



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas PreK-10 School Newsletter February 26th, 2024

School Mission Statement

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School exists to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Educating in the Eucharistic culture and classical intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church, students are led to encounters with the transcendental good, true, and beautiful. In wonder, confidence, and virtue, students are prepared to engage our broken world for the glory of God, the good of others, and for their own sanctification.

Virtue for the School Year: Faith

- Assenting, through grace, to God's revealed truth

Virtue for Scholastica Term: Friendliness

- Acting in a becoming manner towards others



~ Upcoming Events ~

March 1st

**Financial Aid Application Deadline
School EF Mass**

March 4th-22nd

Reading Month Competitions/Events (see below)

March 5th

Technology Discussion Night, 7-8:30 p.m., school library (see below)

March 6th
No School – ICLE PD Day

March 7th
Gala Planning Meeting, 2-3 p.m., parish hall

March 13th and March 22nd
Dress-up/Dress-down days canceled due to special dress days for March Is Reading Month (see below)

March 28th-April 7th
Easter Break

SAVE THE DATE: April 19th
St. Thomas Gala – Weber’s Inn



From the Headmaster

We are now in the thick of Lent, and it feels also as if we are already into spring! Plenty of things are coming our way in March, but, as I reminded the students at assembly today, Lent is also a time to simplify, to focus in on what’s most important. Yesterday at Mass, we heard the story of the Transfiguration, which serves as a reminder of where we are headed as the goal of the battle we are currently fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The glimpse that Jesus gave his 3 apostles – the same 3 who joined him during the agony in the garden – was a source of encouragement and a bolster for their faith, which was to be severely tested during His passion and death. I encouraged the students to pray for a stronger faith this Lent. It is a virtue that helps us to cling to Jesus and His Truth through all trials and suffering.

In introducing March Is Reading Month, I emphasized with the students that this is not about the quantity of books read, but the quality of reading and the time invested. This year, we have changed the focus and structure of the reading competitions (which begin next week) to better reflect what we are trying to do in reading at a classical school. One change is that we will be competing as houses rather than as individual classes. Teachers will be determining how they will be “measuring” reading for their own class and will be sending out details about that this week. As a faculty, we take seriously the idea that what we read forms us – our intellect, imagination, desires, emotions –, habituating us to certain ways of thinking

and feeling. There is no better time to form reading habits than when we are young and still wide open to receiving what is new!

As a note, due to the special dress days during March, we will not have our regularly scheduled dress-up and dress-down days. Teachers will be clarifying with students on good/bad dress ideas for those special days.

Please see below for the full schedule and explanation. A special thanks to Mrs. Deemer for helping to organize this time to renew our focus on good reading!

Preschool Scholarship

St. Thomas School offers a scholarship each year for a new St. Thomas parish family that is joining our preschool. If anyone you know is interested in both our preschool and in becoming a parishioner of St. Thomas Catholic Church, please let them know. The preschool scholarship offer is \$2,500 off 2024-2025 tuition. As a reminder, any family that enrolls at St. Thomas School, the referring family gets a \$750 tuition credit for the 2024-2025 school year.

Gala Tickets, Planning Meeting

Tickets can be ordered on our website at <https://sta2.org/school/st-thomas-school-scholarship-gala-auction-2024/>. Please consider attending the Gala meeting on March 7th from 2-3 p.m. in the parish hall to see how you can volunteer for specific needs still to fill as we gear up for the event.

Lunch Duty Volunteers Needed

Mrs. Steffy has sent around a sign-up genius for serving lunches. March remains almost completely uncovered. If we don't get some help soon, we may need to cancel and refund some upcoming hot lunches. Please consider pitching in, even if it's only short-term help. Please see Mrs. Steffy's invite from February 2nd for openings.

March 5th Technology Discussion Night

I look forward to fostering further dialogue among parents about the use of technology at home. Mike Hanley and I will be hosting from 7:00-8:30 p.m. in the school library. Please see the February 5th newsletter for a full write-up on the event.

March Is Reading Month

Here are the plans for our upcoming month of reading:

Household Reading Competitions: March 4th-22nd

- Angel House Competition: Each house will compete to earn the most points from reading. Each lower-school (K-5) teacher will be, based on their own points system, be determining on a weekly basis which house within their respective class is 1st, 2nd, and 3rd. A first-place finishing house from a given class will earn 5 points for their house, with 2nd place earning 3 points and 3rd place earning 1 point. These points will be tallied across classes at the end of each week and added to the grand total as we progress through March. The house with the most points on March 22nd will win the prize, which is being finalized with Mrs. Deemer.
- Middle-School Household Competition: Using a list of good books compiled by their teachers, each household will try to read as many books as possible. The competition will not require logging minutes, pages read, or anything else besides simply the titles of the books read. The prizes are a trip to PizzaPazza in Kerrytown for the winning household, and a separate prize of a nice edition of a book picked by the teachers for the top 4 readers in the middle school.
- Upper School: For the pure joy of reading and the challenge of it, the 9th and 10th graders will be working their way through *War and Peace* with Mr. Massett, perhaps while sipping tea!

Library Times

- Special activities will be arranged by Mrs. Deemer for classes during their library times throughout March.

Other, Scheduled Elements

- THURS, FEB 29 - FRI, MARCH 1
 - Introduce March is Reading Month activities in the class library times
 - Book Fair in the parking lot after school both days
- MON, MARCH 4
 - Dress up as a character from a book which your class read this year.
- MON, MARCH 11
 - Dress up from the historic era your class is learning about right now.

- TUES, MARCH 12
 - Miss Dalian's mother will come and read her recently-published book and answer questions for grades PK, K, 1, and 2
- MON, MARCH 18
 - Special jeans day with spirit wear or green for St. Patrick and our Irish athletics
- TUES, MARCH 19
 - The Feast of St. Joseph- Normal dress code, only the students can wear something red- a shirt, tie, vest, sweater, socks, hairbow, pin, etc. Mrs. Deemer will set up a St. Joseph Table in the school office hallway, and the students can come by before their lunch period to visit the table and receive a St. Joseph cream puff and/or bread.
- GRAND FINALE: THURS, MARCH 21- FRI, MARCH 22
 - Library raffle prizes will be given out at library class times.
 - On Friday, we will have a special all-school assembly in the parish hall at 2:00 pm for a game of Literary Trivia. Two representatives from each of grades 1st-10th will be selected to compete in a K-4 or 5-10 trivia competition with questions composed by their teachers about literary subjects. Winners of the reading competitions will also be announced.

Canned Food Drive Supporting Hope Clinic

Mr. Votel is coordinating, with his 6th-grade class, a Lenten food drive for Hope Clinic. This drive, which has already begun, will run through the week before Holy Week. Please see the attached guidelines from Hope Clinic for donations. The 6th graders will be tracking the number of items each class brings in, and the class that brings in the most average items per student will receive a prize, to be determined!

Please note that, first and foremost, this is about helping the poor, not winning a competition. Certainly, any food items that fit the criteria of the attached guidelines are welcome, but a hundred cans of tomato paste (as an example) would perhaps not be the best contribution. Also, please do not open packages of bulk items (whether food or non-food such as hygiene or paper products), since the clinic can't distribute items that have been taken out of the package with the proper labels. For that reason, smaller-sized items are usually better. Cereal, rice, peanut butter, oatmeal, and cooking oil are all good/needed items.

Please also note that, though the guidelines include various dairy and meat items as possible donations, we will not be able to accept anything that requires refrigeration. Thus, for food donations, please stick to non-perishable items.