

August 20, 2009

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

Aaaahhhh August. Summer sports simmer down. The urge to mow lawn dwindles. Sleeping late is routine. Aaaaahhhhhh -- That is until now. Mid-August brings the panicked realization that the summer season is about to change. So, get ready, get excited, get geared up for a tremendous school year!

VISITATION DAY: Please attend our annual Visitation Day on Monday, August 31, from 11:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. As usual, this is an opportunity for you to visit the classroom, meet the teacher, bring in supplies, pay fees, sign necessary forms, tour the school, and catch up (or meet) with friends. I would greatly encourage you to walk around and through the school, looking at the summer alterations and newly renovated spaces. See you there!

AS YOU TOUR, YOU'LL NOTICE SOME CHANGES: Last year, the classrooms on Beltrami Avenue received new windows. This summer, the rest of the windows in the school were replaced. WOW! What a difference. To go with that, ceilings in the two kindergarten rooms were raised and painted blue. Mrs. Hanners and Mrs. Swedmark switched rooms, putting the two PK classrooms in the corners of the lower floor and the kindergarten rooms on either side of the center stairs. The art room has relocated to a new space between the remodeled computer lab and the increased parish storage area. On the main floor, we have a changed stairway system to the office, and added new carpet and some new furniture in my office. Mrs. Swartz' science room on the top floor has new trapezoid tables. Outside, we have a solid new fence with mesh screening surrounding the playground. How truly blessed we are to be receiving these long awaited improvements.

SCHOOL STARTS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st! Summer vacation ends a bit earlier for St. Philip's students this year as we kick off the start of school before Labor Day and before other area schools. Please remember that there is no ISD#31 transportation at all this first week, so parents will need to transport students to and from school each day.

The school day actually begins at 8:30 A.M., but students may begin arriving at 7:30 A.M. At 8:00 A.M., students eat breakfast or go outside. For emergency situations, we have morning supervision at 7:00 A.M. at a cost of \$2.00 daily.

LET ME INTRODUCE OUR STAFF: Over the summer, we did acquire two new employees. I am proud to welcome Mrs. Heidi Fladeboe as our Receptionist / Health Aide. Heidi, an LPN, is the mother of Elise (gr. 3) and Jack (Kdg) and the wife of Marty. Also new to the staff is Mrs. Paula DeClusin, mother of Andrew (gr. 8), Allison (gr. 2), and Grant (gr. 1), and wife of Jay. Paula will serve as our assistant cook and assistant Noah's Ark coordinator. They will both be wonderful additions to our present staff.

Returning personnel include: PK-Mrs. Chris Hanners and Mrs. Meghan Thompson; K-Mrs. Susie Balstad and Mrs. Doris Swedmark; 1st-Mrs. Sue Hengel and Mrs. Marilynne Hodapp; 2nd-Mrs. Lynn Baird; 3rd-Mrs. Heidi Hiscock; 4th-Mrs. Susie Dahle; 5th-Mrs. Geri Clairmont and Mrs. Sue Swartz; 6th-Mr. Terry Belanger; 7th-Mrs. Jean Lindow; 8th-Mrs. Karen Williams; PE-Mrs. Marsha Stebe; Conflict Management/5th -Mrs. Margaret Hins; Music-Mrs. Anne Will; Algebra-Mrs. Pat Snell; Art-Mrs. Ruth Oswald; Library/Technology-Mrs. Lisa Graefe and Mrs. Laurie Yost; Kitchen-Ms. Michele Minogue and Mr. Les Evans; Office- Mrs. Debra Olson and Mrs. Denise Kern; Foreign Languages-Mrs. Graefe and Mr. Peter Marino; Custodial-Mr. Larry Mack, Mr. Greg Allen, and Mr. Jim Shaw.

Altogether this is a super group of individuals who give St. Philip's their ALL.

PARENT MEETING: On **Thursday, September 3rd, at 2:45 P.M.**, we will have a special Parent Meeting lasting no more than 45 minutes. Students will be released from class when the meeting ends, just in time for you to pick them up. The two parent meetings scheduled for this year provide Fr. Vincent and me direct opportunities to keep you informed of important matters. I hope you will make every effort to attend. Thank you.

FEES: Besides tuition, there are a few other fees that are necessary for school programs. Students in PK – 2nd grade have a yearly snack fee and snack milk fee dependent on the number of days they are in school. Students in grades K-8 have a technology fee, ranging from \$10 to \$60 depending on grade level. The Band/Choir fee, gr. 5-8, is \$10 per student and the Science Lab fee, gr. 6-8, is \$10 per student.

Lunch costs are \$2.10 per meal for full price and \$.40 for reduced meals. Breakfasts continue to be \$1.00 full and \$.40 reduced. The charge for a separate carton of milk is \$.50. Please deposit money into your family's account before school begins. Also in regards to meal costs, if you are at all eligible, please apply for benefits through the federal meals program. The information and application form accompany this letter.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT: Annually, diocesan schools and parishes provide education to adults and students in order to maintain safety for all. All adults who wish to volunteer in any capacity at the school, in Religious Formation, or Life Teen must receive Diocesan Safe Environment Certification. To do this, one must 1) complete an Acknowledgement and Consent form; 2) pass a quiz covering this year's educational material; and 3) have an approved background check. All background checks are done through us by the company Checkpoint. The Acknowledgement and Consent forms for volunteers are available through the school, the church, or the RF offices, or online. The educational piece may be completed by attending a class or doing it on your own either online or from the training materials. Diocesan Safe Environment Certification is valid for one year. If you haven't done it for this school year, please do so soon. Online, go to: www.crookston.org. Click on Safe Envir and complete Component A training. If you take the online quiz, you will receive an email confirming your score. If you do not receive the email, you will have to redo the procedure. Safe Environment Training Sessions will be offered on Friday, August 28 at noon and 5:00. They last approximately one-half hour. Student education will occur during the school year. Thank you for assisting us in creating and maintaining safe environments.

100 YEARS OF GRACE: Our Crookston Diocese is 100 years old! We will commemorate this milestone throughout the year, both in the school and in the parish. Watch for opportunities to participate.

BAND: Is your 5th – 8th grader interested in band? Mrs. Will, our music teacher, invites students to enrich their lives through learning to play a musical instrument. At Visitation, various instruments will be available for students to try. Stop by and speak to Mrs. Will.

FR. VINCENT'S SABBATICAL: Beginning September 7th, Fr. Vincent will be on an eleven week sabbatical for study, prayer, and rest. He will return to us in late November. Fr. Tony will be in charge during his absence.

ANOTHER DATE TO KEEP IN MIND: **Sunday, September 27th** is the third annual Fall Festival. Lots to do. Lots of family fun. Many ways to amass those necessary service hours. Plan on it.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS: Fall sport activities are starting for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Bemidji Middle School. Physicals are required every three years. An activity fee and insurance waiver are also necessary. Check it out so you can be involved.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Fall Festival workers; Information Desk help; Lunch Servers and helpers; PK lunch / recess help; school tour guides for the weekend of August 29th / 30th; clean up after school masses; RF teachers; Parent Association participants; Girl Scout and Cub Scout leaders.

WHAT ELSE IS IN THIS MAILING? Perhaps you have already noticed a few other papers in this envelope. Included is the school calendar with a supply list on the reverse side, the application for the federal meals program, and the all important class list. As always, I hope you will read it from cover to cover.

I truly hope you enjoyed a summer of super memories and are eager for the enriching days of school.

SEPTEMBER 1st!

Very truly,

Carol Rettinger
Principal

