

February 24, 2010

Dear STM Families,

1 Corinthians tells us...*Love is patient, love is kind...it always protect, always trusts, always hopes, always preservers....* During our unannounced winter break, evidence of love and good deeds were frequently reported in the news. But I must say...the major story of love...of patience and kindness... comes from our own St. Thomas More Cathedral School community. Dear parents, you are to be commended for your patience and kindness, and for all you have endured this week as we tried to reopen our school. Many streets, including Cathedral Lane and Thomas Street, were challenging to traverse. And many routines were affected.

The unannounced snow removal at 7:40 a.m. last Thursday morning and the closing of Cathedral Lane was but another "little challenge" that put a small wrinkle into our smooth morning routines. But you rose to the challenges given by these storms as you adjusted to a change in the morning drop off routine and you patiently weaved out of the school lot via Glebe Road! Our morning duty staff under Mrs. Bauer's directions calmly gave directions and a parent, Mr. Farah, jumped right in to help direct cars as we handled the street closure, the arrival of employees to the Diocesan Office Building, the arrival of employees to the Arlington Diocese Refugee Services, the departure and arrival of parishioners attending the two morning masses, and the morning arrival of some 325 school children! Yes, it did take a few extra minutes, but everyone seemed to be understanding. A million thanks for your patience and kindness!

Colossians 3 also shares a wonderful message of *clothing yourself with compassion,...and patience*. Monday's death of our neighbor and friend, Brother David Eddy, brought great sadness to our community. In the Catholic Herald it was written that Brother David *avoided the spotlight even while constantly in it and his life was devoted to overseeing the details of everyday life for Arlington Bishop Paul S. Loverde and the Chancery*. Brother David also helped coordinate Bishop Loverde's visits to our school. His gentle and quiet ways will be remembered by many. And your compassion and understanding was very much appreciated as the funeral arrangements necessitated the closing of school on Friday afternoon.

Yes... *Love is patient, love is kind...it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres...*

Have a great week and God bless,

Eleanor McCormack

CALENDAR ADJUSTMENTS AND SNOW MAKEUP DAYS

When I last wrote to you regarding an upcoming storm, I thought we may close early or possibly close for a day or so. Little did I think that the storms would close our Federal Government for four days and that schools would be closed even longer! I do hope everyone weathered the event with minimal discomfort.

We evaluated the school calendar and weighed our options for making up lost time. How fortunate for STM school that we moved our daily start time up seven minutes this school year! Believe it or not those seven minutes provided us with time equivalent to 3.5 additional days of school! We also held the parent-teacher conferences on half days of school so the days were beneficial to both students and teachers. I know it made for long days for the teachers and I do so appreciate their hard work.

Therefore to make up for the unforeseen schedule change due to Brother David Eddy's funeral, and to the recent storms the following changes will be made to the school calendar:

March 3, 2010 and April 28, 2010 will become full days of school. Students will be dismissed at 2:55 p.m. and Extended Day will be offered.

Please carefully watch the school calendars for any additional changes to our calendar.

A note from Father Rippy - printed in the Sunday bulletin of The Cathedral of St. Thomas More

January 31 marks the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. Bishop Loverde will celebrate the 9:30 a.m. Mass here as we begin our celebrations of Catholic Schools week. It has come to my attention that this 9:30 Mass used to be called the "Family Mass." It seems that many of our school families attend this Mass and I suspect that is where this term originates from. I think this is a very good idea. So, beginning on January 31st, we will once again begin celebrating this Mass as a "Family Mass." It is my hope that a different family will volunteer each Sunday to bring the gifts up at that Mass. I would ask that you see any of the ushers at least 10 minutes before the Mass begins to inform them that you would like to volunteer for this task. Each Sunday we will also have a particular grade from our school to act as greeters/ushers. Seventh and eighth grade students will be able to assist our ushers in taking up the collection and in assisting the ushers in any way that they might need. All of the other students in the different grades will also be able to hand out bulletins to our people as they leave Church. Our Youth Choir will be singing at some of these 9:30 Masses, and this is another way to get involved. We will be distributing a schedule in the school as to which grade has each particular weekend. I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Parents,

If you would like to have your child help at their grade level Sunday family mass, please send a note to your child's homeroom teacher. The students will be signed up on a first

come basis. Please reference the list below for the date assigned to each grade level. Thank you in advance for celebrating at our family gatherings.

Sunday, February 28, 2010 - Eighth grade
Sunday, March 7, 2010 – Seventh Grade
Sunday, March 14, 2010 – Sixth grade
Sunday, March 21, 2010 – Fifth Grade
Sunday, March 28, 2010 – Fourth Grade
Sunday, April 18, 2010 – Fourth grade
Sunday, April 25, 2010 – Third grade
Sunday, May 2, 2010 – First grade
Sunday, May 9, 2010 – Second grade (Mother's Day Weekend)
Sunday, May 16, 2010 – Kindergarten
Sunday, May 23, 2010 – Pre-Kindergarten

EXTENDED DAY PAYMENTS

Due to the closing of the school during the storm, the extended day payments due date was moved to today, February 24th. Please remember that we depend on your prompt payments as the payments provide funds to pay salaries to the staff members who so faithfully watch your children in the Extended Day program. Many thanks for being prompt with your payments.

YEARBOOKS

Yearbook order forms went home with all students and the forms need to be returned with a \$19 check to STM by Friday, March 5. If a student loses a form, he or she can pick up extra ones in the office. Please send in a separate order form and check for each child purchasing a yearbook in your family. Many thanks.

HOT LUNCH

Hot lunch menu was sent last week and orders were due back yesterday. Please call the office today if you overlooked last week's message.

ADVANCED LITERACY LIBRARY RECEIVES \$4000.00 GIFT

The St. Thomas More Development Committee is pleased to announce that on Monday, February 22, 2010, it presented Mrs. O'Rourke with \$4,000 to help expand the school's Advanced Literacy Library. These funds came from gifts made by the families, faculty and friends of St. Thomas More to the school's Annual Appeal. Your tax deductible

donation to the school's Annual Appeal can still be made by check to the office, or online via the school's website. Show your support for our school with your donation of \$10, \$20, or \$50 today.

RACE FOR EDUCATION

Hi everyone! We are looking for parent volunteers in preparation of our upcoming Race For Education on Wednesday, March 17th. Information packets including the address labels will be sent home on Monday, February 22nd. The mailing labels will be due on Monday, March 1st. Right now we need help with various tasks including organizing the students' folders by class and purchasing supplies such as stamps, envelopes, file folders, rubber bands, 3x5 index cards, and gift cards for prizes for which you will be reimbursed. On March 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, we will need volunteers to come to school in the morning to help the Kindergartners and First Graders complete their mailers. As donations and pledges begin to get returned to STM, we will need parents to come to school to file those into the students' files. Of course, on the actual race day, we will need many volunteers to punch lap cards and help with set-up and break-down. Please let me know directly what you would be able to help with and earn those volunteer hours. The success of our Race for Education is dependent on our parents.

Thanks in advance for your support!

Raylene Rozzi

Race for Education Coordinator
rrozzi@verizon.net

STM AUCTION IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER – COME AND SPEND A DAY AT THE BEACH!!

Come and join your fellow members of the STM community at ***A DAY AT THE BEACH on April 17, 2010!*** STM's annual auction is the adult social highlight and a major fundraiser for the parish school. This year's auction will be held in the atrium of the National Science Foundation. **We need your time and talent to make this annual event a SUCCESS.** Please contact the Auction Committee Chair, Suzanne McCreery, at 703.465.9877 or at stmauction2010@gmail.com if you want more information about a committee or volunteer position. Also, please see the attached flyers to volunteer, participate in the raffle, and donate an item or event to the Auction.

St. Thomas More Band Program

1st Parents' Concert: Rescheduled for Thursday, March 4th, 7:30 P.M.

Dear Band Parents and Students,

We will try again to schedule our **1st Parents' Concert for Thursday, March 4th at 7:30 P.M.** Both groups, the beginners and advanced, will be performing on the same concert. All beginner students please be at school by 7:00 P.M. with cases and coats left in the selected classrooms. A reminder of no playing in the gym until asked to play the concert.

In order to make our performance look as well as I believe we will sound, uniformity of dress is important. We would ask that the following dress code be followed:

Boys: Dark pants (black or navy)
white dress shirt - no tennis shoes

Girls: Dark dress or pants (black or navy)
white dress shirt - no tennis shoes

Please be informed that Mr. Ward has a rule that if a student is not properly dressed for the concert, they are not allowed to perform. Although I would prefer not make this strong a statement, I feel that proper dress does have an affect on attitude and would appreciate your adherence to the above mentioned dress code. This dress code will be the same for the Arlington Diocese Band Festival and Busch Gardens Competition in May.

I believe that both bands should play a very fine concert and encourage you to help fill up the audience. I am proud of the band program at our school and want to share their hard work and dedication with you. Looking forward to seeing you on Thursday evening, March 4th at 7:30 P.M., I remain...

Very truly yours,
Barry Ward

A PLEA FOR BOARD GAMES, PUZZLES, LEGOS, AND BOOKS

As the recent cold weather does not permit outside play after school, STM is in need of board games, puzzles and book, crayons, markers and drawing paper, for our students who stay after school. Do you have a game or two that you could donate to our program? We also are in search of some puzzles (25 to 100 pieces) and some books. I do ask that the puzzles have all their pieces. Any and all Lego pieces would be helpful. The Lego do not need to be sets, all Lego pieces go together to create fascinating creations! Thank you in advance for any items you may be able to donate!

A NOTE FROM OUR NURSE

Dear Parents,

Illness: This week we are still seeing some cases of **strep throat**. Please watch out for symptoms of this, esp. if you have received notification from me that it has been found in your child's class. Here are the symptoms: a fever, sore throat, and tonsillitis (swollen tonsils) are the symptoms of a strep throat infection. Your child may complain of a severely sore throat where it is difficult to swallow. The back of the throat will be bright red or bright red with white patches near tonsils. When a skin rash occurs as one of the symptoms, the infection is commonly called scarlet fever.

Remember:

1. Do not use common drinking glasses. Do not share personal articles such as toothbrushes. Disinfect counters where the toothbrushes may lay daily. Change hand towels often.
2. Keep children at home when they have the symptoms of a cold or a sore throat accompanied by a fever. (Can return after child is fever-free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medicine.)

Wellness Corner: Watching the Olympics is an exciting thing to do as a family. The variety of sports and the athlete's determination inspire all of us. The athletes are great examples of what determination and perseverance with exercise can accomplish. This also offers an excellent opportunity to examine our own activity levels and those of our children. Maybe it will inspire us to try a new sport or perhaps to add more activity into our daily routine. Perhaps just doing simple exercise and stretches during the commercials can spur family contests. Now that most of the snow has cleared, an evening brisk walk together while you talk over your child's day is a great way to connect with him/her. Have fun and see what your family can do to be heart healthy this month.

Seeing Red? You may have noticed that the faculty is Wearing Red today (2/24) to celebrate a Go Red for Women day. They were provided information on women's heart health and exercise, heart healthy goodies and blood pressure screenings.

Summer Camp Forms: If you are signing up your child for a camp that requires a health form, just email or call the clinic. I can copy it and send it home for you.

Good handwashing remains the best way to avoid spreading the flu and other viruses to each other!

Nurse's Webpage

This is listed under "about STM" and all forms are grouped here for your convenience. Please use these forms, not a handwritten note, when dropping off medication for your child to have at school. All prescription medication needs to have a prescription label attached, please.

Nurse's Hours: Mon-Wed and Friday 7:30-3:30. On Thursdays, Mrs. Bauer staffs the clinic.

Donna Lorge, RN, BSN
STMC school nurse
(703)528-6781 ext. 28
nurse@stmschool.org

STM WOMEN'S COUNCIL PRESENTS SPEAKER ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

On **Thursday, February 25** at 7:00 we will have a Women's Council meeting at 7:00 pm in the school cafeteria. **Our guest speaker, Ms. Cathy Turner**, Director of Health Promotion and Senior Health from Virginia Hospital Center will give an overview of five critical areas of women's health: heart disease, menopause, osteoporosis, breast cancer and exercise/nutrition. You will also learn about the preventative check-ups you should be having at each stage of your life. Please plan to attend.

IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT NEWS

House Poised to Regulate Private Schools

The U.S. House of Representatives could vote soon on legislation governing elements of a school's disciplinary policy and practice.

The bill (HR 4247) would affect all public schools and private schools whose students or teachers benefit from any federal education program (about 80 percent of Catholic schools, for example). The measure represents an unprecedented and unwarranted degree of federal regulation of religious and independent education.

To contact members of Congress about this important issue, visit CAPE's [Legislative Action Center](#). To learn more about the bill's troubling provisions, visit CAPE's [Web site](#).

Thank you for conveying to Congress your views on this legislation and for inviting friends, family, and members of your community to do the same.

Private Education: Good for Students, Good for Families, Good for America

[Sign up for CAPE's free email updates!](#)

Joe McTighe

Executive Director

email: update@capenet.org
phone: 301-916-8460
web: <http://www.capenet.org>

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

- March 1 – Special Presentation and Coffee Hour – *The Hurried Child*
- **March 3 – Full day of school**
- March 4 – Band Concert
- March 12 – No School
- March 17 – Race for Education
- March 23 – Design For Excellence (DFE) Opening Program
- April 1-11 – Easter Break
- April 17 – STM Auction

ATTACHMENTS

- Virginia Action Alert
- STM Band Parent's Flyer
- Make up Pizza Lunch this Friday Flyer
- Auction Volunteer Form
- Auction Tuition Raffle Flyer
- Auction Donation Form
- Race for Education Label Reminder
- Left Noodle-Right Noodle STM Spring Break Flyer
- Special Presentation by the STM Counselor Flyer – *The Hurried Child*
- March Calendar



Dear Parents:

Please send in healthy snacks and non-food items for the market table this Friday! We really need your help with this. Also, if you are free to volunteer please come to the cafeteria at 11:00. We are usually done by about 1:00, but you can come and go whenever is convenient for you. If you can volunteer, please let me know by calling my home 703/837-9049, or e-mailing me at laurie.purpuro@klgates.com.

Thank you!

Laurie Purpuro
Pizza Lunch Coordinator

Pizza Lunch Schedule 2009-2010

9-11 8th Grade
9-18 7th Grade
10-2 6th Grade
10-16 5th Grade
10-30 4th Grade
11-13 3rd Grade
12-4 2nd Grade
12-11 1st Grade
1-8 Kindergarten
1-22 PreK
2-5 Spanish
2-19 Band
2-26 Band – make up Pizza Lunch!
3-5 Music
3-19 Library
4-16 Computer
5-7 Art
5-21 PE

6-4 CYO

From: the3wardsdad@aol.com

Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 6:57 PM

To: stmoffice@stmschool.org; boat4acar@cox.net; Michele_Reilly@harkin.senate.gov; kstice@stmschool.org

Subject: St. Thomas More Band Parents' Concert on Thursday, March 4th

St. Thomas More Band Program

1st Parents' Concert: Reset for Thursday, March 4th, 7:30 P.M.

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Very truly yours,
Barry Ward



ACTION ALERT: SUPPORT EDUCATION TAX CREDITS!

Legislation that has been approved by the House of Delegates and is currently before the Senate of Virginia would establish income tax credits for businesses and individuals who donate to scholarship foundations. These foundations would, in turn, provide financial assistance to families of limited economic means who desire to send their children to nonpublic schools. If passed, **House Bill 599**, patroned by Delegate James Massie (R – Henrico County), would ensure that Catholic and other nonpublic schools are affordable for more children. By providing incentives for scholarship donations, the bill would also have a positive overall effect on enrollment in Catholic schools, and thus would have the potential to help with affordability for Catholic-school families in general.

The Virginia Catholic Conference – established by the state’s Catholic bishops to advance the legislative goals of their two dioceses – is lobbying the General Assembly to secure passage of **HB 599**. However, before the full Senate of Virginia is permitted to debate this bill, it must be approved by the Senate Committee on Finance.

St. Thomas More Cathedral School is in the district of Senator Mary Margaret Whipple, who serves on the Senate Committee on Finance. To encourage her to support this bill, please call (804) 698-7531 or e-mail district31@senate.virginia.gov as soon as possible and convey the following message or a personalized one:

“Please vote in favor of **HB 599** when it comes before the Senate Committee on Finance. This bill would help make nonpublic schools – such as St. Thomas More Cathedral School which my child attends – more affordable for more families. Thank you for considering my request.”

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To sign up for regular alerts on school-related and other issues of particular concern to Virginia’s Catholic bishops, please visit the Virginia Catholic Conference’s website (www.vacatholic.org), click “**Join The Network!**” and complete the short form provided. Your free membership will enable you to communicate directly with your legislators without looking up addresses or composing letters. Alerts include pre-drafted messages that you can send (“as is” or modified to suit your own style) to your elected representatives.