



October 5, 2019

Dear St. Mary's Families,

Welcome to October! We had a wonderful **Blessing of the Pets** yesterday afternoon in recognition of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Mary's students and faculty, family members, family pets, and Father Joe gathered on the front lawn of the school for a beautiful visit and blessing by Father Joe. All creatures, both great and small, human and animal, were blessed on during the ceremony. Family dogs, cats, turtles and tortoises, gerbils, hamsters, rabbits, fish, lizards and geckos were the honored guests at the ceremony. It is a wonderful annual tradition for our school community, and a fun event and meaningful event.

**ITBS testing will take place next week, October 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup>**, for students in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades. The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) is a series of standardized achievement tests used to assess a child's knowledge of what they have learned in school, and are not cognitive or IQ tests. St. Mary's students will take the test next week per diocesan standards, and again in the spring to be used as a measure of student learning and growth. Testing will take place each morning, and there will be no homework for students taking the tests. If your child will be taking the ITBS this week, please ensure they attend school each day, have a good night's rest each night, and have a nutritious breakfast each morning. Home and School will be providing nutritious snacks during test breaks this week, thank you!

As an important reminder, please remember the St. Mary's school parking lot operates in a **ONE-WAY** manner with all traffic moving north and exiting at the north exit onto Central City Road. **Cars should never travel south in the school parking lot at any time during**

the school day, nor exit through the main driveway closest to the Central City Road traffic circle. I have seen several parents and grandparents driving through the parking lot in the opposite direction, and this puts everyone in our school community at risk. Please ensure you and anyone else (especially grandparents) dropping off or picking up at school knows this important information and drives at a slow, safe speed in our parking lot.

### Important Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Daniel Boone visits K-2 <sup>nd</sup> grade, 1:00 p.m.
October 14 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup>	ITBS Testing for 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup> grades
Friday, October 18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Diocesan PD Day
Monday, October 21 <sup>st</sup>	School picture retake day
Thursday, October 24 <sup>th</sup>	Trunk or Treat, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. Parent-Teacher Conferences, 3:30- 6:00 p.m.
Friday, October 25 <sup>th</sup> Conferences,	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> - Parent-Teacher 7:30-11:30 a.m.