

# St. Germaine Family Newsletter

March, 2021

Lent, 2021

## Spring Break Travel and Quarantine Guidance

As Spring Break approaches, please be aware that the Archdiocese Office of Catholic Schools has issued guidelines regarding mandatory quarantine restrictions for travel over the break. The complete text of the news release dated 2/24/21 is attached as the third page of this newsletter.

We have been very successful in maintaining “in-person” instruction this year. The quarantine restrictions are necessary to protect all of us and to preserve our ability to hold in-person instruction. Families should make their plans with these restrictions in mind.

For students who are required to quarantine after travel, teachers will post lessons/activities as they have during the current school year, but daily ZOOM lessons will not be possible, since the teachers will be in the classroom with “in-person” learners.

We will continue to post eSchool learning resources from the archdiocese. These activities provide instruction/assignments in all of the major areas of the curriculum. They will prove to be useful during any quarantines.

Students will also have access to the internet platforms that are a part of STG normal expectations. (I-Ready, IXL, Mathletics, Read Theory.

## Pre-School Recruitment

Please help us in our efforts to recruit new pre-school students for next year. If you know anyone who has a three or four year old that was not able to attend pre-school during the COVID year, please let them know that we would love to have them join us!

Our pre-school enrollment for this year was smaller than usual due to concern parents had about sending their little ones to school. We would love to be able to have two full pre-school classes!!  
Be an ambassador for STG!

Our theme for Lent this year is “Be Faithful to the Gospel.” The words are a part of the prayer said at the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

This year, because of the pandemic, Father Cabala distributed ashes to students in the classrooms, using a q-tip! Certainly, an Ash Wednesday unlike most we have experienced.



Eighth grade students recorded two versions of the Stations of the Cross, which we will post on the parish website so that all of the students will be able to pray them in their classrooms throughout Lent. We're grateful to Mr. Jim Baker and Father Cabala for “producing” the video and posting it. We encourage each family to take a few minutes during Lent to view the presentation at home together.

Our theme, “Be Faithful to the Gospel,” calls us to do more than just believe in the gospel or to follow the rules for Lent. Being “faithful” requires a much more intense commitment. It calls each of us to renew our commitment to be a people who live out the gospel values of Jesus in all aspects of our lives. It requires authenticity and consistency, even at times when we would rather not be authentic or consistent!

Even though this Lent will be very different from Lents in the past, make your personal commitment to be faithful to the gospel.

## Registration for the 2021-2022 School Year

We recently sent out the tuition announcement for the next school year, along with a re-registration form for all of our returning families. We are hopeful that the 2021-2022 school year will be “more normal” than this one—and are excited about continuing to provide an outstanding educational experience for our students and families.

If you have not already let us know about your plans to return next year, please do that as soon as possible. We are asking that you submit the annual registration fee (\$100 for one student, \$200 for two or more). Remember, the registration fee is deducted from your August invoice—so in a sense it is a pre-payment toward your tuition and fees.

We are seeing an increase in the number of potential students for next year. In some cases, the families are looking for a school with a record of “in-person” attendance throughout this COVID year. Our class size limits may restrict enrollments. Please help us to track our enrollment by sending your re-registrations in early.

## Second Trimester Report Cards and Optional Parent Teacher Conferences

Report cards for the second trimester will be distributed on Friday, March 5th. Our optional “second parent teacher conferences” will also be scheduled. If you would like a conference with your child’s teacher, we will include a request form for you to complete with the report cards. Conferences will again be “phone conferences” as they were in November.

The phone conferences will be held on Thursday, March 18th. **Students will be dismissed at 11:30.** Extended Day will not be available. Friday, March 19th is scheduled as a professional development day for teachers. No student attendance on Friday, March 19th. Teachers will meet to learn about the new Archdiocese of Chicago initiative on “Proficiency Scales” which will be a focus for the 2021-2022 school year.

## New Chromebooks in Grades K-3 Finally!

At the end of the last school year, the lease for our Grade k-4 chromebooks expired. We ordered new devices to replace them, Once the COVID epidemic hit, schools all over the US were vying for chromebooks to support their remote learning. School districts that ordered devices in the thousands, of course, received shipping preferences from the manufacturers.

The Germazing Mighty Ducks provided the funds that allowed us to purchase the chromebooks we had rather than send them back in August. That insured that all of our K-4 students had chromebooks to use for the first part of the year.

Our shipment was promised over and over again. Just this week, the shipment finally arrived and we are in the process of distributing them to the classrooms. Our intent is that the new devices will remain in school rather than be sent home for remote learning. We are not anticipating any reason to move to remote learning again this year. We can always revisit the decision if our situation changes.

As we complete the distribution of new chromebooks, we may have a number of the "off-lease" devices to sell. We will pass along details if we are able to offer any of the chromebooks for sale.

## Illinois Tax Credit Scholarships

A number of our school families have applied for and received scholarship help thru the Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship. The support they received has been essential to their ability to keep their children in a Catholic School.

Governor Pritzker has proposed a number of devastating changes to the program that will significantly decrease the funding available to assist families across the state.

Please contact your state representative, Kelly Burke, and Governor Pritzker to voice your support for continuing funding of the Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship.



Please continue to use Amazon Smile when making on-line purchases. Once you have an account, St. Germaine automatically receives the Amazon rebate!



## Thank You from the Little Sisters of the Poor

We received a nice thank you from the Little Sisters of the Poor for our Catholic School Week donation. You may recall that we sent about 10 large boxes of personal protection equipment and paper products to them. We were also able to send a check for \$500 from cash donations made by our families. The Sisters and their clients are very grateful for your help.

## University of Chicago "Five Essential Survey"

Last year, the Office of Catholic Education sponsored a survey of parents, students and teachers concerning their experiences in Catholic Schools. We are being asked again this year to complete the survey. Students in Grades 4-8 will complete the online survey in their classrooms. Teachers have already sent their responses.

We are including the link to the survey instrument. The window for completion is open until March 26th. The Office of Catholic Schools is looking for a response rate of at least 50% from each school.. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey over the next few days.

### 2021 Archdiocese of Chicago Parent Survey

Link to survey: <http://survey.5-essentials.org/archchicago/survey/parent/>  
Opens Feb. 16, 2021 and closes March 26, 2021.



The Germazing Mighty Ducks continue to do a stellar job! The Ducks are always looking for suggestions for prizes, so please let them know if you have an idea.

Our deepest thanks to the Duck Team for all their hard work. They have been able to make significant contributions to the school budget in addition to providing items for the teacher "wish-lists." Recently, they were able to purchase updated touch-screen laptops for the teachers. The touch screens make completing the school report cards much easier. Everyone is so grateful.

## Looking Ahead . . .

Our school calendar of events looks rather sparse this year!! We miss being able to gather with you to share some FUN. Hopefully we'll be able to get together soon.

- 3/2 Illinois State Board of Education Recognition Visit —being done virtually this year!!
- Eighth Grade Graduation Pictures—during the school day
- 3/5 Second Trimester Report Cards distributed to students
- 3/16 First Communion Pictures—make an appointment online. Call Mrs. Lassandrello for details
- 3/18 Optional Parent Teacher Conferences. Students dismissed at 11:30—No Extended Day
- 3/19 Professional Development Day for Teachers—no student attendance
- 3/26 Confirmation for first STG group, 7:00 p.m. in the Church





## Travel and Close Exposure Quarantine Guidelines

As of February 24, 2021

Our Archdiocesan COVID-19 Task Force continues to monitor all published quarantine guidance per local and federal health departments. As such, we are implementing the following adjustments, which include exceptions for vaccinated persons meeting specific criteria. Our guidelines align to the published guidance of the Chicago Department of Public Health (as of Feb. 22, 2021) and concur with the Cook County Department of Public Health. These guidelines are effective immediately for all Archdiocesan locations and apply to all Archdiocesan clergy and personnel, including parish, school, agency and Pastoral Center staff:

### Travel Quarantines

**Vaccinated individuals** who have travelled domestically (state-to-state) are not required to quarantine if they are:

- asymptomatic; and
- fully vaccinated (i.e., are  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of 1 dose of a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine).

**Non-vaccinated individuals** travelling domestically (state-to-state) should consult the City of Chicago's Department of Public Health [Emergency Travel Order map](#), which is updated every Tuesday. Depending upon which state an individual travels to/from a quarantine of 10 days may be required.

**International travel still requires a 10-day quarantine for all individuals regardless of vaccination status.** These individuals must continue to strictly adhere to all recommended protective measures, including, but not limited to, wearing a mask, maintaining physical distance, practicing hand hygiene, etc.

### Close Exposure Quarantines

**Vaccinated individuals** who are a close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e., are  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine).
- Have remained asymptomatic since their last contact with the infected person; and
- Are not inpatients or residents in a health care setting.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are not required to quarantine should monitor their health for 14 days after their last contact with the infected person. If they experience symptoms, they must self-isolate pending clinical evaluation and COVID-19 testing. Vaccinated persons must also continue to adhere to all recommended protective measures, including, but not limited to, wearing a mask (and utilizing job-specific PPE), maintaining physical distance, practicing hand hygiene, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.

**Non-vaccinated individuals** must quarantine for 14-days following close contact to a confirmed COVID-19 case.

For all Archdiocesan employees, per recently published policy, proof of completed COVID-19 vaccination (i.e., both doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine series or receipt of one dose of a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine) must be provided to their supervisor.

Again, our guidelines reflect input from our local departments and our own medical advisors. We continue to monitor and update them accordingly adhering to our priority of safe operations for all staff, parishioners, school families and students.