

Enlightening Minds, Enriching Lives

St. Germaine Family Newsletter

February, 2020

Third Grade Family Mass
February 9th
11:30 a.m.



<https://www.bark.us/>

The third grade families from our school and RE programs will celebrate together as a class on Sunday, February 9th at the 11:30 Mass. Please plan to join us.

All Our Gratitude

We have so much to be grateful for this month!

We are grateful to all of the parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, and everyone who attended our Catholic Schools' Week Mass and Open House. Thanks, too, to all the School Board members and volunteers who managed the reception and took visitors on tours!

We also had a very successful "Ice Cream Social" on Wednesday evening of CSWeek. Everyone enjoyed a preview of "Fish Fry Ice Cream," and a few group games. Thanks to everyone who helped set up and provide the games for the tables.

Our annual Musical Performance on Friday was well received. The students did a wonderful job with their routines! It was great to see everyone singing in the finale! If you missed any part of it, the videos are posted on our FACEBOOK page, St. Germaine Catholic School, Oak Lawn! Can we get some extra "likes" and shares" to help us get our message out?

Dimes for Dairy

Thank you for your support of our Catholic Schools' Week service project. As you know, we worked with the Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program to collect funds for the Together We cope food pantry. The funds were used to purchase dairy products to distribute at the pantry. Most Food Pantries do not have refrigeration facilities to allow them to store products for their clients. Providing healthy dairy products for these families is an important addition to their nutrition. The Cook County Farm Bureau matched the first \$100 of our collection! We estimate our collection was about \$675. Well done!

Social media and internet activity can become temptations for many of our young people. Stories of inappropriate or harmful searches are wide spread—many that have very dire consequences.

St. Germaine School offers many technology resources to our students. Our school networks contain firewalls and protections to filter undesirable sites and prevent student access. None of these protections is ever 100% effective. It is still important to be vigilant about how our students are using the resources we provide.

We recently began a subscription to a notification service called BARK. Launched in 2015, Bark looks for potentially harmful activities that may indicate on-line predators, adult content, sexting, cyberbullying, drug use, depression, suicidal ideation and more.

When possible, dangerous or questionable searches arise on school-issued accounts. **Bark for Schools** sends us alerts so we can address the situation in a timely manner. The alerts identify the student by name and include a copy of the material they accessed whenever possible. These alerts also give us insight that help promote the wellness of the entire student body. Click on the YouTube link below to view a brief description of the program:

<https://youtu.be/5R02p9XNHm8>

Bark offers a Parent Portal, free of charge, to parents so that they can monitor to receive alerts after-school hours. A FAQ section is available in the link below for those who would like additional information:

<https://help.bark.us/en/articles/2670927-faqs-parent-portal>

In addition to the Bark application, we encourage you to take an active part in monitoring your child's internet history. You can always check their history on the setting tab of their Chromebook. Teachers in school will occasionally do a "history check" but the process can be time consuming when trying to check multiple devices. If you find that your child's search history has been "cleared," it might be a good time to have a discussion with him/her about what might be missing.

In the event that we receive an alert from BARK that indicates a serious concern, we will contact you. Repeated or serious concerns may result in the school prohibiting the student from using a school owned device.

Registration and Recruiting for 2020-2021

We are well underway in our recruiting process for the next school year. During Open House and the Ice Cream Social, we took eight prospective families on tours of our school. They all commented about how welcome they felt and appreciated the "family atmosphere" that makes up the culture of our school.

When asked where they "heard" of St. Germaine, the answer was usually "word of mouth." No one mentioned the newspaper ads or posters we placed throughout the community. Instead, they all heard the wonderful stories that you, our school families, tell about your experiences.

Please continue to share the stories of St. Germaine School with any new families who have moved into your neighborhood. Encourage them to stop by for a visit. **You really are our best advertisement**



National Junior Honor Society Induction

On Sunday, January 26th, we inducted 31 sixth, seventh and eighth grade students into our newly formed National Junior Honor Society. The students were selected based on their academic achievement, leadership, service and civic contributions. We congratulate all of these students and their parents on a job well done.

One of the responsibilities of the new members is to demonstrate leadership in our school community. During Lent, the new members will be working with all of our students on a project to better understand the

Beatitudes of Jesus. Each week, teams of our NJHS students will visit the classrooms to explore the meaning of a Beatitude, discuss how we can live out the challenge of the Beatitude and complete an activity. The students will pray together to ask God to help them live as "happy" disciples.

Illinois State Board Of Education Recognition Visit

Our State Board of Education (ISBE) Recognition visit is scheduled for the afternoon of March 18, 2020. The visit will include a building inspection and a compliance check for all of the state regulations for Illinois schools. Our last visit was in 2015.

Part of the compliance check will include an examination of student health records. Each student is required to have the documentation required for the grade. For example, third grade students must have an eye exam (required in kindergarten), a physical exam record with immunizations (kindergarten) and a second grade dental record.

As we examine the student health folders, we will be sending additional forms for those students who are not in compliance. Noncompliance could jeopardize our school's recognition by the state. If you receive a note requesting records, please act quickly to complete the requirement. If you have any questions, please call the office.

Bourbon Street Successes

Thanks to our Family School Association for all the planning and work that went into the spectacular **Night on the Town** at Bourbon Street!

The evening was so much fun! The raffle baskets were tempting and the silent auction items attracted a lot of attention.

In our school budget for this year, we budgeted proceeds of \$13,000. We're proud to announce that the event raised an amazing \$18,000.

Our most sincere thanks to all of our families and sponsors who helped us to achieve this goal.

Germaniacs of the Month

Congratulations to our Germaniacs of the Month!

- K: Ali Banach, Matt Karingada
- 1: Eibhlin Kearns, Kaiden McDonald
- 2: Anna Stekala, Max Pedroza
- 3: Hazel Kincinas, Lili Kopec
- 4: Molly Ruzich, Ryan O'Shea
- 5: Abby Covarrubias, Mateo Gonzalez
- 6: Sadie Dominquez, Dylan Koss
- 7: Lauren Schiltz, Matt Rahn
- 8: Abby Kupscuk, Alexander LaMantia

Germaniacs of the month demonstrate positive contributions to the class environment, exemplary peer relationships, and a willingness to persevere in working hard to attain their goals.



Looking Ahead. . .

- 2/9 Third Grade Family Mass; 11:30 a.m. in the Church
- 2/11 Urban Gateways All-school Performance: "Make 'em UP" Improv group, 12:45 in the gym
- 2/14 Half-Day Faculty Meeting; students dismissed at 11:30 a.m. Extended Day will be available as usual.
- 2/17 Presidents' Day holiday; no student attendance
- 2/20 Confirmation Practice, 7:00 p.m. in the Church
- 2/23 Confirmation (8th Grade); 2:00 p.m. in the Church

