



ST. SEBASTIAN SCHOOL

Celebrating Over 100 Years of Catholic Education

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Greetings, St. Sebastian School Community,

I hope this week's Newsletter finds you well and mindfully present to all you hope to attain through the season of Lent, growing in holiness.

Part of our mission at St. Sebastian Catholic School is to inspire and support our students to be problem-solvers: *"The St. Sebastian Catholic School community actively engages with students in developing a solid faith foundation, pursuing academic excellence, and building community. Together we nurture and inspire our richly diverse student body to grow and persevere as critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and peacemakers, utilizing their unique gifts to love God and serve others."*

You may have read in the news that students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, are organizing a student protest to rise up against gun violence in schools following the tragic events of last week. It is the students themselves joining forces in demanding - and acting upon - greater safety in our schools. Regardless of where one stands on the issue of gun control (not the point of today's opening), I was profoundly impressed by students taking the lead on such a significant issue, working to problem-solve in finding a resolution.

I also recently came across an educational article from Dr. Charles Fay, a founder of the well-known theories and practices of *Love & Logic*, proven strategies used in schools and parenting alike in working effectively with children and teens. His theme reiterates how essential it is for children to learn to be problem-solvers. Below is the article from LoveandLogic.com:

"If children are going to survive and thrive in tomorrow's complex world, they need practice solving as many problems as possible...today. The following process is designed to get kids thinking more about their problems than we do.

Step 1: Provide a strong and sincere dose of empathy:

Empathy allows the child to stay calm enough to solve the problem... and learn from it. Experiment with saying something like:

"Oh no. This is a problem. I bet that's really upsetting."

Step 2: Hand the problem back.

After you have proven that you care, ask:

"What do you think you might do to solve this problem?"

Don't be shocked if the child mumbles, *"I don't know."*

Step 3: Ask permission to share what "some kids" have tried.

Avoid giving suggestions until you have asked:

"Would you like to hear what some other kids have tried?"

Step 4: Provide two or three alternatives for solving the problem.

Remember to avoid resistance by saying:

"Some kids decide to _____ . How would that work for you?"

Step 5: Allow the child to solve or not to solve the problem.

Resist the urge to tell the child which alternative to pick.

End the session by showing your faith in the child:

"Good luck! Let me know how this turns out."

Problem-solving is a life skill, habit, and disposition that will help and equip our children in all aspects of life - academically, spiritually, in attaining goals and future endeavors, social relationships, and the list could go on and on. We do our best to encourage problem solving in the classroom and interactions throughout the school day, as I'm sure you do at home. Rather than try to shield and protect our children through all of life's bumps and bruises, let us support one another in encouraging a community of faith-driven, justice-minded, and solution-oriented problem-solvers, no matter the issue. Let us also keep all of the souls impacted by the Florida tragedy in our prayers, knowing we hurt whenever any of God's children do as well.

God bless you,

Ms. Grams

SAD NEWS TO SHARE – We regret to share the news that Mrs. Judi Kearney has passed away following a lengthy illness. Mrs. Kearney was a beloved first grade teacher here at St. Sebastian School for 27 years before retiring. Visitation will be held at Schmidt & Bartelt on Friday, February 23th from 5:00 – 7:00 PM. Mass will be held at St. Sebastian Church at 10:00 AM on Saturday, February 24th.

HALF-DAY ADDED TO OUR CALENDAR - On **FRIDAY, MARCH 9th**, we will be adding a half-day to our school calendar in order for our faculty to attend an Archdiocesan professional development program. Please mark your calendars and **plan to pick up your child at 11:00am** on that day.

ENROLLMENT STATUS NOTIFICATIONS - All families who enrolled in the Milwaukee Choice Program online system will receive a notice coming home with the family mail carrier later this week, alerting you whether all necessary information was received within the February window. You will see on the slip coming home whether your family's status is either "verified" or "not verified" at this time. All families who provided proper documentation in the February are "verified," in the system, but the next step for enrollment is meeting Registration requirements of St. Sebastian School. Official enrollment information and each family's status will be sent out as a target goal by the end of March.

STORY TIME WITH STACEY - Families with kids 2-5 years old are invited to Story Time With Stacey on Wednesday, February 28th, 8:30 AM. Spread the word! Pre-registration required. Please see the attached flyer for details.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES, TARDIES, AND EARLY DEPARTURES - Please note that families whose students have excessive absences, tardies, or early departures from the school day will be receiving notifications this week. State law mandates students are absent no more than (10) school days or are considered "truant." Additionally, when students are not present for the entire school day (when otherwise not impacted by illness, unavoidable appointments, or special circumstances) it impacts your child's progress, the teacher who feels responsible for catching your child up in his or her planning time, and the rest of the class as students come and go from the class. Excessive absences in any or all of these categories may impact families' enrollment status at St. Sebastian School, and it is an area we currently need to improve upon across the board. Thank you for prioritizing working with your family to address concerns if you receive a notification.

NEW SEB'S SPIRITWEAR IS COMING! - Quite soon (most likely next week's Newsletter or before), a link will be sent out to all where you may begin ordering our new and exciting Seb's spiritwear! We are excited to bring you options that merge our logo's intentional design in reflecting our community's mission, as well as our past, present, and future. Anyone will be able to order spiritwear directly from the site. If ordered by the 20th of each month, merchandise will be delivered to St. Seb's for pick-up by the 1st of the following month. Watch for the link coming soon!

GOOD NEWS – SAFEGUARDING SESSION TO BE HELD HERE – If you have been wanting to take the Safeguarding All God's Children class, we have a convenient opportunity coming up. It will be offered here at St. Sebastian in the evening on **Thursday, March 8th**. This one-time session is required by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Any adult working or volunteering with children or chaperoning a field trip is required to have participated in this awareness session, as well as completing a background check. You must register online at www.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding.htm.

ROSIE READER - Congratulations to the following student for their progress on the Rosie Reader program:

Completing the letter "E" in reading:

K4 - Archie Ambrose

Completing the letter "D" in reading:

K4 - Maren O'Brien and Maame Dampare

Great job! Keep up the good work!!

READERS ARE LEADERS – Congratulations to these students for earning the following points! Keep reading!

5+ Points

Ella Rose Banks

50+ Points

Maxine Leopold

Angelo D'Amico

75+ Points

Roman Zielinski

100+ Points

Leonardo Lococo

BOX TOPS UPDATE - Congratulations to the K4 class for winning gold week 2 of the Box Tops Olympics, 4th grade for winning silver, and 5th grade for winning bronze. Nice job everyone! This is the final week of the Box Tops Olympics! Winner receives a pizza party! Go for Gold! Good Luck!

TRIVIA NIGHT - MARCH 17TH - Do you have the luck of the Irish, or the skill of a trivia wizard? Either way, join us for a night of fellowship, fun, and fundraising. Register your team (up to 10 members-age 16 or older) by filling out the attached form and returning to the school office. Teams must register and pay the entry fee of \$10/team member. Bring your own snacks and beverages, but a little leprechaun says there will be 992 ounces of a well-known green St. Patrick's Day beverage for everyone's (of age) enjoyment. Prize given for the best team spirit such as creative team name, theme, coordinated outfits, or table decorations!

OLYMPIC RESULTS -The results are in. . . the Olympics were awesome. The team competition saw Team MSP win the Gold, Team LoMount win the Silver, and the Gormans win the Bronze. The female competition saw Liz Martin win gold, Kelly Bentfield win silver, and Cat Bresser win the bronze. The male competition saw Joe Cayen take the Gold, Steve Whitney take the Silver, and Jon Metz take the Bronze. Congratulations to all the wonderful competitors. Many, many great costumes from all over the world. The night was just another example of what a wonderful community we have here at Sebs. Proceeds will go toward buying and raising new American and Wisconsin flags for the gymnasium, a perfect Olympic tribute. Any remaining proceeds will go towards funding a new sound system for the gymnasium as well. Thanks to everyone who came and we hope more can join us next year.

FATHER/VIP-DAUGHTER DANCE PICTURES - A huge thank you to Heidi Steeno (mom to Simone in 5th grade) for volunteering to take photos during the Father/VIP- Daughter Dance. Check out the photos at <http://bit.ly/2C0rYXW>. Great photos of a great night. If you would like to print any photos, please either create a Snapfish account or login to order pictures.

YEARBOOK ORDERS – Order forms for this year's school yearbook were sent home with each student last week. Extra order forms are available in the school office. The cost is \$13.00. Orders are due March 8th. Checks should be made payable to St. Sebastian School.

NEXT PIZZA FUNDRAISER – The order form is attached for the next 8th grade pizza fundraiser. It will take place on March 2nd. Order forms are due by Tuesday, February 27th. Late orders cannot be accepted. The 8th grade class appreciates your support.