



St. Lawrence

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

We are a Catholic School family dedicated to nurturing and celebrating a love for Jesus Christ and educating the whole child with academic excellence.


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Principal's Corner

Dear Parents,

Mrs. Tsatsos and I have been working together on behavior, dress code, and etiquette. We feel what makes us really stand out as a Catholic School is first and for most, faith, but also tradition and values. It seems like in today's day and age we've lost a lot of tradition and values, so we are working together to reinforce them. Therefore, Mrs. Tsatsos and I will be writing articles about what we are working on in our school together as a staff. We ask that you reinforce the same at home.

Etiquette in a Catholic school is a set of rules and guidelines that students and staff are expected to follow to show respect, courtesy, and professionalism. Below are some of the common etiquette rules we are striving to instill in our students here at St. Lawrence:

- Dress modestly and neatly, following the school's uniform policy. Pay particular attention to skirt length, as that seems to be the most challenging issue lately.
- Address teachers and administrators by their titles and last names, such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Dr.
- Use polite language and avoid profanity, slang, or vulgar expressions.
- Raise your hand and wait for permission before speaking in class.
- Listen attentively and participate actively in class discussions and activities.
- Do not interrupt, mock, or argue with others.
- Keep your desk, locker, and classroom clean and organized.
- Do not cheat, plagiarize, or copy others' work.
- Be honest, responsible, and cooperative with your teachers and classmates.
- Follow the school's rules and policies on attendance, homework, exams, discipline, etc.

Etiquette is not only a matter of manners, but also a way of living out the values of faith, love, and service that St. Lawrence promotes. By following the etiquette rules, you can show your respect for God, yourself, and others, and contribute to a positive and productive learning environment.

I hope everyone is enjoying this Advent Season preparing for our Lord Jesus Christ! God bless all our students, staff and parents during this very blessed season. Merry Christmas!

Mrs. DiMercurio

ASSISTANT'S PRINCIPLES

Happy December!

During conferences in years past, parents of students in K-5 were shown their child's reading level – where they are developmentally, and where they should be. You may have noticed these levels were not provided during the last round of conferences. Since some of you asked about it, I decided to share some additional background information on our adoption of the science of reading.

Reading is one of the most essential skills that children need to learn in their early years. It opens a world of knowledge, imagination, and creativity for them. But reading is not something that comes naturally to everyone. Some kids struggle with decoding words, understanding meanings, or remembering what they read. That is why the science of reading is important in lower elementary. This body of research examines how children learn to read and what are the most effective ways to teach them, based on how the brain learns to read. It involves teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension in a systematic and explicit way. The science of reading helps children develop the foundational skills they need to become fluent and confident readers. It also helps them overcome any difficulties or gaps they may have in their reading development. By using the science of reading in lower elementary, teachers can ensure that all children have the opportunity to enjoy reading and achieve their academic potential.

The reading levels you used to receive come from the Fountas and Pinnell assessments. Fountas and Pinnell are two educators who developed a framework for guided reading instruction, based on the idea that students need to read texts at their appropriate level of difficulty and receive support from the teacher. The science of reading does not necessarily contradict Fountas and Pinnell's approach, but it does suggest some areas for improvement, such as using more explicit and systematic instruction in phonics, assessing students' decoding skills more frequently, and providing more opportunities for students to read independently. The Fountas and Pinnell approach is based on the idea that children progress through various stages of reading development and need several types of texts and support at each stage. The science of reading, however, challenges some of the assumptions and practices of Fountas and Pinnell, such as the use of cueing systems, the reliance on leveled texts, and the lack of explicit phonics instruction.

Some researchers argue Fountas and Pinnell's method does not align with the evidence on how the brain processes written language and how children acquire the skills and knowledge needed for fluent and comprehending reading. Therefore, they suggest that teachers should use more systematic and explicit instruction and expose children to a variety of texts that are not limited by levels or stages. This is why we have transitioned to the science of reading, and it is also why you will no longer receive a reading level for your child.

I hope everybody has a wonderful Christmas. Enjoy the break and let us all keep in our hearts the reason for this beautiful celebration – the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

See you in the New Year!

God bless,

Mrs. Tsatsos

DATES & DEADLINES

DECEMBER

- 21 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break
- 22 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break
- 27 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break
- 28 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break
- 29 NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break

JANUARY

- 1 NO SCHOOL - Christmas Break
- 2 NO SCHOOL - Christmas Break
- 3 NO SCHOOL - Christmas Break
- 4 Classes resume
- 15 NO SCHOOL - MLK JR Day
- 22 NO SCHOOL - Teacher Records Day
- 25 8th grade Confirmation Mass 7 p.m.
- 28 Catholic Schools Week Open House 1-3 p.m.
- 29 Catholic Schools Week Begins (Jan. 29-Feb. 2)

FEBRUARY

- 19 Winter Break
- 20 Winter Break
- 21 Winter Break
- 22 Winter Break
- 23 Winter Break

SPIRITUAL CORNER



**DIVINE NEWSLINE
JANUARY 2024**

OUR MISSION

We are a Catholic School family dedicated to nurturing and celebrating a love for Jesus Christ and educating the whole child with academic excellence.

THE FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is observed on Sunday, January 7, 2024. It commemorates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. It is also known as "Theophany".

As Catholics, we celebrate the baptism of Christ in the Jordan by John the Baptist: a milestone event in the life of Jesus and in Christianity. At His Baptism, Christ reveals himself again, this time to repentant sinners. The Baptism of Jesus also marks the first public revelation of all Three Persons in the Holy Trinity, and the official revelation of Jesus as the Son of God to the world by God the Father. Jesus's baptism is described in all four Gospels, and it marks the beginning of his public ministry. "After Jesus was baptized, he came from the water and behold, the heavens were opened [for him], and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove [and] coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, "This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Mt 3:16-17) We know that Jesus, holy and sinless, did not need to be baptized. Yet, he humbled himself and submitted to his Father's will. Jesus's baptism sanctified the waters and instituted the Sacrament of Baptism. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: Our Lord voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, in order to "fulfill all righteousness." Jesus' gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying. The Spirit who had hovered over the waters of the first creation descended then on the Christ as a prelude of the new creation, and the Father revealed Jesus as his "beloved Son." (CCC 1224) Fr. Antony Kadavil explains this further: "Neither John nor Jesus invented baptism. It had been practiced for centuries among the Jews as a ritual equivalent to our Confession. Until the fall of the Temple in 70 A.D., it was common for Jewish people to use a special pool called a Mikveh - literally a "collection of water" - as a means of spiritual cleansing. Men took this bath weekly on the eve of the Sabbath; women, monthly. Converts were also expected to take this bath before entering Judaism. The Orthodox Jews still retain the rite. John preached that such a bath was a necessary preparation for the cataclysm that would be wrought by the coming Messiah. Jesus transformed this continuing ritual into the one

single, definitive act by which we begin our life of Faith. In effect, He fused His Divine Essence with the water and the ceremony. In this humble submission, we see a foreshadowing of the "baptism" of his bloody death upon the cross. Jesus' baptism by John was the acceptance and the beginning of his mission as God's suffering Servant. He allowed himself to be numbered among sinners. Jesus submitted himself entirely to his Father's will. Out of love, He consented to His baptism of death for the remission of our sins." On this glorious feast day, we also celebrate our own baptisms, which freed us from sin and made us sons and daughters of God. Through baptism, God has opened the doors to Heaven. Deo gratias!



Our next First Friday rosary will be held on Friday, Jan. 5. Parents and families are invited to pray the rosary with Fr. Roman the first Friday of each month at 9:05 a.m. in the front pews of the Church and pray for our students and St. Lawrence school family.

Preparing Our Hearts for Jesus' Birth

The Sisters from The Shrine of Jesus, The Divine Mercy, visited with our Kindergarten students this month. They made Nativity snow globes, listened to a Christmas book and talked to the Sisters about Religious life. A joyous preparation for all! Happy birthday, Jesus!

PARISH NEWS



Knights of Columbus Calendar & Events

2024 Breakfast Dates

January 14
February 11
March 3
April 14
May 12

Events

February 9 - Trivia Night
March 16 - St. Pat's Party
April 6/7 - Tootsie Roll Drive
First Week of May - Silver Rose Commemoration

Youth Leadership Projects

The St. Lawrence Knights of Columbus promotes leadership development for 8th to 12th graders. We are looking for motivated teens that are interested in leading a team for their choice of project, willing to share their Gifts of the Spirit with others and learn about leading a team and project planning.

Please contact Joe Lograsso at lograsso@comast.net for more information.

Morning of Reflection *Epiphany and Empowerment*

Saturday January 13, 2024
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
St. Lawrence Church and Social Hall
Registration is now open!!



Have you experienced something in your life such that it provides more clarity to your purpose? Have you been inspired by a Scripture reading, witnessed someone displaying kindness or concern, or simply have greater understanding of God's love for you after listening to a Homily or watching a faith-based video?

Our St. Lawrence community will come together for a morning of Mass, breakfast, short testimonies, and fellowship. We start with Mass at 8:30 a.m. and will be finished around 11:30 a.m. We look forward to a broad range of attendance from our high school students to our wisdom-filled seniors.

Please sign up below so we will have a good idea of food for a continental breakfast and materials.

[Day of Reflection Sign-Up Link](#)

CRE News

Epiphany House Blessing

Epiphany House Blessing (chalking the door) is a Catholic family tradition to ask for God's blessing on our homes, families, and visitors. [Click here for the prayers and blessing: Epiphany Blessing](#)

[CRE Website](#)

Children's Sacrament Preparation

1. RCIA classes for children/parents seeking Baptism are held Tuesday evenings, 6:30pm. Contact Mrs. Rajnicek to register CRE@stlawrenceparish.com
2. 2nd grade Family Retreat – Saturday January 6, 2024 9:30am-11:30am in church
3. 8th grade Confirmation Retreat – Saturday January 20, 2024 9:00am-1:00pm (sponsor or parent required to



- attend with candidate)
4. 8th grade Confirmation Mass – Thursday January 25, 2024 7:00pm (candidates and sponsors must be in Social Hall by 6:30pm)

Adult Faith Formation

Contact Mrs. Rajniecek to register CRE@stlawrenceparish.com

1. L.I.F.E. Living in Faith Everyday – January 18, 2024 at 7:00pm in church
2. Bible Study – Fulfilled, Discovering the Scriptural Foundations of Catholicism; Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings

[Adult Faith Formation Website](#)

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

This month we get to know our new fourth grade teacher Mrs. Yurgalonis. Welcome to our St. Lawrence family.

We are blessed to have you and your family as part of St. Lawrence.

Mrs. Yurgalonis



Mrs. Yurgalonis just joined St. Lawrence as our fourth grade teacher this year. She has been teaching for four years and received her degree from Michigan State University

She has been married for 16 years and has two children who attend St. Lawrence, Emily in 7th grade and Andrew in 5th grade. She has a hound dog named Charlie.

In her free time, Mrs. Yurgalonis likes to read and spend time outside walking, camping, riding bikes or just relaxing in the sun.

Interesting facts you'd like to share: "I lived in 3 different states and worked at Walt Disney World when I was in college."

Favorite Saint: "St. Martha, she reminds us to worry less about the busyness of everyday life and put God first."

Advice / words to live by: "Always strive to be a blessing to someone else."

SCHOOL NEWS & UPDATES

Open House and Enrollment

"In-School Family" ONLINE re-enrollment will begin Jan. 7, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. with a deadline of Jan. 26, 2024.

The "New Family" ONLINE application process will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Jan. 28.

More information can be found on the "Enrollment" page of our school website.

The St. Lawrence Open House will take place on



OPEN HOUSE

ST. LAWRENCE CATHOLIC SCHOOL



JANUARY 28, 2024 1:00PM - 3:00PM

OUR OPEN HOUSE IS A PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO TOUR THE SCHOOL, MEET THE STAFF, AND ASK ANY QUESTIONS ONE MAY HAVE ABOUT ST. LAWRENCE CATHOLIC SCHOOL!

"WE ARE A CATHOLIC SCHOOL FAMILY DEDICATED TO NURTURING AND CELEBRATING A LOVE FOR JESUS CHRIST AND EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD WITH ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE."

WWW.STLAWRENCE-SCHOOL.COM | 586-731-0135

Jan. 28 from 1-3 p.m. It takes many volunteers to help make our Open House a success. Please consider donating your time in this effort. Click on the Sign Up Genius to sign up. Thank you for your help!!

[Open House Sign-Up Link](#)

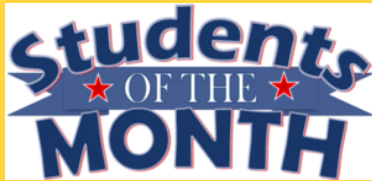
Congratulations to our Accelerated Reader winners in November.

11/13-11/21

Luciana Offer (3rd time winner) - 5th grade

11/27-12/1

Scarlett Stiefel (3rd time winner) - 4th grade



December SOTM Recipients

Congratulations to our December Student of the Month recipients!

Students will receive a free jeans day and breakfast with Mrs. DiMercurio and Mrs. Tsatsos after Christmas break. Parents of the recipients will receive an email with more information.

Kindergarten/Jr. K

April Combs
Frank Fragnoli
Andrew Lesh
Giuliana Perrone
Jude Stephan

Fourth Grade

Claire Robine
Andrew Shkreli
Grant Smiley
Emma Wrightner

First Grade

Blake Kern
Malina Kostadinovski
Noah Nisan
Julian Rodriguez

Fifth Grade

Charleigh Bainbridge
Meena Brikho
Emilie Brillati
Alessandra Tapia

Second Grade

Roman Hannosh
Clare McKenzie
Dominic Morad
Giuliana Shaman

Sixth Grade

Amelia Kozak
Alice Mena
Sophia Sommer

Third Grade

Sofia Aboufawaz
Landen Hessano
Zachariah Matti
Cecelia Viviano

Seventh Grade

Christian Pizzo
Nahum Poullath
Brady Vanlacken

Eighth Grade

Antonio Lalama
Lawrence Schuster
Pailyn Watson