



2011-2012

# St. Michael School

"In so doing, they [Catholic schools] have also fostered the improvement of all education in the United States. Many of the reforms being suggested for public education (school-based management, greater parental involvement, values education, increased homework, more rigorous courses, and even school uniforms) have long been associated with the success of Catholic schools." (In Support of Catholic Schools, 1990)

Although twenty two years have passed since the document, In Support of Catholic Schools, was created...it is clear that Catholic Education continues to serve the student, family and community in a way that not many other schools can proclaim.

Celebrate You!

Celebrate Us!



Please join us in celebrating the many reasons why St. Michael the Archangel Catholic School is so successful.

These past few weeks, we have celebrated so many good things as we hosted a series of Open House events. It is important to hear what those outside of

our school community have to say about who we are and what we have managed to create for our students.

As you may have already heard, the theme for CSW this year is **Catholic Schools – Faith. Academics. Service.** The theme speaks so well of the mission of StMS and the reason for our existence. All of the Catholic School Week activities are highlighted in this edition of The Principal's Post. We hope you will join us as often as your schedule permits.

May God bless you each and every day!

-John



## News Cardinal Gibbons High School

Cardinal Gibbons High School is pleased to announce that it is embarking on its *Building the Vision* construction project that will expand and enhance the school. Construction is to start this month (January) on this exciting project, and planned completion is set for August 2013. Please visit

[www.cghsnc.org/buildingthevision](http://www.cghsnc.org/buildingthevision) for more information about our building program, including a letter from Principal Jason D. Curtis, FAQs, interactive site plan, press release and comments on campus.

And news regarding the next THEATER PRODUCTION!

Friends,

Please help us spread the word about our Drama Department's upcoming production of *Once Upon a Mattress*. The cast and crew describe the production as a louder, faster and funnier version of *Princess and the Pea*.

The play will be performed Fridays and Saturdays, March 16, 17, 23 & 24 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, March 18 at 2:30 p.m.; and Thursday, March 22 at 4 p.m. The performances will take place in the Cardinal Gibbons Theater, 1401 Edwards Mill Road, across from the RBC Center. All tickets will be \$5. Getting the word out early is crucial to the play's success.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you,

Rachelle Garbarine

Marketing and Publications Coordinator

Cardinal Gibbons High School

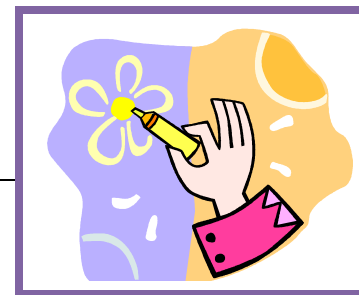
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## Walls of Fame CSW Debut

As part of our celebration of Catholic Schools – we are transforming the walls in our stairwells to WALLS OF FAME! These walls feature the artwork of our students. Mrs. Girolimon and Gis Donovan took the lead with this project. So many moms and dads helped by volunteering their time to showcase the works of art!

Please take time to notice when you visit our school during Catholic Schools Week or before! The white walls are full of color and the beautiful expressions of our students!

THANK YOU ALL!



## CELEBRATE Good Times!

### “CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES”

Mark your calendars! The Spring Show featuring the students in grades 6-8 of our middle school program is on

**Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** beginning at 7p.m. We have partnered with Cardinal Gibbons High School, thus the show will take place in their theater! Students are getting excited as they prepare for their stage debut! Get Ready to Rumble as you watch Mark dazzle you with his B-ball skills or dance with Wil and Ashley as they get Footloose! Every student in grades 6-8 will participate and be on stage. Join us as we pay tribute to our Eight Grade Stars is a finale that will make you proud to be a StMS angel! We promise a good time. Tickets will go on sale in early April! Everyone is invited!!!!

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

January 29 – February 3, 2012

**ACADEMICS**  
**SERVICE**  
**FAITH**



Please take some time to review the separate attachment regarding Catholic Schools Week! We have many activities planned to celebrate the many people who value StMS and the wonderful CATHOLIC Education that is fostered each day!

**“Graduates of Catholic schools are more closely bonded to the Church, more deeply committed to adult religious practices, happier, and more supportive of religious perspectives on women and have more confidence in other people, more benign images of God, and a greater awareness of the responsibility for moral decision making. They give in a committed fashion more contributions to the Catholic Church (National Opinion Research Center [NORC])”**

(In Support of Catholic Schools, 1990, pp. 4-5)

## JANUARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Monday January 30, 2012

We will celebrate all students, teachers and staff with a birthday in January. Invitation will be distributed this week!



## CELEBRATE Mardi Gras & Shamrock Games

### Our Annual Mardi Gras and Shamrock Games School Wide Celebration

Friday, February 17th beginning at  
8:15 AM

### Families Invited!

This year we will CELEBRATE two of our favorite StMS events on the same day. The “Pep Rally” and send off to our student athletes and coaches as they head to Charlotte as well as our Mardi Gras Parade and parties will both take place on Friday February 17<sup>th</sup>. This is due to the fact that Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> (Mardi Gras) is a scheduled day off from class for our students. Thus we will really CELEBRATE on Friday!

8:15 – Mardi Gras Breakfast in classrooms

9:00 – Pep Rally and Team Recognition  
(Parish Center)

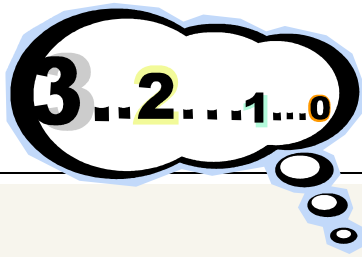
10:00 – Parade from Parish Center to church

10:30 – Prayer, Awards and Recognition (Church)

11:30 - Dismissal

We hope that everyone will join us for a “spirit” filled morning! These events are a StMS tradition. The parade will feature our Pre-Kindergarten walking with balloons, our StMS band, kindergarten children and their family floats pulled by our 8<sup>th</sup> grade and YOU – our biggest fans!!

Let’s give our Basketball teams a real “New Orleans - style” send off! Please plan on being a part of this celebration!



# Math Computation

## Grade:

Grades 1–2, Grades 3–5, Grades 6–8

## Subject:

Math Fluency and Intervention, School Administration and Management

This article is excerpted from the Scholastic Research Foundation Paper [Research Foundation & Evidence of Effectiveness for FASTT Math](#)

Educators and cognitive scientists agree that the ability to recall basic math facts fluently is necessary for students to attain higher-order math skills. Grover Whitehurst, the Director of the Institute for Educational Sciences (IES), noted this research during the launch of the federal Math Summit in 2003: “Cognitive psychologists have discovered that humans have fixed limits on the attention and memory that can be used to solve problems. One way around these limits is to have certain components of a task become so routine and over-learned that they become automatic.” Whitehurst, 2003)

The implication for mathematics is that some of the sub-processes, particularly basic facts, need to be developed to the point that they are done automatically. If this fluent retrieval does not develop then the development of higher-order mathematics skills — such as multiple-digit addition and subtraction, long division, and fractions — may be severely impaired. Indeed, studies have found that lack of math fact retrieval can impede participation in math class discussions, successful mathematics problem-solving, and even the development of everyday life skills. And rapid math-fact retrieval has been shown to be a strong predictor of performance on mathematics achievement tests.

If a student constantly has to compute the answers to basic facts, less of that student’s thinking capacity can be devoted to higher level concepts than a student who can effortlessly recall the answers to basic facts. For example, a child who is performing multiple-digit division must monitor constantly where he is in that procedure. If the child must use primitive counting strategies to subtract or multiply during the division process, the attention and memory resources devoted to these procedures reduce the student’s ability to monitor and attend to the larger division problem. The result is that the student often fails to grasp the concepts involved in multiple-digit division.

Recent research in cognitive science, using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), has revealed the actual shift in brain activation patterns as untrained math facts are learned (Delazer et al., 2003). As predicted by Dehaene (1997, 1999, 2003), instruction and practice cause math fact processing to move from a quantitative area of the brain to one related to automatic retrieval. Delazer and her colleagues suggest that this shift aids the solving of complex computations that require “the selection of an appropriate resolution algorithm, retrieval of intermediate results, storage and updating in working memory” by substituting some of the intermediate steps with automatic retrieval (Delazer et al., 2004).

The research cited above highlights the importance of math fact fluency; however, the computation capabilities of American students appear to be falling. Tom Loveless of the Brookings Institute has reviewed responses to select items on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and concluded that performance on basic arithmetic facts declined in the 1990s (Loveless, 2003). Clearly, students need help to develop rapid, effortless, and errorless recall of basic math facts.

## Mathematical Knowledge

Mathematical knowledge of basic facts can be classified into two categories. The first category, called *declarative knowledge*, can be conceptualized as an interrelated network of relationships containing basic problems and their answers, such as  $4+7=11$  or  $11-4=7$ . The facts stored in this network have different “strengths” that determine how long it takes to retrieve an answer. The stronger the relationship, the more rapid and effortless is the retrieval process. For example, if the fact  $2+3=5$  has greater associative strength than the fact  $7+5=12$ , it will take less time to retrieve the answer 5 to the first of these two problems (Pellegrino & Goldman, 1987).

Ideally, all the facts stored in this network are retrieved from memory quickly, effortlessly, and without error. However, this is often not the case with many students, particularly those with learning problems. These students, for a variety of reasons, have not established a declarative knowledge network, and instead of retrieving facts from memory, they rely on a second category of mathematics knowledge, called procedural knowledge.

Procedural knowledge refers to methods that can be used to derive answers for problems lacking pre-stored answers. For example, in the problem  $6+8$ , a student might use a common “counting-on” strategy in which the larger of the two addends (8) is stated and the student increments the smaller addend on his or her fingers while saying 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Although correct answers can be obtained using procedural knowledge, these procedures are effortful, slow, error-prone, and they appear to interfere with learning and understanding higher-order concepts.

Underlying both declarative and procedural knowledge in mathematics is a type of understanding typically called number sense. While several definitions of number sense can be found (see, for instance, NCTM Standards 2004 or Case 1998), academics generally agree that it involves an awareness of number names, values, and relationships. Children with number sense recognize the relative differences in number quantity and how those differences can be represented. Number sense gives meaning both to an automatic math fact and to a computational procedure. Gersten and Chard roughly compare the importance of number sense in computation to the need for phonemic awareness in reading (Gersten & Chard, 1999). Both are critical building blocks. Garnett describes a typical hierarchy of procedures, or strategies, that rests upon number sense and leads eventually to automatic recall (Garnett, 1992). All elements—number sense, procedural knowledge, and declarative knowledge — must be developed together to achieve full math fact fluency.

## **MATH COMPUTATION SKILLS AT ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL**

The **research** cited above highlights the importance of **math** fact fluency; however, the **computation** capabilities of American students appear to be falling. We have found this true of many of our students in grades 3-8. Although Math Analysis, Concepts and Estimation have remained rather strong, the scores (stanine) observed in Math Computation through analysis of our ITBS Tests, are not where we would like them to be for a school of our caliber.

Meetings with teachers and administrative overview of the tests as well as the Scope and Sequence in mathematics, have assisted us with designing a program to address this need. Computation skills will be the main focus of this school-wide program that will be launched during Catholic Schools Week. Students in Pre-Kindergarten through grade 8 will be introduced to a variety of strategies that have been proven to strengthen computation skills. Every teacher, regardless of whether they teach math, will be on board for this cross-curricular approach to math. Once CSW is over, the math teachers will embrace the responsibility of strengthening these skills and concepts. We will evaluate the program after this quarter. **PLEASE LET US, AS EDUCATORS, WORK TO STRENGTHEN THESE SKILLS!**

Please Note:

- Regular, daily lessons in math will not be abandoned or replaced.
- Computation skills will be integrated with math concepts at grade level.
- There is no need for parents to be concerned. As you can see from the article above and other research, computation scores seem to be on the decline across the nation. Our goal is to be proactive rather than reactive when scores fall. The change in the National Standards for Teaching Mathematics has caused some gaps in what the textbooks are promoting as grade level skills.
- Our Math Teachers (present or former) have been committed to strengthening math skills and concepts.. Our students know a significant amount of math....this is proven by their work day to day and standardized test scores in other areas of Mathematics.
- More information can be found at: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/mathematics>

# TECHNOLOGY Corner

## WE ARE MOVING FORWARD....

A meeting of the Because We Care Technology Committee took place on Monday, January 23, 2012. The following information was discussed.

- 7 more Promethean Boards will soon be ordered and installed in March.
- Old Computer Hardware has been removed from the building with the exception of a few rooms.
- POWERSCHOOL was voted as the “best way” to move forward in technology that allows for school to home communication.
- School and parish web pages will be redesigned to “modernize” the look as well as allow for consistency among school, parish and ECC.
- Teachers will be trained to use Promethean Boards and Powerschool in March and June!
- SMARTboards will be maintained and used in Pre-K and kindergarten.
- ALERTNOW will continue to provide us with important information as well as announcements in time of emergency.
- Calculator Class Packs will be purchased and used in middle school classes before the end of this school year.
- **COMING SOON:** COWS (Computers on Wheels) (Mobile Labs) are the next big WOW! in our technology corner!

The Library Media Center website also has a wiki. There are pages for different grade levels and subjects. We can make pages for all kinds of things, teams, clubs, whatever. The wiki we’ve got lets us keep it at the privacy level you’d like. It can be made where just a teacher can see it, or your class, or the world. You can also set up accounts in your classes so the kids can use the wiki **\*without\*** email addresses. Mrs. S says... “I think it will be cool!”

Teachers can also use the wiki to plan together. It’s very flexible.

ALSO - The Library Media Center website is on the school webpage, if you scroll down under the Principal’s Post.

Here’s the link:

<http://stmsmedia.wordpress.com/>

There are tabs for students, teachers, parents, technology, new books, classroom pages, etc .

YES! We are moving forward...thanks to everyone who is assisting us with the improvements we need in technology!

## DEEP SEA BINGO

FRIDAY JANUARY 27, 2012

## PLEASE JOIN US!

BIG SEA NEWS: We celebrate our first 2 winners of the Bingo Mysteries of the Sea Challenge.....Luke Fitzgerald and Danny Macsherry.

There will be 2 more winners this Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup>!



# Catholic School Week Planning Guide

We hope that the notes included on this page of the Principal's Post will help you better understand the events taking place during Catholic Schools Week. If you have any questions – call the office or e-mail Mr. Yelenic.

## Plans for the week:

- Focus on Academics, Service and Faith
- Recognizing the people who help our school be a place for learning, faith, happiness and outreach.
- Math Computation Integration

## Monday:

- Focus on Academics/Students  
Student Appreciation Day
- DRESS DOWN DAY for Students
- Student Led Activities/Hobbies/Interests – this is a great way for our students to take the lead and share their talents with peers. Some of the activities include:
  - ❖ Italian Cooking with Chris
  - ❖ Brian's History of Video Games
  - ❖ Jake's Juggling Acts
  - ❖ Kirsten' Lavish Lava Lamps
  - ❖ Art Class with Amy and Madeline
  - ❖ Getting fit with Yoga featuring Hannah and Jordan
  - ❖ Katie's Hip Hop Dance Class
  - ❖ Surfin Safari with J. C. (Jake Curtis)
  - ❖ Fencing Featuring Brian
  - ❖ Leap of Faith -Pole Vault with Heather
  - ❖ And many more.....

## Tuesday:

- Focus on Academics/Teachers  
Teacher Appreciation Day
- Please let your teacher(s) know how much you appreciate them – a card or letter from the student/family would mean so much this day.
- Teachers Dress Down
- Teacher/staff/8<sup>th</sup> grade luncheon compliments of parents/school office - served by 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.
- Students wear StMS uniforms or Physical Education uniform if Tuesday is a gym day.
- Teachers are appreciated with an “early out” today at 2:00. Homeroom Parents and other volunteer parents will work with each homeroom to design a “paper quilt”. These quilts will be hung in the classroom as a sign of appreciation and welcome when they return on Wednesday. Mr. Yelenic and Mrs. Langevin will be visiting all classrooms during this time. If you have a great idea for your classroom quilt – let your homeroom mom know.

## Wednesday:

- Focus on Service/Community  
Community Appreciation Day
- Dress Down for \$2 Today – all money collected will serve a local family in need of medical treatment as well as others in our school family who can use a little extra help.
- A white bag is included with the Wednesday Folder. We ask that each family decorate the bag and return it with a lunch that can be shared with the hungry of Raleigh through Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen. One bag/lunch per family.

### Wednesday (continued)

- Please join us for Prayer focused on Outreach and Service!
- Hear our Faculty “rock out” during their first public performance of Christian Rock.
- Our Light the World Projects are very popular. Do our students really understand the ways in which the “work of their hands” touch our community? Let’s hear from graduates who have served others because of the example and opportunities received at StMS.

### Thursday:

- Focus on Faith/Family  
Family Appreciation Day
- Dress in uniform today unless otherwise declared by our “shadow” principal on Tuesday.

### Friday:

- Focus on Faith/Church and Volunteers  
Church and Volunteer Appreciation Day
- If you give of your time, talent and treasure in any way to our school – please stop by for breakfast. Let us celebrate you in the Blue and Gold Room beginning at 9:00. If you know of someone who will not receive this edition of The Principal’s Post – please extend the invitation.
- First Friday Mass – 10:00 – planned by our faculty. All are welcome....to join us for our final day of celebration.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Recognition – Basketball/Cheerleaders**

**Join Us....Tuesday January 31, 2012**

**Varsity Girls – 4:15**

**Varsity Boys - 5:45**

**Recognition to take place in between games!**

Listen....can you hear the Crack of the Bat?

### **It’s BASEBALL TIME....**



Dear 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys,

This year has been filled with many great sports moments and we hope for more of these moments in the spring with Boys’ Baseball! If you are interested in playing baseball – sign ups are just around the corner. Do you also love to play lacrosse? Then I have great news, I would like to tell you that you can play BOTH! Our baseball coaches, Mr. O’Connell and Mr. Kenny, had a discussion with our lacrosse coaches, Mr. Scott and Mr. Lyons. They are working together so that you can play all of your favorite spring sports. The athletic fee for playing both sports would only be \$100.

If you are interested in playing baseball for StMS - please meet our baseball coaches for a meeting on January 30, 2012 in Mr. O’Connell’s room beginning at 12:15. We look forward to seeing you!

### **Go Angels!!**

Blessings,  
Ms. Reed  
StMS Athletic Director



### **ATTENTION GIRL SCOUTS**

On Girl Scout Sunday (March 11<sup>th</sup>) we ask that all Girl Scouts, whether you belong to a school troop or another troop, wear your uniform and attend the 12:15 Mass. You will receive a special blessing from Father. If you have any questions, please contact Martha Waltersdorf a MWaltersdorf@stmichaelcary.org.

*St. Michael's Father/Daughter  
Valentine's Ball*



*Put on your  
fanciest clothes and join us for  
a night of dancing and fun!*

**Friday, February 17, 2012**

**St. Michael Parish Center**

**6pm – 9pm**

**\$10/ticket**

See the Flyer in the Wednesday Folder.

**A WORD FROM OUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

Alex Kerekes

Please see the Consent for Counseling Form and the Authorization for Release of Records Form that are included with the electronic mailing of The Principal's Post. Please use these forms if you would like for your child to meet with your school counselor either on a one time basis or on a regular schedule. If a child is referred to the counselor or stops in for a self referral – a form seeking parental permission will be sent home once a second appointment is scheduled.

**"Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education the Church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action."**

**To Teach as Jesus Did, 1972, #7**

**St. Michael's Mother/Son March**

**Madness Game Night**

**Friday, March 2, 2012**

St. Michael's Archangel Centre Gallery

6pm – 9pm

\$5/ticket

Tickets on sale in the Parish Office **Mon.,**

**Feb. 13 – Wed., Feb. 29.**

(Tickets will not be sold at the door.)



See the Flyer in the Wednesday Folder.

**Middle School Talks on Sexuality**

**Parent Advice Sessions**

This spring, students in grades 6-8 will be introduced to Sexuality from a Christian/Spiritual point of view. This age appropriate, developmental approach will be facilitated by our school counselor, Alex Kerekes, along with Mark Westrick, Director of Pastoral Care for the parish and Nina Rizzo, Director of High School Youth. Students already receive information regarding their body in science, health and religion. These "talks" will help to pull the information together. Parent Sessions focused on Christian Ways to Raise Kids Today will also be offered to interested parents of StMS students.

These sessions will replace the annual visit by Mary Ronan. As stated early in the year, we focus on our students. The surveys completed by the PTO last year as well as the talks with faculty and students presently in grades 7 and 8 indicated that the services provided in the past should be revisited. Students and faculty felt that having someone more positive when talking with students and someone who could be available after the two days of sessions should be given priority when planning this year. Dates of sessions will be announced at a later date.

## EDUCATIONAL OUTFITTERS

Winter Sale

Everything Long

(sweatshirts, pants, long sleeve polos)

15% off

Through January 31<sup>st</sup>!



INCLUDED IN THIS EDITION OF THE  
PRINCIPAL'S POST....

- Free Workshop Information – Helping Kids Cope With Anxiety
- Father/Daughter Ball
- Mother/Son Game Night
- Auction and Gala Donors
- White Bag – Community Lunch Day during CSW
- CSW Family Friendly Guide to a GREAT week!

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Fridays during Lent

2:15



My Jesus, often have I signed the death warrant by my sins; save me by Thy death from that eternal death which I have so often deserved.

Our Father.... Hail Mary.... Glory Be to the Father....

**Leader:** Jesus Christ Crucified.

**All:** Have mercy on Us.

**Leader:** May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, Rest in peace.

**All:** Amen.

Please join our StMS students for the Prayer of the Stations of The Cross! Prayer will be held in church on Friday when school is in session.

Faith. Academics. Service.  
**Catholic Schools**

The Catholic Schools Week 2012 logo is a rectangle, with the words Catholic Schools in red across the bottom of the rectangle. The "t" in Catholic is a purple cross and from the right top corner of the T/cross is an undulating green banner with words in white lettering that proclaim, "Faith. Academics. Service."

The theme focuses on three priorities that Catholic schools establish that make them stand out from other educational institutions. Children are taught faith – not just the basics of Christianity, but how to have a relationship with God. Academics, which in Catholic schools are held to very high standards, help each child reach his or her potential. Service, the giving of one's time and effort to help others, is taught both as an expression of faith and good citizenship.

Catholic Schools Week is a joint project of NCEA and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about Catholic Schools Week, visit the NCEA Web site at: [www.ncea.org/news/CatholicSchoolsWeek.asp](http://www.ncea.org/news/CatholicSchoolsWeek.asp).

The date for Catholic Schools week in 2013 is January 27 - February 2, 2013.

The NCEA, founded in 1904, is a professional membership organization that provides leadership, direction and service to fulfill the evangelizing, catechizing and teaching mission of the church. NCEA members include elementary schools, high schools, parish religious education programs and seminaries.