

February 14, 2020

Dear St. Mary's Families,

Happy Valentine's Day! I hope your family has a LOVELY weekend together and enjoys an extra day off on Monday in honor of Presidents Day. St. Mary's started our Valentine's Day off in a very fitting way...Celebrating Mass together and sharing our love of Christ with each other. We were blessed to have both Father Joe and Father J at Mass this morning, and Father J's homily reminded us to keep our hearts, ears, and eyes open in order to stay close to God.

Speaking of hearts, St. Mary's kicked off our annual **Kids Heart Challenge** on Wednesday, which benefits the American Heart Association. Information and collection envelopes were sent home this week for Kindergarten – 5th grade students for our annual **Jump Rope for Heart** event, and we already have 57 students registered! This is St. Mary's sixth year to participate in the challenge and our students are VERY excited! Your child may have already mentioned some of the healthy habits that Mrs. Margie Black has been discussing with them, as well as the fun jump roping activities that will be incorporated into PE over the next few weeks. Over the past five years, St. Mary's has collected more than \$30,000 for the American Heart Association by raising awareness each February through **Jump Rope for Heart**. We all know someone affected by heart disease, and the awareness and donations raised over the years have benefitted so many people. Donations can be collected in person, however we do NOT encourage our students to go door-to-door. Online donations are very easily requested and made on the website www.heart.org/kidsheartchallenge and after finding our school (St. Mary Elementary) OR you can download the FREE app, Kids Heart Challenge. Students earn a glow in the dark bracelet just for registering online and taking one of the healthy heart challenges. Sending out texts and emails is very easy with the app. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Black at mblack@jacss.org or 623-1465. Thank you for your support and encouragement!

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about **St. Mary's Early Childhood and Kindergarten programs**, please join us for an **Open House on Saturday, February 29th** from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. This is a great morning to visit with our talented faculty, learn more about each class's specially designed curriculum to develop and enrich academic, emotional, spiritual, and social skills, enjoy a school tour with refreshments, and help your child make a Leap Day craftivity to take home. This open house is for families that have a child who will be 2 years old by July 31st (Early Learners), 3 years old by July 31st (Preschool), 4 years old by July 31st (Pre-Kindergarten) and 5 years old by July 31st (Kindergarten). Hop on in for a Leap Day morning filled with fun and discovery! For more information, please call or stop by the office.

Don't forget that Miss Amy is still collecting photos to include in our **2019-2020 St. Mary's Yearbook!** It would be a great way to include all the fun Catholic Schools Week and Valentine's Day activities you may have taken of your child and/or his or her class.

St. Mary's will be holding a **Penny War** the week of February 24th -28th with proceeds going to the JACS Annual Appeal. A penny war is a fun class competition to see which class can raise the most money with pocket change. Pennies are positive points and silver coins (nickels, dimes, quarters, etc.) and paper money can be placed in other classroom change bins to cancel out pennies. Money will be collected, counted, and tallied each day during the week, and the **winning class will get a week's worth of jeans days** (except Friday due

to Mass) from Mrs. Lown as a grand prize. Start saving your change now and thank you for your support!

It may still be chilly outside, but the **Spring Fling** is getting closer and you won't want to miss the fun! Please mark this year's date, **Saturday, April 25th** on your calendars now, and make plans to attend! Formal invitations will be sent out in March, but planning has been going on for months for this fun and important evening benefitting JACS. If you or your company has an item or service to donate to the auction, you may start to bring these in to St. Mary's, and donation and sponsorship forms will be available in the office soon.

Thank you for all that you do for your child and our wonderful school! It is very inspiring to see our parents and families not only care so much about their child's faith and education, but also all the thoughtful and generous things that are done to support our school community. I am constantly touched by the love, compassion, and dedication our entire school community has for our students, our faculty and staff, our parishes, and all of our parents and grandparents. Not all schools have this amazing school support and shared dedication, and St. Mary's is such a positive, nurturing, and special place for your child to call home during the school week. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any question or concern you may have about any aspect of your child's school day, or any other way that I might be able to help your family.

God bless and take care,
Joanne Lown
jlown@jacss.org

Important Dates to Remember:

Monday, February 17 th	Presidents Day, NO SCHOOL
Thursday, February 20 th	St. Mary's hosts the Diocesan Principal's Meeting
	Free Dress Day
February 24 th – 28 th	St. Mary's Penny War!
Tuesday, February 25 th	Mardi Gras Celebration and King Cake
Wednesday, February 26 th	Ash Wednesday, School Mass at 8:30 a.m.
Saturday, February 29 th a.m.	Early Childhood and Kindergarten Open House, 9-11:00