September 24, 2015

Dear Parent:

The October calendar is filled with many activities that we love. Some are new to us (the traveling rosary) and others are enjoyed every year.

Respect Life Month. October has been set aside as Respect Life Month and the first Sunday of October as Respect Life Sunday. We strive to make young students aware of the value and dignity of every human life. It is important for them to understand that through the service activities they engage in, they are developing a deep respect for all life. When our primary students bring in hundreds of jars of baby food for Mom’s House, they are helping families especially mothers and infants, and in doing so develop empathy and respect for life. When our seventh grade students volunteer to visit the residents at Lake Park after school, they are not only reaching out to those who are ill and to the elderly, but are also growing in their appreciation for the sacredness of life. As our sixth grade students write to members of the parish who are home-bound, elderly, or infirm, they witness the Catholic Social Doctrine principle of solidarity – that they are indeed the keepers of their brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. By knowing how much Jesus loves all people…they are witnesses to that love…they will be better able, as they become adults, to speak against war, terrorism, the death penalty, abortion, and other issues that belittle life.

DONUTS WITH DADS. Our annual “Donuts with Dads” morning is scheduled for Friday, October 2, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:50 a.m. At this time, “Donuts with Dads” invites the students in the elementary building only. I hope all of our K – 5 dads are able to join us that morning. If dads are not available, then grand-dads, uncles, adult brothers are welcome in their place. Middle school students will have their own “Donuts with Dads” time a little later in the school year. By scheduling the middle school students for a different morning with their dads, we significantly lessen the stress on traffic, parking, and buses. We also eliminate the safety concern of crossing those students at the end of their visit to the elementary building. So, Middle School Dads, please stay tuned for that date to be announced soon.

On the morning of “Donuts with Dads”, there may be a few adjustments that need to be made regarding parking.

- Parking is available until 7:30 am. in all campus lots. At 7:30 am., the elementary school lot is closed to all incoming/outgoing car traffic. If you arrive before 7:30 am and are able to stay until 7:55 am you will not have any difficulty.
- If you park across the street from the elementary building, you may move in and out of that lot at any time. We ask that you follow the traffic plan that is established for that area.

With all that being said, we really do hope that you will find the time to share “Donuts with Dads” with your kindergarten through fifth grade child/children.
On behalf of PTO, thank you for your generous participation in our fall fundraising event. Chaired by Sandy Gilley and Cherie Pelok, the two-week event generated gross sales in excess of $68,000!! We found the quality of products offered to be excellent. However, it still takes great leadership and generous hearts to complete a campaign so successfully. A huge thank you to Mrs. Gilley and Mrs. Pelok for the excellence in leadership and to you - for your generous hearts. I remind you that pick-up for the fundraiser orders will be Tuesday, October 13 from 1:30 pm to 6:00 pm.

PTO Morning Muffins! Thank you to all of the volunteers who provided items for PTO’s first “Morning Muffins” of the new school year. Thanks to our volunteers, teachers and staff were provided an assortment of donuts, bagels, yogurt, cereal bars, fruit, juices, and homemade granola ... all nutritious and delicious. Many thanks go to: Nikki Myers, Kristy Brinker, Sandy Gilley, Brynne Furko, Kate Kelly, Mindy Bieber, Nancy Arquette, Rita Hayes, Alisa Heerdegen, Susan Suwinski, Julie Heerdegen, Christine Angevine, Amanda Brzuchalski, Stacy Steward, Amy Ziegler, Niki Simon, Laurie O’Leary, and Jenny Durnell. And a shout-out to Kelly Bell for helping to set up this event. Morning Muffins is a twice-a-year PTO sponsored event. A second Morning Muffins will take place in the spring. Thank you again to all who helped make this event a special treat for our staff.

PTO Faculty Luncheon. Each year, St. Joseph School’s PTO organizes and provides luncheons for the faculty and staff. These luncheons are mostly provided through the generosity of parent volunteers. Our staff members and faculty gratefully anticipate these very special lunches and most thoroughly enjoy them. Our substitute teachers are always eager to say “yes” on a day when there is a PTO/Faculty lunch! Thank you to the organizers and leaders of this PTO activity, Denise Brown and Michele Piscopo. Many thanks to the generous volunteers providing food and beverages for the September luncheon: Stacy Steward, Amanda Brzuchalski, Cherie Pelok, Mindy Bieber, Rita Hayes, Terri McGranahan, Tracy Kindl, Richelle Smith, Holly Hurley, Valerie Bullard, Julie Forgach, Heather Moore, Ellen Case, Casey Barbour, Megan Salameh, Sukh O’Loughlin, Amy Carroll, Michelle Hacker, Nikki Myers, Niki Simon, Kate Kelly, Maegen Verkennes, and Brenda Hoffman.

Dress Code Reminders. The warm weather modification of the Dress Code ends on September 30. This is a good time to review the Dress Code with your children. Following are a few reminders:

- Sweat shirts/Fleece Jackets. Our uniform code includes a navy sweatshirt with the St. Joseph School logo and a navy fleece half-zipper jacket with the St. Joseph School logo. These items are only available through Schoolbelles. Two other Spirit Wear sweatshirts may be worn. Both are navy. One has the school logo and the other includes the phrase…Instilling values, enriching… Sweaters may be worn in the classroom. (Colors are white, yellow, navy, red, and hunter green. Styles in the dress code include cardigan, crew-neck, v-neck, and vests.)
- Shorts may not be worn after September 30. This includes navy skirts.
- Light blue shirts and khaki slacks are not part of the grade 1 – 5 uniform…ever. They are a middle school option only.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for November 2 and 3. Next week’s Thursday Envelope (October 1) will include a hard copy of the Conference Request Form. Please complete it and return it to Patti Bell in the school office no later than Friday, October 16. Intersession week begins on the following Monday, October 19, and Mrs. Bell uses the Intersession Week to schedule conferences. School resumes and the second quarter begins on Monday, October 26.
Eighth Grade High School Visitation. Eighth grade students visit the area Catholic high schools each year in preparation for transition to secondary education. The visits are designed to give students a brief overview of each high school’s program. They return to us at the end of each visitation day ready to walk out the door and eagerly jump in to four more years of Catholic education. There is much outreach and financial support for students and parents who want a Catholic high school education. I encourage you to ask questions of the high school of choice about tuition assistance, work-study programs, scholarships, legacies. We believe that parents make a choice about high school as early as fourth and fifth grade. That matters to us for many reasons. Sylvania Township and Sylvania residents do have an option. Sylvania schools are fine schools. But they are not Catholic schools. I believe you send your children to us for many reasons - faith formation, moral development, and values that echo your family life are the ones most often named. In speaking with parents over many years, I know it is a very difficult decision. If we can be of help to you as you make this decision, please call upon us. I have spoken with some of our Catholic high schools and am inviting them to meet with parents and share information about “how to move from impossible to possible” based upon the significant degree of financial aid each of them offers. Please watch for more information about these evening presentations.

Mission and Belief.

Our Belief Statements are driven by our Mission. We remind ourselves as Catholic school educators and you as Catholic school parents, what it is that we do - and we do it.

St. Joseph School Mission Statement

St. Joseph School, a ministry of St. Joseph Parish, is dedicated to Catholic faith formation and to academic excellence. Assisting parents as primary educators of their children, the school calls forth the unique potential of the whole child.

Belief Statements

...St. Joseph School is not only a school but a community of Faith;
...those that you entrust to us are not only students, but children of God;
...we are not only educators, but Ministers of the Gospel;
...the values we teach are not only character development, but a call to Holiness;
...our courses of study are not only academic pursuits, but a search for Truth;
...the purpose of education is not only for personal gain and the development of society, but for the Transformation of the world.

In Christ,

Sally A. Koppinger