



ST. SEBASTIAN SCHOOL

Celebrating Over 100 Years of Catholic Education

March 14, 2018

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Dear St. Sebastian School Community,

As you know, last week was a - different - sort of week around St. Sebastian and St. Coletta! Though one news reporting station portrayed the event as more of a scene from the movie *Backdraft*, we are thankful in knowing what we visibly saw from the outside was more of the small billows of smoke released when a pope is declared from the Vatican!

Knowing students were dismissed from Mount Olive sporadically through the afternoon, we felt it important to re-group as a community Monday morning first thing. Students and staff gathered in the gymnasium as we talked about last week's events, including:

- sharing simple details about the nature of the fire, as well as sharing specifics of the clean-up process,
- highlighting how safe and clean the building is following a weekend of clean-up,
- how they are cared for, loved, and safe at school every day!,
- how AWESOME they behaved, followed safety procedures, and went with the flow of the day,
- how thankful we are for a community of AWESOME St. Seb's & St. Coletta faculty and staff who keep us safe,
- how thankful we are for our First Responders and kindness from our neighbors at Mount Olive, and we prayed together in thanksgiving for our many blessings as well as for a great start to a new week!

As you may know, today holds a national "Walk Out" movement to protest violence in schools and promote peace. Though we did not plan to "walk out" with students given their young ages, we still wanted to honor the day and our place within it in an age appropriate manner. It is admittedly often a challenge in knowing how to best convey and discuss topics of a sensitive nature to over 300 students spanning the ages of 4 through 14. We want our students to be socially aware of the world around them, yet always, of course, information delivered in an age appropriate manner. We also are mindful in yielding to your conversations at home as the best place for such conversations to occur. To that end and on the heels of discussing "safety" following last week, I mentioned to students that today St. Sebastian and St. Coletta will be part of a "peaceful movement" (refraining from mentioning "guns" or "violence"), where we are intentional peacemakers in our schools, true to our mission. Father Larry also discussed and reinforced this at mass today, as we are challenging our community to participate in a "Walk UP" movement from now through the remainder of Lent, where they may elect to "Walk UP" to others with the intention of spreading peace and kindness.

They might *Walk UP* to someone in the cafeteria eating alone and invite him or her to sit together...*Walk UP* to another on the playground and invite him or her to play...*Walk UP* to compliment someone who they may know can be treated unkindly from time to time...or *Walk UP* to someone they don't know well and introduce themselves, to name a few ideas. Fr. Larry will bless red rubber bracelets for students to wear if they wish, visibly showing their involvement in the *Walk UP* movement. Ms. Zimmerman informed me she already tried this with 1st graders earlier in the week in PE class, challenging them to *Walk UP* to a someone they do not usually play with and partner up for the activity. The children's reflections after the activity were precious. As a school, we talked about how hopefully after Lent, this practice will become a habit. Thank you in advance for supporting this from home and asking your children about their experience within the *Walk UP* movement!

One additional piece I want to share on the heels of last Thursday came from parental feedback as well as an in-the-moment realization that we need a better system of communication to reach you if there is an emergency. I am pleased to share we are responding to this need by adding a system called "Phonevite" to our protocols for emergencies, weather notifications (if a snow day, for example), and those rare communications essential to ensure everyone has heard. This system will be used sparingly and judiciously, not for reasons such as "*Remember there's a bake sale today!*") All home and cell phones we have on file will be added to this program so you hear from us efficiently and effectively on your phones, rather than by email through our Newsletter system. As in cases of emergencies such as last week, please know those calls are made once the children are first safe and settled, once we have the proper information to know what to convey, and once we are in a place to respond. I hope you experienced this was all the case last week, despite the time you first heard of the situation. If you have other safety suggestions, we are always open to those and hopeful you will share your ideas.

Thank you for your support through the challenges of last week. Let us challenge ourselves as adults as well to *Walk UP* to others in the community in the spirit of promoting more peace and kindness in our school communities.

God bless you,
Ms. Grams

WELCOME – We would like to welcome Nataly Woods to Mrs. Schlater's first grade class. We hope you are enjoying the first week in your new school.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHESS TEAM - The Wisconsin All Catholic Chess Invitational sponsored by St. Sebastian School was held this past weekend in the Church Hall. A total of 52 players from 9 different schools participated. The Saint Sebastian team consisted of Margaret Murray, Brendan Conklin, Joseph Murray, Bennet Corr, Tahlia Melendes, and Harrison Schwabe competing in the K3 division along with Zach Klarer, Luke Murray, Matthew Wallace, and Marik McKenna competing in the K6 division. The K6 team finished in fourth place in their division, one point behind the 3rd place team. Special congratulations to the K3 team which took 1st place in their division, beating the 2nd place team by 2 points.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY – You may choose to dress down and wear green on Friday, March 16th in celebration of St. Patty's Day.

SCRAP METAL DRIVE DATE CORRECTION - In the Home & School minutes from last week there was a typo stating the Scrap Metal Drive is on April 18. It is actually on April 28. More details to follow.

WISCONSIN FORWARD EXAM STATE TESTING - Students in grades 3-8 will participate in the Wisconsin Forward Exam State Standardized test again this year. The Forward Exam measures student proficiency against academic content area standards set by the State of Wisconsin. The testing window for the Forward Exam is March 19 - May 4. Grades 3-8 will complete tests in the areas of ELA (including Reading, Grammar, Listening and Writing) and Math. Additionally, grades 4 and 8 will complete tests in the areas of Science and Social Studies. Individual class testing schedules will vary.

All components of the Wisconsin Forward Exam are administered electronically. We will be primarily using the new computers in the computer lab and also Chromebooks for some sections of the test. **All students will need headphones** for the test. Many of the students already have headphones at school. If you have not yet sent headphones for your student in grades 3-8, please do so by March 16th. It will not be easy for siblings to share, so please send a pair for each child. Ear buds are fine as well.

Please be certain, as always, that your children are well rested, present at school on time and for the entirety of the school day, as well as eating a nutritious breakfast. Whether in the classroom or for assessments, we want to ensure students are prepared and ready to engage in their learning!

NO CHILDRENS CHOIR – There is no children's choir until after Easter break. Choir is cancelled on March 21st and March 28th. After that, it will resume every Tuesday from 3:00 – 3:30. The last session is scheduled for May 29th.

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

Completing the letter "I" in reading:

K5 - Grace Mahn

Great job - keep on reading!!

LOST and FOUND- The Lost and Found Box downstairs near the cafeteria is overflowing! Please check it if you are missing clothes, backpacks, coats, water bottles, lunch boxes, etc. Any items not claimed after Spring Break will be donated!

TRIVIA NIGHT - MARCH 17TH - It's not too late to register a team. Please join us for a night of fellowship, fun, and fundraising. Your trivia night of fun will directly benefit purchasing new books for the school library. The library supports the philosophy that books should be like windows: a way for students to learn about a world outside their own. Books should also be like mirrors: a place where students can see themselves in stories. To this end, we will use trivia funds to add to our multicultural book selection in the library. Last trivia night raised over \$1000 to support the library! Let's beat that number this year! Register your team (up to 10 members-age 16 or older, but it doesn't have to be that many) 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! Molly Ambrose has been organizing some grade level teams, so if you are looking for a team, please contact her at mambrose@saintsebs.org and she will arrange that for you. Mr. Hohl is making a guest appearance to emcee the questions for the night. As a sneak peak, some categories include TV series, sports, St. Patrick's Day, Movies and a category of questions our own students have researched. May the luck of the Irish be with you!

MILEAGE CLUB - Mileage club is in need of parent volunteers starting after Spring Break. The program opens up to 1st grade in April and we need parents, especially 1st grade parents, to help encourage the runners and punch their mileage card. Please consider helping out either regularly or as your schedule allows on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays from 11:45-1:00. Please contact Cat Bresser at ccbresser@gmail.com with your availability. This is a really great program for our children and we need more parents to help out to keep it running (no pun intended).

GRANDPARENT/SPECIAL GUEST DAY - St. Sebastian's annual Grandparent/VIP day is on May 2nd. Home and School is preparing an invitation to be mailed. An invitation will be sent to all the addresses on the grandparent forms that have been turned in. If you have not returned your grandparent form yet, or if a grandparent is not able to attend, and you would like an invitation sent to a "Special Guest" for your child, please send a name and address to the Home and School Chair, Molly Ambrose at mambrose@saintsebs.org.

SEBS STATE CHAMPIONS - Special congratulations to two St. Sebs 7th graders. Congrats to Nevan Kearney, and his team from Elmbrook, for winning the Division 2 Bantam level (13 & 14 year olds) Wisconsin Hockey State Championship and to Jack Ambrose, and his team from the Milwaukee Blaze, for winning the Division 4 Pee Wee level (11 & 12 year olds) Wisconsin State Hockey Championship. Way to make Sebs proud!