

March 1, 2019

Dear Parents,

Long time, no letter! I decided it was time to take my feet off my desk, put down the bon-bons, and update you on a variety of activities. There are follow ups to most of the items online so make sure to check there for more details.

Stewardship—Did you know there is a stewardship committee that meets regularly? This group addresses parish concerns such as overall parishioner engagement, connecting parishioners to various ministry opportunities, and tends to the overall welcoming atmosphere we are so well known for at St. Aloysius. Stewardship forms are online NOW! This is the first year we've had the online option and I can tell you from experience, it takes less than 5 minutes to complete. There's a link on both the school and the parish website so make sure you take care of this simple task asap. Paper forms are also available through the parish office. Remember, your parishioner rate for tuition next year is based on completing this form. New this year, be among the first 200 forms turned in and you will be automatically entered into a drawing for a gift card to a swanky restaurant!

Enrollment—The enrollment/marketing committee continues to blaze trails into new territory. The minutes from our last meeting are online. We are still looking at options to add bus service next year so watch for a parent survey coming your way soon. We are also making great progress on our new school website. This new site should be up around spring break and we will continue with the old site for a while as we learn the ins and outs of the new format. As always, if you have suggestions once the new site is launched, we are happy to hear them. Marketing to nearby preschools, sending info via fish fry take out orders, improving WiFi service in the gym (often first point of contact), rehangng sports banners, and many other items are in the works. Want to join us? The next meeting is scheduled for March 20 at 6:00pm.

School Board—Not to be outdone, the school board minutes are also forthcoming. We've had good discussion on accreditation notes, developing and reintroducing an exit survey, and started a technology committee to review/renew our school tech plan. In March you will see nomination forms for new members. This is a three year commitment for board members and a one year commitment for alternates. We are blessed with a strong, resourceful parent community and hope you consider contributing your talents to this group. (You could put it on your stewardship form...). If you'd like more details, please feel free to email me.

Counselor's Corner—Did you know that Mrs. Shain has a wealth of information at her fingertips? She's starting a newsletter that will be posted at least once a month aimed at supporting parents as they deal with a variety of issues/concerns. The first edition is online now and has resources for dealing with anxiety and upcoming Terra Nova testing. If you have topics you'd like included in future posts, just send Mrs. Shain a quick email.

Through the news and social media, you may be aware of dangers surrounding what is being referred to as the "Momo Challenge," the latest in a series of concerning online trends. The Momo Challenge involves a disfigured head attached to a bird's body encouraging children to

complete a series of challenges otherwise their families will be cursed/harmed with the ultimate directive of suicide. Momo has infiltrated popular digital platforms such as YouTube Kids, Peppa Pig, What'sApp, and Fortnite. Parents should be aware of this viral trend so they may have open, honest conversations with their children about safe and appropriate online activity. Bringing up the Momo Challenge specifically may lead children to investigate it themselves. Instead, consider asking them whether they have encountered anything online that caused them to be worried or upset. If your child is aware of this trend, remind them that Momo is not a real person and cannot directly harm them. Children should also be reminded to NEVER contact strangers online, regardless of the method. As presented in two parent forums this year, parents need to tighten device settings and parental controls. Video games, YouTube Kids, etc. should be limited to shared family spaces. Watch out for unknown phone numbers or strange email addresses. More on Momo can be found in the Counselor's Corner.

Lent—Yes, it's that time! This week we will celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass at 8:15 and encourage you to join us. This week after all the Masses, four of our students will be hosting a bake sale with proceeds going to Catholic Relief Services. These girls have an admirable passion for works of charity and we commend them for setting an example of service to others. Sydney McDill, Reese & Sydney Hall, and Christine Very organized a clothing drive last fall and after attending the recent Rice Bowl Luncheon, felt called to help CRS. We will be having a classroom contest the week of March 18 collecting loose change for rice bowls. Stay tuned for more details. Fish Frys start this Wednesday and continue on every Friday. See you there!

Awards & Competitions—Eagles are soaring across the board! Congratulations to our six winners in the James Claypool Conservation Contest. There were 540 art entries and St. Aloysius winners were: Katie Robinson (1st), Katrina Oswald (2nd), and Meredith Feger (3rd). In the essay portion, congratulations are in order for Lila Norris (1st), Grace Corbell (2nd), and Sydney Hall (3rd). Lila's essay won at the county level and will go on to state competition. Also going on to state competition is our elementary archery team! This is a first for our young archers and we wish them well. Good luck wishes are also extended to our elementary governor's cup team who won as district champions and go on to regional competition tomorrow. Go, Eagles!

Terra Nova—This is our LAST time taking Terra Nova at St. Aloysius! Next year the archdiocese is transitioning to a new testing format which you will hear about in the months to come. However, this year, we have one more shot to qualify for Blue Ribbon status using our tried and true Terra Nova. There's a tip sheet online but mostly, it's just common sense parenting. Students should get a good night's sleep, eat a healthy breakfast, have water bottles and snacks at the ready, check their #2 pencil supply, grab a calculator, and take a deep breath. There's no last minute studying or magic formula to follow. This is a snapshot of what your child is retaining and what he/she has really mastered from instruction. Because of testing, tardy students or those coming/going to doctor's appointments may be held in the office.

Enjoy your weekend, there's more fun to come!

Mrs. Hayslip