

# St. Mary's Cathedral School Bits and Pieces!

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**Home School Association (HSA)** - All parents are invited to be active in HSA. HSA raises money through after-school popcorn sales and the sale of St. Mary's Spirit shirts and hoodies. HSA uses the money to provide Christmas bags for the students and various other projects or classroom needs. HSA also sponsors the Back to School Swim Party, Spirit Nights at community restaurants, St. Nicholas Day, Teacher Appreciation week, Field Day and Wonderland Night. HSA has meetings once each month. The HSA has compiled a list of events and special days that take place during the school year. The list is by no means complete but we hope that this information is helpful!

- Room Parents (M thru 5th) – Each class has 2 room parents. Room parents work with the teacher to provide parties and coordinate volunteers for school projects. Room parents are responsible for the class project to be auctioned at the spring fund raiser.
- FACTS tuition management is the online source St. Mary's School uses for tuition and billing. All families are required to create a FACTS account when they enroll.
- FACTS SIS (ParentsWeb) – St. Mary's School uses FACTS SIS software system to enroll students in the school. It is also a great tool for parents to track student grades and attendance. There is no service fee for using this service. Set up your account by clicking on the link on our website.
- Spirit Day (K thru 5th) – Occurs every Thursday. Students may wear clean denim shorts or jeans with any St. Mary's t-shirt.
- Wednesday Notes (M thru 5th) – The principal publishes an electronic newsletter every Wednesday. The Wednesday Note contains information on upcoming events and school happenings. It is very important to read the Wednesday Note and all the attachments that come with it. It is also posted on the school website. The school has a Facebook page and posts various announcements and events. Communication also occurs through emails sent through FACTS/ParentsWeb and occasionally through Flocknote.
- Eucharistic Adoration (K thru 5th) – Once a month, grades K-5 spend 20 minutes in Eucharistic Adoration held in the chapel at the church.
- Extended Day (Montessori thru 5th) – Extended Day is available for all students who need to stay later than 3:15/3:30p.m. Extended Day is open until 6pm. Registration is required for all students that need to use this service and there is a \$25 registration fee. The cost is \$10.00 a day and is billed as an incidental through FACTS.
- Friday Mass (M thru 5th) - St. Mary's School Mass is every Friday at 8:15am, unless there is no school on Friday.
- Harrington Library Consortium (K thru 5th) – St. Mary's is the first Catholic School to be a member of the HLC. Each student receives a library card for use in all the public libraries. Students do not need to bring their library cards to school.
- ITBS Testing (1st thru 5th) – Students in grades 1-5 take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, which is utilized as a diagnostic tool, during the fall semester. Results are shared with parents. The superintendent determines if the test will be a fall or spring administration.
- Lunches (M thru 5th) – Currently the school serves hot, healthy lunches in the cafeteria. Lunch trays are \$3.50 for students; Milk is \$.50. Parents may eat with their child but may not bring in fast food from restaurants or carbonated drinks. Parent meals are \$4.50. Parents must notify the school by 9:00 a.m. if you plan to eat lunch with your child, however, we ask all parents to wait until AFTER the first six weeks

of school before coming for lunch. This gives the staff and students time to implement and adjust new procedures. The lunch menu is available on the school website and is sent home once each month through Wednesday notes.

- Mileage Club (K thru 5th) – Students can participate in Mileage Club beginning at 7:30a.m., in the gym on Tuesday through Thursday according to their class schedule. Occasionally students run outside in the church parking lot area. Students receive t-shirts after reaching the marathon mark (26.2 miles).
- Piano and Voice– Private Piano and/or Voice lessons are offered for interested students. The lessons are held during the student’s lunch recess. Information about signing up is sent out at the beginning of the school year.
- PSIA (Private Schools Interscholastic Association) - Academic competition for students in grades 1-5. Events include: Dictionary Skills, Maps/Graphs/Charts/, Number Sense, Creative/Ready Writing, Mathematics, Prose Interpretation, Music Memory, Story Telling and Spelling. Parents are encouraged to coach students to compete. Teachers also act as coaches. The state competition is held in Ft. Worth.
- Organized Sports (K thru 5th) – Throughout the year, several sports are played through Kids Inc. Check with the Kids, Inc. office for sports and registration dates.
- Second Grade Sacraments (2nd) – All Catholic second grade students (who have been baptized) participate in First Reconciliation and First Communion. If the child is not Catholic, he/she still participates in the classes, listens to the teachings and participates in the activities. Parents are required to study/work with their child at home and participate in 2-3 evening classes for each sacrament. Each student will be interviewed by a priest or lay person on his/her understanding of the Sacraments.
- Blessing of the Animals (M thru 5th) – Occurs on or near the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi (October). Students may bring smaller pets in cages to school or parents may bring larger pets to the Blessing in the afternoon. The pastor presides over the Blessing while all classes participate by singing various songs.
- Carnival (M thru 5th) – Occurs the Saturday following Columbus Day in October. Carnival is the largest fundraiser for St. Mary’s School. Every family is required to volunteer during the day of Carnival. Carnival consists of games, a Mexican Café, rides, silent auction and a VISA card raffle. There are numerous ways to volunteer and committees to join.
- Carnival Raffle (M thru 5th) – Occurs at the end of Carnival. Families are responsible for selling 15 raffle tickets. The cost of a raffle ticket is \$25.00. Forty Visa gift cards are given with a top prize worth up to \$20,000.
- Class Projects Live Auction (M thru 5th) – Each year, parents decide on a Class Project. Every student contributes to the project. Projects are auctioned during a School Auction fund raiser. This is held each year in the spring. HSA has pictures of past projects.
- All Saints Day (grade K) – Held during school Mass on the Friday closest to All Saints Day (November 1<sup>st</sup>). The students are assigned a saint to study and then dress up as the saint for Mass.
- Light up for Christ (K thru 5th) – Held on a weeknight in early December, Light up for Christ begins with the lighting of the Cross on the school. The school Christmas program is held on this night, with all grades K-5 participating. Montessori usually hosts a separate program in the spring.
- Christmas Holiday Fair/Penguin Patch (M thru 5th) – Generally held the first or second week of December. Students are allowed to bring money to purchase special ‘surprise’ gifts for their families. Items range from \$0.25 - \$20.00 with 75% of the items under \$5. This is an excellent way for the students to learn budgeting while shopping in a safe environment. The school receives a portion of all sales.

- St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) – Students leave their shoes outside classroom doors and HSA parents fill the shoes with bags of various goodies. It is intended to be a surprise!
- Catholic Schools Week (M thru 5th) – Generally occurs the last week of January. Various activities are held during the week, mainly involving just the students during the school day.
- St. Jude Math-A-Thon (K thru 5th) – Students raise money for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. They complete math problems at home and return the booklets to the school. The math-a-thon takes place during the spring semester (sometimes it is held during Catholic Schools Week).
- Book Fair (M thru 5th) – Students can purchase books during school or with their parents after school. Books and other fun items are available for all ages. The school receives a portion of the proceeds from sales. Teachers provide ‘Wish Lists’ for those interested in purchasing books for their child’s classroom. The book fair is usually held in the spring. The librarian coordinates the fair and she gets parent volunteer to help work it. This is a great way to get some volunteer hours.
- Wonderland Park Night (M thru 5th) – Wonderland Park opens its gates for private and parochial schools. Tickets are purchased through the school and the school receives a portion of the proceeds. Wonderland Night normally occurs in May. It is preceded by a family picnic sponsored by the HSA and the Knights of Columbus.
- Teacher Appreciation Week (M thru 5th) – Parents and students have the opportunity to show how much they appreciate the teachers. Teachers will supply wish lists of items for their classrooms. Teacher Appreciation Week occurs the first week in May.
- Field Day (M thru 5th) – Features a picnic lunch and various activities. Field Day occurs in late May, during school hours, and is free for all students. Montessori students participate in the morning and elementary students participate in the afternoon. Parents volunteer to work in various activity booths.
- Awards Assembly (K thru 5th) – Held during the last week of school. Students in grades K-5 receive awards/recognition for various achievements gained throughout the school year. Only students in grades 3-5 receive academic awards.
- Safe Environment Training (Adults) – All school volunteers are required to attend Safe Environment Training before volunteering. Please check with the office for dates and times. Safe Environment Training must be repeated every 5 years.
- School Contact Information (Parents) – [www.stmarysamarillo.org](http://www.stmarysamarillo.org) and 376-9112. School hours are 7:55a.m. until 3:30p.m. (3:15 for Montessori), Monday through Friday. Students may be dropped off no earlier than 7:30am. Early arrivals wait in the cafeteria under staff supervision.
- Volunteering (Parents) – Volunteers are vital to the success of St. Mary’s School. All volunteers must attend Safe Environment Training before working with the students. The training is a Diocesan requirement. Volunteers must sign in/out at the office and wear a volunteer badge while on school grounds. Grandparents may volunteer as long as they have attended the Safe Environment Training. Training is offered at various times throughout the year and may be taken at other parishes. Every family is required to have 40 volunteer hours.