



Summer is a time for students and staff to engage in outdoor activities, explore personal interests, and strengthen bonds with family and friends. Each Fall, I eagerly anticipate hearing the stories of students' summer adventures—the experiences that bring love, joy, and a sense of God's presence to each of our lives. As we embark on a new school year, I am excited about what God has planned for St. Mary's School. I am confident that our faith, positive spirit, collaboration, and commitment to excellence will lead us to another successful year.

SMS Staff enjoys learning about *faith, vision, & building relationships!*

SMS staff members attended a workshop sponsored by CSCOE (Catholic Schools Center of Excellence) in Alexandria on August 19th. They spent the day focusing on the story we have to tell about our school: What is our vision, how does that guide our decisions, and how do we teach and lead with our vision while keeping Christ at the center. They shared with each other stories of how they came to be a Catholic School teacher and how the Holy Spirit has guided them in their journey. It was a great way to kick off the school year together, with our faith as the foundation for everything to come.



This year, we will also start a new program called **TCIT-U** (Teacher-Child Interaction Training). It is a professional development, train-the-trainer model designed to strengthen teacher-child relationship skills. Mrs. Wolff was trained this summer to be a coach. She will work with each teacher to incorporate this model into their teaching.

TCIT-U

- Improves children's ability to benefit from academic instruction in preschool through second grades.
- Strengthens teachers' positive relationship skills and classroom management techniques.
- Focuses on improving the development of all children in the classroom, including those with special needs and those not yet identified as in need of intervention.
- Built upon a strong research base showing the effectiveness of the intervention.
- Helps students regulate their behaviors.



WELCOME
TO THE TEAM!

SMS Welcomes new *6th Grade Teacher*

SMS is excited to announce we have a new 6th grade teacher for the 2024-2025 school year! Mr. Nate Schreiber has a BS in Design Technology from Bemidji State University and is approaching completion of a K-6 Elementary Education degree. He has ten years of experience as a paraprofessional in the Bemidji school district, including being an activity director in their summer program and coaching soccer from 6 years old to 6th grade.

Mr. Schreiber enjoys taking walks with his wife, Sara, and their dog, Gage, almost as much as he enjoys hanging out on the couch watching movies, reading books, or playing video games. He also likes building computers and 3D printing.

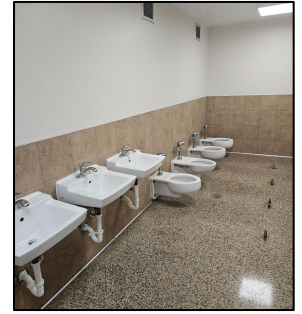
Please join us in welcoming Mr. Schreiber to our SMS family!





SMS has Remodeled Bathrooms!

A big THANK YOU goes out to our donors including Melrose Electric, Arnzen Construction, Kraemer Lumber (True Value), Bitz Plumbing and Heating, and volunteers from our church, Andy Heinen and Bernie Brixius, who helped our maintenance team remodel the student bathrooms at SMS. Toilets and sinks were replaced with new efficient models, brighter lighting fixtures were installed, walls were painted, and new (not green 😊) tile was set on the walls. It's been a great transformation of the spaces!



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **ST. MARY'S PARISH GET-TOGETHER:** Sunday, September 8th. 4:00-7:00 pm at the Church of St. Mary
- **MARATHON/PRAYER-A-THON:** Friday, October 4th.
- **HARRY'S PIZZA FUNDRAISER:** October 11th-25th. Contact a SMS family or the school at 320-256-4257 to order. Pizzas are \$12 each; flavors include 4-Meat, Breakfast, Cheese, Chicken Alfredo, Chicken Bacon Ranch, Deluxe, Pepperoni, and Sausage.
- **GRANDPARENTS DAY AT SMS:** Tuesday, October 15th.
- **FALL-O-WEEN JESUS:** Thursday, October 31 from 3:00-5:00 pm in the SMS Gymnasium. All children ages 2-12 are welcome to join us with an adult for a fun afternoon of crafts, games, and snacks!

DID YOU KNOW?

The estimated cost to educate a student at St. Mary's School will be \$6850 per student for the 2024-2025 school year. This includes staff salaries, building and operating expenses, plus materials used to educate the students. The following areas are the ways in which St. Mary's is funded.

- Tuition:** **First Child Grades K-6** \$2300/year; **Second Child Grades K-6** \$1950/year; **Third Child Grades K-6** \$1675/year
Preschool: 5 full days: \$500.00/month; **5 half days:** \$275.00/month; **3 full days:** \$330.00/month (available for 3-4 year old program only) **3 half days:** \$195.00/month (available for 3-4 year old program only)
- Financial Investment:** The Church of St. Mary supported the school with a \$160,000 subsidy for the 2023-2024 school year. They plan to give \$165,000 for the 2024-2025 school year. We will also receive \$70,000 from the Endowment Fund.
- Donations:** We are blessed to receive many donations from companies and individual people throughout the year to help St. Mary's School balance its budget and offer opportunities for us to add to our curriculum and experiences of teaching to the whole child.
- Catholic Foundation:** The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of Saint Cloud was established in August of 2000 to serve its parishes, Catholic schools, organizations, Catholic families, and individuals throughout the Diocese of Saint Cloud through endowed funds. Money is raised for these scholarships through the Bishop's Annual Appeal and the Bishop's Annual Golf Fundraiser.
- Stacy Meyer Scholarship Fund:** The 2024-25 school year will be the sixth year the Stacy Meyer Scholarship Fund is available to families who qualify for financial assistance. Each year we distribute around \$3000 in scholarships from this fund.
- Sponsor a Child:** The Sponsor A Child program is for anyone who would like to make a contribution toward the education of a student attending St. Mary's Catholic School. All contributions will be used strictly for the education of the students at St. Mary's Catholic School and are tax deductible. If you are interested in sponsoring a child, contact the school at 256-4257 or anelson@smsmn.org, or use your Sponsor A Child envelope in the collection at Mass.
- Fundraisers:** We are very thankful and grateful for the support of our families, parish, and community in raising funds during our fundraisers. Our goal is to have our fundraisers cover a third of our operating costs. Our fundraisers include the Freeport State Bank Golf Tournament, Marathon/Prayer-a-thon, Harry's Pizza Sales, Catholic Schools Week Breakfast, and our Auction4Education.

