and to the 6th and 7th grade students who also supported this show.

### Taylor Mowery Wins First Place at ODU Tidewater Science Fair

We commend 8th grade student, Taylor Mowery for winning 1st place in the category of Cell and Molecular Biology on March 16 at the Tidewater Science and Engineering Fair held at Old Dominion University with her experiment, "How does the Kidney Function?". With a first place win, Taylor now qualifies for an online international fair, the Broadcom Masters 2019. This fair will take place between June and October 2019 where she will be competing against other students who won regional fairs at the middle school level this past spring.



### LESSON ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION TEACHES A LIFE SKILL!

In 7th grade, students learned about diversity and how we are all created by God. However, it is sometimes difficult to get along when there are conflicts. Therefore, Sister Anne Elise planned a lesson where she taught students eight different techniques to use for conflict resolution. The students were given real-life scenarios to act out and resolve using the techniques. They also created a class poster involving the steps of conflict resolution.

### Purple Up Day Celebrates Military Families



April was the Month of the Military Child, a special month to recognize and pay tribute to military families and their children for the daily sacrifices made. At Saint Mary's, we had a Purple Up Day in honor of all our military families! Purple indicates that all branches of the military are supported; Air Force blue, Army green, Navy blue, Marine red, and Coast Guard blue all thought to combine together as a single color, purple. Thank you, military families, for your service!

### MS. TARA GILLIAM NOMINATED FOR DIOCESAN EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD



Ms. Tara Gilliam was nominated for the Diocese of Richmond Excellence in Education Award. Ms. Gilliam exemplifies the mission of the Office of Catholic Schools by her dedication to excellence in teaching academics and by her witness to living out the Catholic faith through her teaching. She has fostered a love for learning in her students through her daily efforts to provide an environment where the students can grow in their knowledge of subject matter and in their faith in God. The Excellence in Catholic Education Award recognizes teachers across Diocesan schools for their contributions to the teaching ministry and their dedication to students. We thank Ms. Gilliam for all her initiatives to support the school and her students throughout her seven years at Saint Mary's!

### Saint Mary's, Mrs. Seely Participates in Mission Trip to Ecuador

For Saint Mary's Pre-K teacher, Mrs. Claudia Seely, her mission to help children goes beyond her classroom and the boundaries of the United States. Last summer, Mrs. Seely traveled with 17 other parishioners from Saint Joan of Arc Church, in Yorktown to the city of Quito in Ecuador for a mission trip to "El Refugio de los Sueños," a children's refuge located in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. The Refuge offers integral support during childhood and adolescence for children at risk of becoming involved in gangs and children who may suffer from severe abuse from their own parents who may be alcoholics, drug addicts or have other difficulties. At the Refuge, about 170 children, ages 5 - 17, are fed daily, taught life skills, given vocational training, presented with scholarship opportunities to go to school, and are provided with medical and dental assistance, but most importantly they receive love. This year, Mrs. Seely and the parishioners from Saint Joan of Arc provided shoes, clothing, medical supplies, arts and craft supplies and other donations much needed for the maintenance of the Refuge. They also visited the Refugio five days during their trip, to help feed the children during their lunch-early dinner; for some of the children this was the only big meal they had during the day. They also served them snacks and even took them on a field trip. The group of volunteers also took time to visit the families' homes where they saw the difficult living conditions in which they live. Mrs. Seely said, "I was very blessed to be able to be part of this mission, it was an amazing experience that allowed me to feel the love that these children and their families offered to us. I was able to see Jesus Christ in them. Even though they were the ones that needed the help, I felt that I was receiving much more from their love and appreciation for our presence."







## SMSS IS HOME TO THE SENTINELS!

Mural artist, Allison Bachman Webster has painted a mural of Saint Mary's sports mascot, a Sentinel, in the school gym. *The Sentinel* is an identifier for our school sports program and will help represent and cheer our Sentinels sports teams. The mural was funded by donations given in memory of Michael Brown, grandfather of 3rd grade student, Mia Minkoff. Mr. Brown had a special love for Saint Mary's and this will be a reminder of the love and care he gave to our school as a father, grandfather, and volunteer.



## Saint Mary's Families are True Testimony to the Sacrament of Matrimony



The 5th- 8th grade students who had been studying the sacrament of Matrimony welcomed Mr. & Mrs. Adams, grandparents of Hunter Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Loeffert, parents of Vivian, Seth, Clark and Bernadette, and Mr. & Mrs. Mullins, parents of Daniel Benedicto to their class. These couples shared with our students their experiences as married couples. They also shared with them the value of prayer and constant attention to the spousal union as key to marital fidelity. Students learned the importance of being able to disagree while still loving their spouses. It was very special for our students to see the reality of the fruitfulness of marriage in the young babies brought to the classroom. The students were most appreciative of the glimpses into married life.

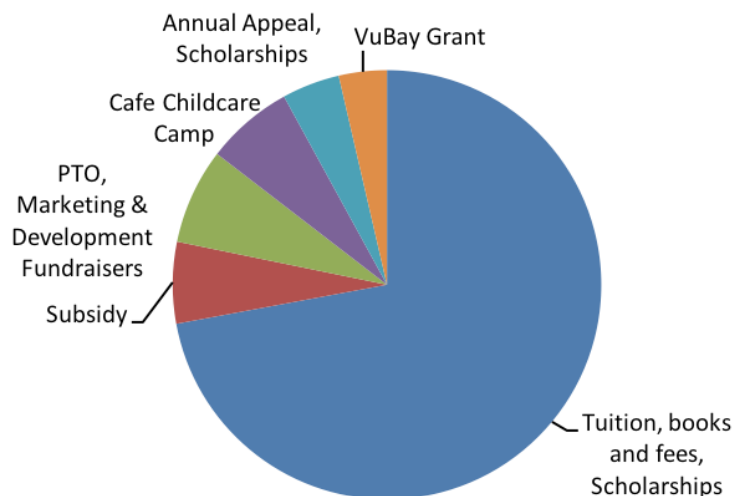
## READING FOR RODS PROGRAM PROMOTES LIFETIME SKILL!

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) sponsored a *Reading for Rods* program this Spring to promote reading in Kindergarten through 5th grades. Forty-five students logged over 700 reading hours during a five week period. As a reward, students who read at least nine hours participated in a Fishing Day with our NJHS students. Reading may be a skill that is learned early in a children's life, but it certainly has a benefit that lasts a lifetime!



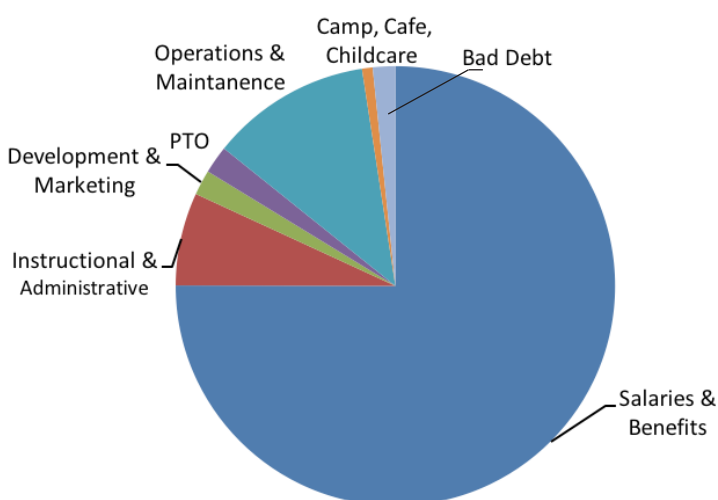
### INCOME

1 Tuition, Books & Fees, Scholarships	\$796,068
2 Subsidy	\$67,809
3 PTO, Marketing & Development Fundraisers	\$79,636
4 Cafeteria, Childcare, Summer Camp	\$72,758
5 Annual Appeal, Designated Scholarships	\$48,104
6 VuBay Grant	\$40,000
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,104,375</b>



### EXPENSES

1 Salaries & Benefits	\$778,352
2 Instructional & Administrative	\$70,884
3 Development and Marketing	\$19,154
4 PTO, Fundraisers	\$21,151
5 Operations & Maintenance	\$122,438
6 Cafeteria, Childcare, Summer Camp	\$8,137
7 Bad Debt	\$17,154
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,037,270</b>



## Saint Mary Star of the Sea School Advisory Board

**Dr. William Moore**  
Chair

**Mr. John Becouvarakis**  
Member

**Rev. John Bosco Walugembe**  
Chaplain

**Ms. Janelle Brown**  
Member

**Mr. Bob Finn**  
Strategic Planning Chair

**Mr. Jeff Jorgensen**  
Member

**Mr. Mark Platt**  
Member

**Rev. Mike Swisher**  
Finance Chair

**Mrs. Maritza Davila**  
Marketing/Enrollment

**Mrs. Noelle Pincus**  
Development

**Sister Mary John Slonkosky**  
Principal





### Greetings from the Development Office!

There is no better time to invest in something that is true - the education and future of our children. This 2018-19 school year was a successful one for Saint Mary Star of the Sea School and I would like to thank all of the parents, benefactors, alumni and all of the Saint Mary community for their continued support. From Golf Tournaments to our Auction and Casino Night and everything in between, there were many dollars raised and hundreds of helping hands to continue the educational excellence at Saint Mary Star of the Sea School.

It is truly a blessing to be part of this community. Working with this group of dedicated and caring professionals, who have been entrusted with your children, is a vocation that reaps so many rewards. I have enjoyed my first year working here and I look forward to getting to know you more. Thank you for making me feel welcome. God bless you all and if I can be of any assistance, please reach out to me at [development@saintmarystarofthesea.com](mailto:development@saintmarystarofthesea.com). **Scott Bolton, Development Director**

### Golf Tournament Raises \$14,000 to Upgrade School's Phone System

On October 6th at the Woodlands Golf Course here in our own neighborhood, 110 golfers arrived on a beautiful Saturday morning and played in the "best ball" tournament. Scott Glenn, Tournament Director, put together a perfect outing and a great time was had by all. When all was said and done, over \$14,000 was raised to support the upgrade of our phone system. This new digital phone system was installed later in the year and now there are phones in all five of our buildings, improving communications on campus and giving teachers access to voicemail.



### Marine Science Scholarship Awarded to Helen Underkofler



Saint Mary Star of the Sea (SMSS) proudly presented its 2018 STEM Scholarship to Helen Underkofler, Class of 2014. Helen is pursuing a degree in Marine Biology at Old Dominion University. In her application she wrote, "All my life I have loved all types of animals. It didn't matter how scaly, slimy or furry the animal was. I would instantly fall in love with the creature and want to learn everything about it. This, combined with my love of the ocean, has made marine biology practically scream at me. I am so excited to be able to learn more about marine life and hopefully one day in the future be able to work with them everyday and help keep them safe." The STEM Scholarship was established by the SMSS Class of 2013. Since then, each graduating class has contributed annually to award this scholarship to a Saint Mary's graduate pursuing a degree in a STEM-related field.

## Annual Auction and Casino Night is a Great Success!

Our annual Auction and Casino Night held on March 30th was a great success. A special thank you to Noelle Pincus and her team for all their hard work to make this such a fun event. This year, 150 of our parents, grandparents and benefactors attended the Luau themed celebration. Silent and live auction items and raffle prizes were organized around our school gym. Guests enjoyed Polynesian cuisine and complimentary beverages from our local friends Oozlefinch Brewery, Sly Clyde Ciderworks, and Firehouse Coffee while strolling around, bidding on several items from our local merchants. Patrons also played casino games run by our Knights of Columbus Council 511 volunteers. Over \$25,000 was raised for our facility improvements. We have received many positive comments on the event and we look forward to next year's Auction being better than ever!



## Educational Improvement Tax Credit Contributions Continue to Grow

Thanks to the Virginia Educational Improvement Scholarship Tax Credit program (EISTC), your contributions helping our students is now more rewarding than ever! Contributors receive a 65% Virginia tax credit plus state and federal deductions for charitable donations. Many contributors have helped make a Catholic education available to those families who are looking for this great opportunity and who may not have been able to do so. As of May, 2019, over \$144,000 has been available for scholarships to Saint Mary Star of the Sea School. A special thank you to our volunteer and grandparent, Mr. Michael Foley, who maintains the recording, letters, and forms for this very worthwhile cause. There is always an opportunity to get involved in this program. Please reach out to Scott Bolton for more information at [development@saintmarystarofthesea.com](mailto:development@saintmarystarofthesea.com).

Visit: <http://www.saintmarystarofthesea.com/support/virginia-education.cfm> to learn more how you can support this unique investment opportunity!

## WARM FAREWELL TO THE FINNS!

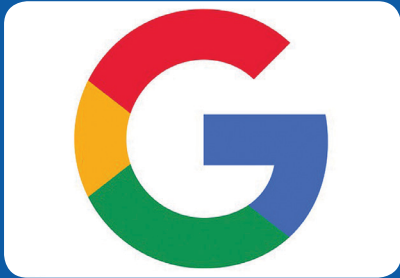


At the end of this school year, we will bid farewell to Mrs. Terri Finn who has decided to retire and relocate to be closer to family. Mrs. Finn has served as a parent, volunteer, First Grade teacher, substitute teacher,

teacher assistant, resource tutor, student academic assistant, and library teacher during her 14 years at Saint Mary's. Her husband, Robert Finn, has also served as a parent, volunteer, strategic planning committee chair, and active member of the School Advisory Board over the years. We cannot thank Mr. and Mrs. Finn enough for all the time, energy, talent and efforts they have given for the good of our students and the school community. We will greatly miss both of them and will always be grateful for their faithful support and friendship. Best wishes and may God bless the Finn family!



### Saint Mary's is a Google Suite School thanks to a Title IV Grant



Saint Mary's is now a Google Suite school, improving email and document communication, providing all faculty and staff with the same email address domain as those in the office and supporting the connectivity within the building. A Technology Grant from the Title IV Program provided funds for this new migration.

### ANNUAL APPEAL BRINGS \$32,000

Our school is built upon the pillars of leadership, community, academics, and faith. For almost one hundred years, students have grown into admirable high school students with these pillars as their foundation. Tuitions and fees alone do not alone cover the expenses to educate a child so each year we run our Annual Appeal. We would like to thank you all for your donations. We began our annual appeal in December 2018 through mailings and through our website. This worthwhile program is ongoing and we always accept donations, which are tax deductible. Our current donations have totaled over \$32,000. Your generosity is very much appreciated.



### Coming this Summer: Bathroom Renovations and Lighting Upgrades!

We move closer to a century of educating our youth in the Hampton Roads area at Saint Mary Star of the Sea School. It is important that we respond to our areas of need as well as continue to be at the forefront of today's education, and instilling the Christian values that have been at the center of what we do. With the funds raised this year, we would like to keep you up to date on a few projects that will be going on in the summer months. We will be updating our lighting in the lower building as well as renovating the girls bathroom. Research studies in educational testing environments (By Jacqueline Howard of [www.huffpost.com](http://www.huffpost.com)), found that "students were more alert and scored higher on their tests when they were in a classroom with proper, updated lighting". Also, there will be some air conditioning units replaced throughout the lower and upper buildings on our campus. This past December we applied for and were awarded \$49,350 from the Richmond Diocese Capital Need Grant Committee. This will be a great help, covering at least 50% of our project costs. This grant, plus your continued support, has allowed us to move forward with these projects.

Father full of Mercy By: Dorothy

Father full of Mercy, you Died and rose for me. You suffered pain and sorrow. Now I may go to heaven. You were Born In a stable, Died on a cross. You healed the sick, changed water into wine. Now I know I am thine. You carried the cross, soon after you rose. you created us all, Big and small. you made the water, the clouds, and the trees. But most of all you created me. And finally, Mary Mother of christ you watched your son Die and Go to Heaven. Mary most holy help us with all we need help with. We love you Father full of Mercy.



by: Dorothy Glenn, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade



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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.

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-  Saint Mary Star of the Sea Catholic School
-  [saintmarystarofthesea](https://www.instagram.com/saintmarystarofthesea)
- **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)

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday

September 14, 2019

The Woodlands Golf Course

#### LOW COUNTRY BOIL

Saturday

September 28, 2019

Saint Mary's Convent Lawn