



St. Mary's Catholic School News  
265 Baker Street  
Berea, Ohio 44017  
440.243.4555

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

Mrs. Mary Whelan, Principal

Dear SMS Parents and Students,

I am so excited to be writing this back to school letter as we begin the month of August and prepare for the return of students and the arrival of new families and children. I hope you have enjoyed your summer break as much as I have enjoyed mine. Though I had lots of opportunities to relax and do a little traveling, I am ready to be surrounded by the voices and laughter that continue to grace our hallways and classrooms on a daily basis.

As I write this letter I am excited to report that our enrollment is stronger than ever! We currently have 490 students registered for the 2009-2010 School Year. That is an increase of 28 students. Every year we get closer and closer to the dream that has been part of our vision for the past 12 years. That dream of reaching our goal of 500 students is closer than ever. I thank you for your continued support and belief in a St. Mary's School Catholic education. I truly believe that it is one of the best investments and legacies you will leave with your children.

When you arrive back to school you will notice a few new faces! As many of you know, Mrs. Bodamer, our Kindergarten teacher had her twin girls on our last day of school in June. She has been very busy taking care of Averie and Emerson since. After much thought, she has asked to take a one-year leave from teaching to take care of the girls. We have hired our favorite long-term substitute teacher, Mrs. Virginia Dober, to fill her shoes and work closely with her to provide the same quality experience and education we expect from our teaching staff. Mrs. Dober was a Kindergarten teacher prior to starting her family and is eager and excited to be working with little ones once again.

Mrs. Wallene Chernosky's retirement created a second opening in our Kindergarten program and we were fortunate to hire Mrs. Nancy Gall, a Kindergarten teacher with over 25 years experience. She had been teaching in the Diocese of Cleveland and lost her job when St. Mel's closed its door at the end of the school year. Her previous principal described her as "one of the best Kindergarten teachers he has ever seen!" I feel blessed to have her join our staff and work with your children.

Mrs. Smith, last year's fifth grade teacher, has moved to the Junior High to fill the Science position that became available with the departure of Ms. Jones. Mrs. Smith's area of concentration is Science and we are thrilled that she will be focusing all her energy and enthusiasm into our Science Curriculum. Filling her fifth grade spot is Ms. Shannon Gareau, a recent graduate from the University of Dayton. Ms. Gareau attended St. Ambrose School and St. Joseph Academy while growing up in the Cleveland area. She is well versed in Catholic education and eager to start her career at SMS.

As many of you know, Mrs. Klanac, our sixth grade Language Arts and Religion teacher took a job at St. Adalbert Parish as the Director of Religious Education. Though we will miss her terribly, she will be working with our parish through the clustering initiatives of the Diocese. Her replacement, Ms. Andrea Jeffrey, a second year teacher and also from St.

Mel's School, will be taking over as our sixth grade teacher. I had an opportunity to watch her teach prior to hiring her and know that our students will enjoy her classes and her personality.

Not only will you see changes in faculty and staff, but you will also see a few changes in procedures and routines we perform on a daily or weekly basis. As you know, we are working diligently to keep costs down while maintaining the same quality of teaching and experiences. A practical way for the school to reduce expenses is to take advantage of technology and send newsletters and reminders to parents through email. The amount of paper we will save as well as copy expenses and toner will be significant. Therefore, this back to school newsletter will be the only newsletter received in hard copy. From this point on, all newsletters will be posted on the St. Mary's School website. Please provide us with an email address (or two, if both parents want updates and news) so that we can send information, news, reminders and emergency information to all families quickly.

We are entering our second year of the Accreditation process and the teachers have been focusing on our Catholicity goal and our Student Performance goal. The surveys you, the teachers and the students completed at the end of 2007-2008 as well as IOWA and CAT scores, and other forms of assessments and evaluations have provided the staff with much to discuss and digest. We will spend a few days prior to the start of school continuing to analyze the data and determine two areas of improvement that will most benefit our students. It is a long process but one that will provide a focus and goal for the next four years.

Don't forget to mark you calendar for the Back to School Picnic that will be held on Sunday, August 23 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm at SMS. The classrooms will be open and the teachers will be ready to greet you and show you the classroom as well as individual desks and lockers. Many parents and students take advantage of the opportunity to bring in school supplies during the picnic to eliminate the large load on the first day of school. You are welcome to bring in as much or as little as you care to on Sunday. We will also be serving a light picnic menu so plan on eating and socializing with classmates and new families.

Please read this newsletter carefully as there is much news to share with all. As always, don't hesitate to call with any questions or concerns. It is our hope that your child's first few days will be memorable and exciting.

God bless you as you enjoy the final days of summer vacation,  
Mrs. Mary Whelan, Principal

### **FATHER MARTY UPDATE**

At the end of last school year, SMS was able to send a check to Father Marty for the slum children in Nairobi. This money was collected throughout the school year through monthly dress down days. A check for \$2,900 was mailed to Our Lady of Nazareth, located in the middle of Nairobi's largest and worst slum named Mukuru, where 250,000 people struggle to survive. In Swahili, makuru means "garbage dump." The only way out of this disease filled and unsanitary area is through education. Thus, the importance of Our Lady of Nazareth School where 1,700 slum children are enrolled! Our generous donation will make it possible to educate and feed 232 children for a full year at Our Lady of Nazareth Primary School. Thanks again for your support! On a side note, our sixth grade students have been writing letters to their pen pals at OLN. It has been fun and educational for all students. Recently, two of our alumni visited Father Marty at OLN and returned with another packet of letters from the students in Nairobi. We are anxious for Martin and Stephan Dober to share their experiences and pictures with the school children.

### LOCAL BUSINESS LEADERS SUPPORT SMS

A big thank you to the following businesses that support SMS through the donation of folders, book covers and homework assignment notebooks. Previously, parents have been required to purchase a SMS homework assignment notebook. In our efforts to reduce costs to both the school and the parents, we have found local businesses willing to help fund these expenses. Thanks again to the following supporters of SMS:

Luna Marketing

Michael P. Waters, DDS

Parkway Autocare

Westpark Dental

Oswald Companies

Tim Fetterman, MD

### BINGO UPDATE

Bingo commitment forms were part of the registration packet and all requests have been taken into account when the 2009-2010 schedule was created. If you did not specify dates, random times were assigned to you. Please remember that the profits from Bingo directly support the school and help keep our tuition fees down. If you do not work your assigned shifts you will be charged the \$300 in lieu of working. The schedule is now available on the school website. If you are unable to work your assigned shift it is your responsibility to make arrangements for a replacement by contacting other parents or volunteers directly. Please contact Virginia Dober at [bingo@smsberea.org](mailto:bingo@smsberea.org) with the changes that you have secured.

#### ITEMS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Mark your calendar for the Back to School Picnic and Open House on Sunday, **August 23<sup>rd</sup>**, from 1:00-3:00 PM. All classrooms will be open to meet the teachers and students may bring in their school supplies to get organized in the classroom. Families should bring a blanket to sit on and share a potluck picnic with our SMS families, faculty and staff. See the enclosed flier for more information.
- The first day of school for Grades One through Eight will be on Wednesday, **August 26<sup>th</sup>**, Kindergarten students will follow the phase-in schedule posted by the Kindergarten teachers. Preschool students will begin after Labor Day.
- All parents are encouraged to reserve the evening of Thursday, **August 27<sup>th</sup>**, for Curriculum Night. Classroom teachers and subject area teachers will inform parents of the specific curriculum being taught at each grade level. Grades 1-3 @ 7:00 PM, and Grades 4-5 @7:30 PM, and Grades 6-8 @ 8:00 PM.
- Our first School Mass is scheduled at the Church (weather permitting) on Friday, **August 28<sup>th</sup>** at 10:00 AM. Parents are invited to join us to celebrate the beginning of our school year.
- The first day for Preschool students will begin the week of **September 8<sup>th</sup>**. Parents will receive a letter from the Preschool teachers with a phase-in schedule.
- All parents are asked to attend **PARENT NIGHT on Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Father Vrabel and Mrs. Whelan will address the parents and introduce the Faculty and Staff. Parents will have an opportunity to visit the classroom teachers. It is expected that at least one parent will be present at this Parent Meeting.
- If you are interested in becoming a member of the Principal Advisory Council (PAC) for the 2009-2010 School Year, please call the school office (440.243.4555 ext. 10) by **August 28<sup>th</sup>**. PAC meetings are held once a month from 7:00-8:00 PM in the school Media Center.
- School buses will be available on the first day of school. Information will be mailed to you from Berea, Strongsville, Olmsted Falls, or Columbia Station Transportation Departments. If you have any questions regarding your child's bus please call your transportation system. Classes will begin at 9:00 AM and end at 3:10 PM. All students will be dismissed at 3:20 PM. If you plan to drive your child to school, we urge you to drop them off in the playground area (at the rear of the building) and pick

- your child up there also. The area in the circle in front of the school is reserved for buses. Please do not pull in or park in this area.
- If your child is riding a bike to school, please remind them that bikes are to be walked through the playground. It is your child's responsibility to lock their bike during the school day. The school will not be responsible for damaged or stolen bikes.
  - Parents visiting the school during operating hours **MAY NOT DOUBLE PARK**. Please use the rear parking lot.
  - No motorbikes or skateboards are permitted on school property.

### **CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

Enclosed with this Newsletter are the Class Lists for the 2009-2010 School Year.

### **PARENTS AND VISITORS TO SMS**

All parents and visitors entering the school building between the hours of 7:30 AM and 3:45 PM **MUST** enter through the north door adjacent to the side driveway by the office and check in with the office personnel. A VISITOR'S PASS will be issued. Persons with appointments after 4:00 PM must enter through the rear gym doors adjacent to the rear parking lot and check in with the Day Care personnel. Also, please know our policy remains that no student may re-enter the school after 4:00 PM to retrieve items from a classroom.

### **EMERGENCY/MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM**

One BLUE Emergency/Medical form will be sent home with your child on the first day of school. Parents are requested to complete one form for each child and return it to the school the next day. Please do not fold or staple this form.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Enclosed in this mailing is a list of those supplies students should have in school on a regular basis for the school year. This is the same list we provided you in the May/June Newsletter and enclosed with the final Report Card.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Gym classes will begin the first day of school. Students are expected to be dressed for class. The schedule for Physical Education classes is shown below. The students in Grades 2 – 8 will need a gym bag, tennis shoes, (over the ankle) white socks, and the SMS gym shorts and T-shirt. First Grade students will only need gym shoes for the entire year. Please mark your child's name on the tag of the gym uniform. In the confusion and hurry of changing, many uniforms get picked up accidentally. By placing your child's name on the tag, we can easily return lost or misplaced uniforms to their owner.

MONDAY – 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 6A, 6B  
TUESDAY – KA, KB, 3A, 3B, 4A, 5A, 5B, 7A  
WEDNESDAY – KA, KB, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 7B, 8A  
THURSDAY – 1A, 1B, 2A, 4B, 5A, 5B, 8A, 8B  
FRIDAY – 4B, 5B, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B, 8B

### **2009-2010 UNIFORM POLICY**

All students are expected to be in School Uniform and Gym Uniform on the first day of school. A copy of the Uniform Policy is enclosed for your convenience. This Policy will be strictly enforced. Please remember, tennis shoes can only be worn with the uniform shorts.

## **JUNIOR HIGH NEWS**

Special dances will be held during the school year for Seventh and Eighth Grade students. The dances end at 9:30 PM. All students must be picked up at the school by their parents or an adult. These arrangements must be made in advance and indicated on the permission slip or the student cannot attend.

## **HONOR ROLL**

We will utilize the Honor Roll for students in Grades 4 through 8 to provide encouragement to our students and honor their hard work and serious academic studies.

Honors and Achievement Awards will be announced quarterly. Special certificates will be awarded and a list of students achieving Honors will be posted in the main hallway.

First Honors Criteria – All A's, one B allowed

Second Honors Criteria – All A's and B's (nothing lower than B-)

Achievement Criteria – This award will be given in the second, third, and fourth quarters to students who have improved their grades in at least three major subjects. No F's (does not refer to 'going down' in subjects).

Major subjects to be considered for Academic Awards are: Religion, Reading, Phonics, Language, Spelling, Math, Social Studies, and Science/Health. Any 'N' or 'U' conduct/effort grade on the report card will negate the possibility of an Academic Award.

## **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

A revised edition of the Parent/Student Handbook will be available to all families at our Parent Meeting on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **CAFETERIA/PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION AUG/SEPT. SCHEDULE ENCLOSED**

As our school grows in size, we continue to make adjustments to our daily schedules. These changes allow for better use of the gym for physical education classes. **Please know that supervision by parents is key to the success of a safe lunchtime and recess environment for the students.**

Our first lunch block will begin at 11:50 AM and end at 12:30 PM. Students will rotate between lunch and recess during this time. The second lunch block will start at 12:30 PM and end at 1:10 PM. Students will again rotate between lunch and recess during this time. Parent volunteers will need to arrive at 11:45 AM and remain till 1:10 PM. This schedule will require outside and inside supervision simultaneously. Many of our aides will be outside with students during the lunch hour. **Therefore, attendance by parent volunteers is imperative to make this schedule run smoothly.**

The Cafeteria/Playground Supervision Schedule is complete for the 2009-2010 School Year and will be included with each monthly Newsletter. Enclosed with this Newsletter you will find the schedule for August and September. **Please check this schedule and be prepared to attend on the days your name is posted.** If you are unable to attend duty on your assigned day, please attempt to switch days with another parent. Please notify the school office of any changes. We appreciate your help and dependability since you are vital in this supervisory program.

## **HOT LUNCH PROGRAM & MILK TICKETS**

The cafeteria will continue the same CASH procedure. The August/September Menus are enclosed with this Newsletter. The amount for each item is listed on the Menu. Simply send in the proper amount of cash each day with your child to purchase a hot lunch or ala carte item. Kindergarten students **will not** participate in the school lunch program. Therefore, they will need to bring a packed lunch to school daily. The Kindergarten teachers will inform parents on lunch procedures and instructions for ordering milk.

MILK TICKETS will be sold on the FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH. The cost will be 20 tickets for \$5.00. A Milk Ticket Order Form will be available to download on our school website for your use.

### **FRIDAY FAMILY FOLDERS**

SMS will continue to use a Friday Family Folder for the 2009-2010 School Year. This program has streamlined communication between families and the school. Each Friday you should expect to receive a plastic, color-coded folder containing school correspondence that needs to be shared with families. This folder will be sent home with your oldest child attending SMS. This program has eliminated lost or misplaced forms, letters, and notices. These folders do not replace the homework folder that certain teachers send home already, so you may be seeing two folders each week. Over the weekend, find time to remove and review the contents of the envelope and respond to anything that needs addressed. These responses should be placed back in the folder and returned to school on Monday. These color-coded plastic envelopes are sturdy and expected to last the whole year. Any folders that are lost or destroyed will need to be replaced at the family's expense by contacting the school office. Please make it a habit to check these folders each weekend. It should cut down on copying expenses and time locating lost paperwork. We will also be looking for volunteers to stuff envelopes on Friday mornings and reorganize folders on Monday mornings. If you would be willing to help out a few hours a week, please call the office.

### **VIDEO TAPING**

Videotaping will occur at SMS for educational purposes. If you have any questions, please speak to Mrs. Whelan.

### **EXTENDED CARE & PRESCHOOL DAY CARE PROGRAM**

We will continue to provide before and after school care, providing time for relaxation, snacks, physical activity and homework or tutoring supervision when needed. The program is not an extension of the school day nor will it be an unstructured "baby-sitting" service. The hours will be 6:30-8:30 AM and 3:30-6:00 PM on school days for students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. The Preschool Day Care is available every school day between 6:30 AM and 6:00 PM.

If you are interested in utilizing this program, please complete the enclosed form and return to the school office along with the fee prior to the first day of school. Contact Mrs. Lake for questions regarding the Extended Care & Preschool Day Care Program at 440.234.7210.

### **STUDENT MEDICATION**

**WHEN IT IS NECESSARY FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL TO ADMINISTER PRESCRIBED MEDICATION, THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES ARE TO BE FOLLOWED:**

- All school personnel must be informed that the administration of any drug (prescription or over the counter) without the order of the physician and the permission of the patient/guardian could be interpreted as practicing medicine and is PROHIBITED by law.
- WRITTEN REQUEST must be obtained from the physician and the parent/guardian before any medication (prescription or over the counter) may be administered by school personnel. The request must include instructions as to the name of the medication, dosage, time and duration of the medication, and possible side effect. NOTE: A proper prescription bottle of medication DOES NOT take the place of the physician's written note with a signature giving permission to administer medication. All medications must have both a physician's written request and a parent's written request to administer medication.

- Medication must be in the ORIGINAL containers (child-proof) and have an affixed label including the student's name, name of the medication, dosage, route of administration, and the time of administration.
- The medication and the SIGNED permission forms must be brought to the school by the parent/guardian. (Forms are available in the school office, clinic, or can be printed from our website.)
- New request forms must be submitted each school year and as necessary for changes in medication order.

### **FAMILY VACATIONS**

Your child's daily attendance at school is vital to their academic success. Please refer to your annual school calendar prior to making vacation plans.

Many times parents ask for schoolwork prior to leaving for a vacation, however, much of the instruction in class is done hands-on, in groups, with a partner, and one-on-one with a teacher or another adult. None of these activities can be replaced with a worksheet. Worksheets are used in class for practice and as a way for the teacher to assess if the student has mastered the concepts that have been taught. So when a parent asks for worksheets, the student is only getting a very small part of the learning process that takes place in the classroom.

If you take a vacation during the school year the teacher will provide you with work when you RETURN from your trip. All work should be returned to the teacher within one week. Your child will also be required to keep a journal of the trip with writing and pictures that he/she will be able to share with the class upon returning. Your child may need to miss several recess periods so that we can teach what was missed during his/her absence. Remember - when your child misses a day, he/she misses a lot!!!

### **PRIDE UPDATE**

PRIDE (*Parents Resolved in Developing Excellence*) is an organization offering unique educational and social activities for the students and parents of St. Mary's School. In past years, these activities have included Father-Daughter Dances, Fashion Shows, financial seminars, road rallies, Cleveland Indian's games, roller and ice skating parties, Cleveland Orchestra, babysitting courses and much more. These activities provide opportunities for parent involvement with as much or as little time as they have to participate. Please complete the pink form enclosed with this newsletter and return to school by the due date. The information will allow PRIDE to provide class rosters to enrolled families. If you have any questions or are interested in becoming involved with PRIDE, please contact the school office or watch for volunteer opportunities throughout the year.



Don't forget to order SMS uniforms and clothing items with our School and Sports Logo's!

Schoolbelles, 4747 West 160<sup>th</sup>, Cleveland  
and  
Luna Marketing & Sports Apparel,  
113 Front Street in Berea.

## **DATES TO REMEMBER**

Please remember to mark your calendars with these important dates!

WEDNESDAY	AUGUST 19	7:00 PM PRESCHOOL PARENT ORIENTATION
SUNDAY	AUGUST 23	1:00-3:00 PM BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC <i>(All classrooms will be open for students and parents to visit.)</i>
WEDNESDAY	AUGUST 26	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL Gr. 1 – Gr. 8 <i>(KDG. follows a Phase-in schedule)</i>
THURSDAY	AUGUST 27	PARENT CURRICULUM NIGHT 7:00 PM Grades 1-2-3 7:30 PM Grades 4-5 8:00 PM Grades 6-7-8
FRIDAY	AUGUST 28	10:00 AM SCHOOL MASS @ Church
<b><u>WEDNESDAY</u></b>	<b><u>SEPTEMBER 2</u></b>	<b><u>7:00 PM SMS PARENT NIGHT</u></b> <i>(At least one parent expected to attend.)</i>
MONDAY	SEPTEMBER 7	LABOR DAY – FREE DAY
TUESDAY	SEPTEMBER 8	PRESCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN <i>(Preschool follows a Phase-in schedule)</i>
FRIDAY	SEPTEMBER 11	2:00 PM PRAYER SERVICE
FRIDAY	SEPTEMBER 25	1 <sup>ST</sup> Qtr. PROGRESS/INTERIM REPORTS
WEDNESDAY	SEPTEMBER 30	PICTURE DAY <i>(No Uniforms, Dress UP Day)</i>