



# St. Mary Catholic Middle School

St. Mary Catholic Schools, in partnership with family, church and community, provides a quality Catholic education that is focused on faith, academics, service and personal development from preschool through high school to influence a rapidly changing world.

## Newsletter

### School Community

Welcome back to our returning families and a sincere welcome to all those new to our school community. Our hope for our system is that we will all work together to create an open and caring environment in a warm Christian atmosphere. We want parents and staff to encourage all students to practice positive school habits and to involve families in the total education process. There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in the school experience.

We hope that throughout the year, our community will come together to participate in and volunteer at a variety of school functions, activities and events, including celebrations of our Christian faith. In this way relationships are formed and positive attitudes developed that give positive input to our children. It is said that a child's life is like a piece of paper, on which every person leaves a mark. Hopefully, all marks left during the year will be indicative of respect, care and encouragement.

Central to the very existence of our school is the integration of faith and culture transmitted in the various subjects that comprise the curriculum. In this way we hope that our students will learn how to follow Christ within our secular culture. We invite all parents to feel welcome, comfortable and free to contribute to the cultural context of our school community.

**“Lord, as we come together to form our school community for this year, empower us to be generous, confirming and obliging. May the gifts of Your Spirit be alive and practiced in every aspect of our school life, as we live it together. Amen.”**

***Mary, our Patron and Mother of us all ... PRAY FOR US !  
Live Jesus in our hearts ... FOREVER !***

### Upcoming Events

Welcome back!!

- 3 SMCMS Prayer/Liturgy
- 3 8<sup>th</sup> grade to Camp Lakotah
- 4 8<sup>th</sup> grade back at 3:30PM
- 4 All forms due to SMCMS office
- 7 Labor Day-No School
- 10 SMCMS Prayer/Liturgy
- 10 7<sup>th</sup> grade Retreat/Team Building  
Camp Lakotah 8:10AM to 5PM
- 11 6<sup>th</sup> grade Team Building
- 17 SMCMS Prayer/Liturgy
- 18 Football Game/Middle School night @ SMCHS
- 24 SMCMS Prayer/Liturgy
- 25 SMCS No School-Staff Development
- 25 SMCMS Meet Me In The Middle 6-9PM
- 26 7<sup>th</sup> Grade VB Tournament
- 26 Connect 5 Run/Walk
- 29 SMCMS Picture Retakes





## Notes from the Campus Minister/Counselor

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### **STAR**

Students Teacher Advisory and Recreation (STAR) is the name given to the time spent each day when students meet with their advisor. Each student has been grouped with 11 to 14 other students and has been assigned an advisor teacher for the school year. This teacher becomes an expert on your child. This teacher is a direct link between you and other teachers in your child's life. Together, parents and the advisor can help make the transition to Middle School easier and help ensure that older students are well prepared for high school. Mrs. Kalas, our school counselor, is responsible for helping teachers in the role of advisor. By offering various activities which help foster self-esteem, reinforce values and make students better decision makers, STAR time can be effectively used to promote social, emotional and spiritual growth in all students.

Each month STAR groups will focus on a character education theme on which activities and discussions will be centered. September will be all about "Getting to Know You." STAR time will include ice-breakers and team-building activities done in small STAR groups as well as some with the grade level. Teachers will take time to help students foster and build positive relationships with their teachers and one another.

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### **Masses, Prayer Services and Collections**

Every Thursday we will gather as a Faith Community to pray together. We will celebrate Mass or have a religion class lead us in a prayer service. On these special days we will also pass the baskets for a collection. We feel it is important to model the practice of tithing and to encourage our students to do the same. Our collection for the month of September will benefit Habitat for Humanity.

In our first prayer service tomorrow, students will learn the story of Mary Our Lady of Hope, for which our beautiful chapel is named. Because these are grade level prayer services this week and next, they will be in our chapel. If you would like more information about Our Lady of Hope, also known as Our Lady of Pontmain, go to:

<http://www.roman-catholic-saints.com/our-lady-of-pontmain.html> or  
[http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian\\_appearitions/approved\\_apparitions/pontmain/](http://www.miraclehunter.com/marian_appearitions/approved_apparitions/pontmain/).

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### **Guidance**

SMCMS employs a full time School Counselor whose role is to advocate for students' educational, social, emotional and spiritual well-being. Mary Lou Kalas can be found at SMCMS all day, every day. Mrs. Kalas meets with each grade throughout the school year in a various classroom settings and works with Mr. D, the health teacher, as well as the STAR teachers to help students learn more about developmental issues they face as young teenagers. Topics including conflict resolution, problem solving, decision making, career awareness, resiliency against drugs and other unhealthy behaviors and acceptance of diversity are just a few examples of the "Developmental Guidance" subjects that will be covered.

Mrs. Kalas also provides small group opportunities on topics such as friendship, loss, and family separations for students as well as



opportunities for one-on-one counseling. Students are encouraged to stop in and meet Mrs. Kalas during their free hours or after school in her office. Mrs. Kalas can also be found in the cafeteria walking around talking to students during lunchtime. Counselors love to hear about the positive things that are happening with young people as well as the challenging... no matter how "big" or "small"! Students and parents can feel free to partner with Mrs. Kalas with any concerns to find healthy and productive solutions to any concerns they face.

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## School News

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### Fall Camp, Teambuilding and Retreat

This Thursday and Friday, September 3 and 4, our **eighth graders** will be at Camp Lakota for a two day event for teambuilding and retreat. Students will develop leadership skills and learn to prioritize their goals for the year, both in faith and academics.

Next Thursday, September 10, our **seventh graders** will go to Camp Lakota for a one day teambuilding/retreat event. They will focus on a theme of “Acceptance” as they learn to celebrate diversity and work to be inclusive. This is a particularly pertinent theme for seventh grade, which seems to be the peak grade with “growing pains.” In middle school, with students trying to figure out where they fit in, they often “compare” themselves to one another, which can lead to “judgment” of their peers. This retreat/teambuilding day reminds students of the value of diversity and the dignity of all!

Finally, **sixth graders** will spend Friday, September 11 participating in our annual Teambuilding Day. This is a day designed to help STAR groups learn to work together, effectively problem solve, increase trust and self-confidence, improve communication and listening, increase personal responsibility, and give students a sense of empowerment. It will also give them practice in removing unnecessary limitations they may put on themselves when considering possible solutions to the problems posed by the activities. At the end of the day, it is typical to see that STAR groups have bonded and are able to support each other throughout the school year.

These days are important for personal and groups growth. Please keep all the students in your prayers on these various days of retreat, teambuilding and personal growth.



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### SMCMS Meet Me in The Middle

The St. Mary Catholic Middle School annual fundraiser is right around the corner. You won’t want to miss this year’s event, so mark your calendar for Friday, September 25, from 6 - 9 pm. This year we will be holding the event in our new middle school commons. Be a part of the fun, eat great food and listen to live entertainment!

We are looking for families to host or co-host event boards. We have many ideas for boards that will make this an easy process for you. You will receive volunteer hours for your generous donation of time. If you are interested in hosting a board event or know someone who might be please contact Kay Bahn at sbahn@new.rr.com.

If you are not able to host a board event, please consider being an event sponsor. All event sponsors are recognized on the evening of Meet Me in the Middle. If you choose to be an event sponsor, please check with the Human Resource department at your company to see if they offer an employee match program, or go to the SMCS website at <http://smcatholicsschools.org/>, click on the “Support Us” button at the top right, and scroll down to check for companies with employee matching programs.

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### Connect 5

Mark your Calendars for the connect 5 Run/Walk for 5 Schools. This event will be held on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>. Public is welcome. This event will raise money for the new St. Mary Catholic Middle School. It will depart from St. Patrick Parish Center, Menasha and end at the new middle school location. Entertainment will be provided after the event along with cash concessions for all to enjoy. A registraion form is attached with this newsletter.

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### 1:1 Laptop Program

We have begun implementing the 1:1 laptop program at SMCMS. Students have started doing their initial login and will continue to learn how to properly use and care for their laptops.

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**SMCS SCRIP News**

\* The Summer Scrip Program, with pick-up at SMCHS, will end Thursday, September 3. There is no Scrip the week of Labor Day (Sept 7- 11). The first delivery to the schools will be Thursday, Sept 17th.

\* Need to change the school pick-up location? Send the request to Ann Harris in the Business Office:  
aharris@smcatholicsschools.org



\* Reminder – all on-line orders need to be placed by 9:00 am on Monday morning for pick-up on Thursday.

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**Notes from Food Service**

St. Mary Catholic Schools participates in the federal free and reduced lunch program for qualified families. To learn more, read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) flyer. Follow the [instructions](#) to complete the [application](#) for the 2015-2016 school year. We encourage anyone who may qualify to fill out and return the form. If you qualify, please fill this [sharing information form](#). Checks for lunch money should be made out to SMCS Food Service. Middle School lunch costs \$2.60. This may be dropped off in the SMCMS office.



Every Thursday the alternate entre menu will be Pizza Hut Pizza. The cost for a super on that item will be \$2.00. The first piece is included in the price of their meal and any additional is \$2.00. For a super on the other days, the extra entre will cost \$1.00. [SMCMS September Lunch Menu](#)

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**Lunch Help**

A Sign Up Genius notification was sent out to all the parents. If you are able, please sign up for a shift to help towards your Parent Involvement hours.

[Sign Up Genius link](#) You will have to login in order to sign up.

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**SMCMS Forms**

A big thank you to all of our parents who did their ‘homework’ and turned in their forms the first day of school. Any student who brings all of the following forms, field trip payment, and summer reading work by September 4<sup>th</sup> will get an out of dress code pass.

- \* [Medication Consent Form](#)
- \* [Field Trip Permission Form](#) (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade) and payment
- \* [Student Emergency Information](#)
- \* [Student/Parent Handbook Acknowledgement](#) (Please read the [2015-2016 SMCMS Student/Parent Handbook](#))
- \* [Technology Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- \* [Terms and Conditions/Accidental Damage Agreement](#)
- \* [VIRTUS Diocesan Volunteer Code of Conduct](#) (Must be signed every year)

We are still missing some and would like them turned in as soon as possible. All forms are located on the forms tab of the web page. We also received several permission slips signed but no payment. If you have not turned in your check made payable to SMCS, please do so as soon as possible.

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**Medication**

We have several medication sheets with directions on how to disperse meds but no medication was sent. If you anticipate your child needing pain killers, etc., please send to school in the original package with his/her name on it. All medication must be kept in the school office.

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**SMCS Apparel**

New SMCS apparel is available on the SMCS website! All of the approved shirts for the 2015-2016 dress code are available to see and purchase, along with other items! Check on the following link: [SMCS apparel](#)

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**First and Vex Clubs**

FIRST introduces students to real-world engineering challenges by building LEGO based robots to complete tasks on a thematic playing surface. FIRST LEGO league teams, guided by their imaginations and adult coaches, discover exciting career possibilities and, through the process, learn to make positive contributions to society.

The SMCMS FIRST program typically meets 3 times a week for 2-3 hours at a time. Students will learn about teamwork, presentation/public speaking, research/problem solving and documentation. These building blocks feed into the SMCHS VEX program by teaching the basic skills needed to take on larger technical and engineering challenges. Currently we have 3 openings on the 2015 team. Contact John Ahles [jahles@kcc.com](mailto:jahles@kcc.com) for more information or check out the 2015 challenge at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/fll>

This school year, the SMCS Robotics Club is offering the opportunity for St. Mary 8th grade students to join a SMCS VEX Robotics team and compete in the 2015-2016 competition season.

Working with adult volunteer mentors and student peers in a fun, safe, and team focused environment, your son or daughter through hands-on activities will help design, build, and program a robot to compete against other school robotics teams.

The SMCS Robotics program is about encouraging STEM educations and much more. It is also about encouraging the values of creativity and innovation, working together, sharing ideas, and treating each other well.

The 8th grade team or teams will begin meeting Wednesday evening September 16 from 6 PM to 8 PM in the robotics building which is part of the concession\athletics complex on the SMCS Neenah campus. Parents are also asked to attend for a short meeting regarding the program and competition schedule. The team meeting schedule will include Saturdays from 12 PM to 3 PM and that start date will be announced soon after school begins. There will be a \$50.00 per student participation fee. If you have any questions, please contact Greg Cheslock at [gcheslock@new.rr.com](mailto:gcheslock@new.rr.com) or 920 268 9373.

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**Parent Involvement**

SMCMS requires 40 hours of parent involvement as part of having a child enrolled at SMCMS. Research has proven that parent involvement and student achievement go hand in hand. Parents may choose to pay the fee or give 40 hours of time to SMCMS. Parents are billed \$200 as a parent involvement fee. This fee may be worked off through volunteer activities (\$5.00 per hour). Parents are responsible for keeping track of the hours they work and hours are credited on a quarterly basis. **Please provide all dates and be specific in the details.** Service needs to benefit SMCMS but only 10 hours can come from Scrip or Jumbo Gumbo. Some possibilities include:

- Meet Me in the Middle
- Serving lunch
- Concessions/gate/score book/ clock at home games
- Coaching/assistant coaches
- Retreats/field trips
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade teambuilding
- Socials
- Mini-course coordinators/teachers
- Building cleaning/organizing
- Forensic coaches
- Math team help
- Teacher appreciation lunch/Supper
- Classroom help (contact your child’s teachers)
- Attending parent meetings
- Student Teacher Conferences

**Not Parent Involvement:**

- Attending band/choir concerts
- Attending sports games
- Attending forensic/solo & ensemble performances

The SMCS Booster Club asking parents to work 5 shifts/athlete/sport, with a max of 20 shifts/family.

We have determined that you can work SMCHS athletic games and count count up to 10 hours of involvement volunteering at the high school events towards your middle school involvement hours. The purpose of the MS involvements hours is to help increase parent volunteers at the middle school level. However, you will still be expected to complete the necessary hours asked by the Booster Club, if more hours are needed.

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### **MMITM Highlights**

- \* Win a chance to be Mayor of Neenah for the Day!
- \* Battle of the Bartenders, Mr. Z vs Mr. D (more exciting than Tom Cruise in Cocktail!)
- \* How about your very own Personal Parking Spot for the Year?

**Prize drawings** to be held for advance ticket sales! Advance ticket sales begin at Parent Orientation on August 31, please bring \$20.00 cash or check.

We are looking for **families to host or co-host event boards**. We have many ideas for boards that will make this an easy process for you. You will receive volunteer hours for your generous donation of time. If you are interested in hosting a board event or know someone who might be please contact Kay Bahn at [sbahn@new.rr.com](mailto:sbahn@new.rr.com).

If you are not able to host a board event, please **consider being an event sponsor**. All event sponsors are recognized on the evening of Meet Me in the Middle. If you choose to be an event sponsor, please check with the Human Resource department at your company to see if they offer an employee match program, or go to the SMCS website at <http://smcatholicschools.org/>, click on the "Support Us" button at the top right, and scroll down to check for companies with employee matching programs. We have attached a sponsor form for your convenience. Sponsor forms are also available at Parent Orientation.

Enjoy your last week-end before school starts! Thank you for your continued support and God Bless You!

Becky Aldag & Betsy Ellenberger  
MMITM Co-Chairs



## Meet Me In The Middle Sponsorship Opportunities

\_\_\_\_ Platinum Sponsor - \$500 or more

\_\_\_\_ Gold Sponsor - \$250 - \$499

\_\_\_\_ Silver Sponsor - \$100 - \$249

\_\_\_\_ Bronze Sponsor - \$99 and under

**Total Contribution:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please charge my sponsorship to this credit card\*:

\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_ American Express \_\_\_\_ Discover

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ CVS \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Credit card information will be destroyed in compliance with federal and state guidelines*

**Payments must be received by Friday, September 4, 2015, to ensure event recognition.**

How would you like your name to appear on the Meet Me In The Middle event signage?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to remain anonymous: yes / no

I would like to be recognized in the SMCS Annual Report: yes / no

Thank you for supporting St. Mary Catholic Schools. Please make your check payable to SMCS - Meet Me In The Middle and return to St. Mary Catholic Middle School 1000 Zephyr Drive Neenah, WI 54956. Please include this form with your gift. Your contribution is 100% tax deductible



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**Prize drawings to be held for advance ticket sales!**

**Please tear off and remit form below with payment**

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**ATTENDEE NAMES:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**# of ATTENDEES:** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 each = \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to SMCS**



# CONNECT 5

5K Run/Walk for 5 Schools

**SATURDAY  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2015**

**Public welcome! This non-competitive run/walk will raise money for the new St. Mary Catholic Middle School. It will depart from St. Patrick Parish Center, Menasha and end at the new middle school location on the St. Mary Central campus at 1050 Zephyr Drive, Neenah via the Trestle/Friendship trail. Entertainment will be provided after the event along with cash concessions for all to enjoy.**

Fee: \$15/student - \$25/adult - \$60/family (immediate family only)

**Mail registration form and payment to:  
St. Mary Central High School  
c/o Run/Walk  
1050 Zephyr Drive  
Neenah, WI 54956  
OR**

**Register online by clicking on the  
New Middle School icon at [www.tcces.org](http://www.tcces.org)**

**Registration/Check-in: 8:45-am-10:00 am  
Start Time: 10:00 am  
Concessions: 10:30am-1:00pm**



T-shirts may be picked-up  
at St. Mary Catholic Middle School  
on Friday, September 25, 2015  
from 3:00-5:00 pm  
or at check-in on Saturday

\*Participants who register by September 9, 2015 will receive a t-shirt!

Busing will be available leaving SMC at 9:00 am going to the start line, and back at 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm

## Connect 5 5K Run/Walk REGISTRATION FORM

Family Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Primary/Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

I cannot participate but wish to donate: Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Participant(s) Name	Birth Date	Circle Shirt Size		Participant(s) Name	Birth Date	Circle Shirt Size	
		Youth	Adult			Youth	Adult
_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL	_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL
_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL	_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL
_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL	_____	_____	S M L	S M L XL XXL

LIABILITY INFORMATION: By participating in the Connect 5, I agree to release and hold harmless Saint Mary Catholic Schools its parties, officers, directors, employees and agents, the City of Neenah, City of Menasha, or Town of Menasha from any liability, losses, claims, actions, costs, including fees resulting from injury to person or damage to property arising out of my participation.

Participant/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Fee Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_