

THE GOOD NEWS

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

Providing tuition assistance to students at Community of Saints Regional Catholic School

End of Year Challenge!

Every donation to A&F&F Tuition Assistance Fund will be matched 100% — up to \$8,500 — through December 31, 2017.

Give a gift to honor someone who values Catholic education. See pg. 10 for details.



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COS ENROLLMENT UP 15%

School Families Create Good Buzz and Bring in More Students

Community of Saints was one of four Catholic schools recognized for increased enrollment this year by leadership of the Catholic Schools Center for Excellence. Not only did the school enrollment rise for the third consecutive year, the preschool now has a waiting list (see story pg. 3).

Doug Lieser, COS Advancement Director, credits current families for the steady growth. "Our families are happy," he said simply. "The current retention rate is just under 90%, which is a high number. Happy families have created good buzz about our school."

There's no better example of that than Maricruz Hernandez, whose sons are in second and fourth grade this year. Maricruz and her husband first enrolled their boys at COS in 2016, and since then she's taken the lead in recruiting families from Our Lady of Guadalupe, where she's been an active member for 20 years.

"We always had it in our hearts to send our children to Catholic school," Maricruz said when explaining their decision to move the boys from a public school. "It was a big change," Maricruz recalled. "At Community of Saints, you have to be involved, not just go for conferences. You have to be part of the school community. I feel like it makes me a better mom."

"When I know something is good — I want everyone to know"

When the school learned that Maricruz worked professionally as a Spanish language translator, they asked if she'd be willing to help them with Open House announcements after Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe (OLG). Maricruz did that and more. "She became our Latino marketing squad," Doug Lieser said. "She would translate materials for us, attend all the Masses and make announcements.

She also made a point of talking to as many families after church as possible. "She's very persuasive," observed COS Principal Bridget Kramer, who got to see her in action.

"When I know something is good, I want everyone to know," Maricruz said. "I tell them, 'My kids love it — you're gonna love it. Go visit.'"

Continued on page 5



MESSAGE FROM **father steve**

Dear Alums, Friends and Families of Community of Saints:

With this issue we mark and celebrate our 10th anniversary of tuition assistance to students of COS. Five years ago COS came to be as the merging of three Catholic parochial schools — Saint Michael, Saint John Vianney and Saint Matthew.

It was obvious to all in 2007 that middle income and low income inner urban families were bringing home less and less in their pay envelope and the cost of education was rising annually, sometimes by double digits. Many families decided that they were unable to provide their children with a Catholic education.

In light of this reality, a dozen committed men and women, intent on the proposition that Catholic education be available and affordable to families in our community, came together and made an act of faith and a promise: "No student will ever be turned away from our Catholic school for financial reasons."

Hundreds of families believed the promise, and because of you and your generosity, Catholic education was theirs — people who never thought they could give this gift to their children were able to bless them with a Catholic education.

This success is your success. The promise is your promise, and God willing, Alums & Families & Friends will continue to make that promise a reality in the lives of tomorrow's students. Hope allows us to invest in the next generation and in projects that will outlast our lifetime.

With gratitude,

Father Stephen Adrian, Canonical Administrator of Community of Saints



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Dorothy Hecht Estate Gift Honors Fond Memories of St. Matthew's

You Can Make a Lasting Impact for Students at Community of Saints

For information about including Community of Saints in your legacy planning, call Doug Lieser at 651-457-2510 x119.

Dear Mr. Lieser,

My aunt, Dorothy A. Hecht, was almost 97 when she passed away in December 2016.

She was born in 1920 and we assume she graduated from 8th grade at St. Matthew's in 1933 or 1934.

Dorothy and my mother Helen Hecht both had piano lessons from the nuns at St. Matthew's and both played beautifully throughout their lives. They went to St. Joe's Academy and The College of St. Catherine.

They enjoyed their years at St. Matthew's.

In The Good News magazine, I saw the most senior alum, Florence Bandholz at the reunion. Perhaps she knew Dorothy or Helen. They lived on the S.W. corner of Delos & Bellows. The house was kitty-corner from the park.

Dorothy wanted to leave something to St. Matthew's and we hope this contribution can be matched and help reach your fundraising goal.

Sincerely,

Judy

School Update from Principal Bridget Kramer



Q: What's the big news for this year?

A: Enrollment is up and things are looking really promising. The preschool already has a waiting list and we continue to increase the number of students that go from preschool to Kindergarten — that's important.

I'm also really happy about the fact that even with our higher enrollment, we're still a diverse school. Our demographics are about the same as they've been. That's something we offer our families that's distinct from most other schools — a culturally mixed environment. Every day students here are learning how to work and play with kids with different life experiences from their own. That's an integral part of their education and those skills will serve them throughout their life.

Q: What's at the top of your education initiatives?

A: A big theme I'm working with the staff on this year is increasing academic motivation. That's an education concept that basically addresses a student's desire to learn a subject, when their competence is measured against a standard of performance.

We have a very diverse group of learners. Our goal is

Increasing academic motivation among students is one of the top initiatives.



to meet each student where they are at, and help them grow. To identify where each student is, we look at MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) test scores and plan interventions. This year we're being more intentional about using data to help guide instruction.

I'm really excited that this year for the first time we have Title I support for all grade levels. Before this, we only had funding for K-4th grade but this year we've expanded through 8th grade. Title I is designed to provide reading and math support to students to prevent a growing achievement gap.

Q: Any other news?

A: We've expanded our extracurricular activities to meet the interest of students. We now have drama club, tech club, art club, and SOS — Study or Serve Club.

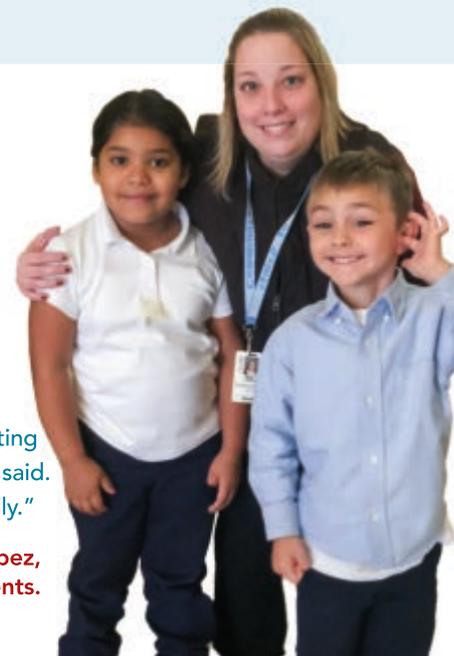
Plus our student leadership team continues to be very active. Last year their focus was on literacy and this year the theme is anti-bullying. They will look for ways to address that issue here within the school, the local community and globally. I look forward to seeing what they do.

Former School Parent is New School Secretary

You could say there's a new face at the front desk but it's actually a pretty familiar one. Angie Lopez, whose two children have graduated from Community of Saints, is the new school secretary. "It's my dream job!" she said jubilantly.

Angie is also bilingual, which is a big plus. "She's been extremely helpful in communicating with our Spanish-speaking families," Bridget said. "Angie's Spanish language skills are used daily."

The new school secretary, Angie Lopez, with first grade students.





As director, Katie Hartz has led the way to earn national certification for our preschool program.

COS Preschool Rated 4 Stars by Parent Aware

Early Learning Scholarships Make It Affordable

Community of Saints (COS) preschool recently received a four-star rating from Minnesota Parent Aware, a program that helps families find high-quality preschools for their children ages 3-5. COS was already accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), considered the gold standard for early childhood programs nationwide.

The four-star Parent Aware rating now qualifies COS for the Minnesota Department of Education's Early Learning Scholarship Program, which provides funds to low-income families to cover the cost of preschool. "The four-star rating is a big deal," explained COS principal Bridget Kramer. "Families can attend our school now and qualify for scholarships up to \$7,500, which basically covers the cost of full-time preschool. For working families, it's an incredible opportunity."

Middle-income families can also qualify for assistance at COS through the Schulze Early Learning Scholarships Program. The Schulze Foundation chose COS as one of a few Catholic preschools to pilot the program, which is meant to build enrollment in Catholic schools.

Katie Hartz has been the Preschool Director at COS since the doors opened in 2012. She led the efforts for both NAEYC accreditation and the Parent Aware rating, even though many preschools opt to skip the NAEYC accreditation process because it's so rigorous. "It was a

year-long process," she said. "But in the end, it improved our program, so it was worth it."

Families must agree because preschool classes are full and there's a waiting list. Katie reports that people are already calling about next year.

Preschoolers Supported by School Community

Katie describes the preschool as an integral part of COS. Each four year-old student has a sixth grade buddy who takes them to Mass and other school functions. "Everybody in the school loves these kids and watches out for them," Katie said. "It's something I always stress to parents who are looking for a preschool. These kids are part of a bigger community that supports them."

The number of preschoolers who go on to kindergarten at COS grows every year. That's good news for Katie. "I love being able to watch them grow up," she said with a big smile. "I started teaching at St. Matthew's in 2007, so there are kids I taught in preschool who now are in seventh grade at Community of Saints."

Getting to watch her students advance in school also serves as motivation in her work. "This is where we close the achievement gap — from birth to age five." Katie stated. "That's what keeps me in early education."

Note: A&F&F tuition assistance does not apply to preschool students. However, other assistance through private foundations and government programs is available to families.

Preschool Director Katie Hartz with some of her former students "I love being able to watch them grow up."





Maricruz with her sons: Francisco (left) is in fourth grade and Pablo is in second grade.

Continued from page 1

School Community is Important

Maricruz had to leave her family behind when she moved to the U.S. to look for work when she was 21 years old. Her search for a good job took her to California and Chicago. “Then I heard about Minnesota Nice,” she said, laughing. “How people here are really welcoming, and the minimum wage was \$6.50! Twenty years ago that was really appealing.”

She moved to the West Side to be near an uncle and cousins, got married and eventually had children. But she missed her family in Mexico, especially when her boys were young. “Not having a mother or someone to help with babysitting, made me want to go back.” That’s changed since coming to COS. “Now I have the support of the school community. We feel like we belong.”

Tuition Assistance Breaks Down Major Barrier

Maricruz knows that for families from OLG, the biggest barrier to sending their children to Catholic schools is financial. “I can’t speak for everyone, but most Latinos are working two jobs and they have two households to support. Their family here and they feel responsible for sending money to their family in Mexico. So paying tuition is hard.”

Funds raised by Alums & Friends & Families (A&F&F) for tuition assistance at COS makes all the difference. “When I tell people about financial assistance, they still think they will pay a lot. But I always say we will make it work.”

Maricruz is thrilled that her boys are getting a good education at a school where God is part of the conversation every day. “(Latino) families are so focused on basic necessities — food, clothes, sometimes education is pushed aside. We never think about private school. But thanks to the gifts that (A&F&F) are giving, kids’ lives can change.”

Maricruz believes everyone has a mission in life and she believes helping COS is part of what she is meant to do. It’s a lesson she wants to impart to her sons. “I always tell my boys, ‘You’re going to that school because God has a big plan for you. Nothing happens without God’s will,’” she says earnestly. “My boys have been blessed. They need to be a blessing to others.”



Increasing Latino Enrollment in Catholic Schools

According to a 2016 study, “Catholic Schools in an Increasingly Hispanic Church” published by Boston College, Latinos now constitute about 40% of all Catholics in the U.S., and 60% of Catholics under 18. Yet only a tiny fraction of Latino children, just 2.3%, attend Catholic schools.

The report identified tuition as the primary barrier, citing data that shows 60% of Hispanic households in the U.S. earning less than \$30,000 a year.

Increased Tuition Support is Essential

A&F&F’s commitment to raise funds for tuition assistance is exactly the kind of effort the report calls for to increase the number of Latino students who can access Catholic education.

The report provides a wake up to Catholic communities around the country, reminding them that providing a high-quality education is part of the Church’s historic commitment to immigrant communities. It is also seen as a crucial investment in the future of the church. “Given the striking growth of the Hispanic Catholic school-age population and the declining enrollment in Catholic schools, the Church must be realistic and plan creatively to serve this critical and growing group of American Catholics,” said the report’s co-author and Boston College professor, Hosffman Ospino.

Looking Back at 10 Years of

From the Editor

In 2007, Jerry Sexton '44 came over to my house and asked if I'd be willing to sign on to a new committee that was forming to raise tuition assistance for St. Matthew's School. I'd never met Jerry before but he explained that the group was called Alums & Friends and he wanted to publish a newsletter to get the word out. He said he could print the newsletter for free at his company, Sexton Printing, and he asked me to be the editor. He already had a name for it: *The Good News*.

I was iffy on the idea — sounded like a lot of work — but Jerry is a persuasive guy and by the time he left I agreed to give it a try. It was a good decision.

Nov.-Dec. 2007 Everyone loved St. Matt's kindergarten playhouse. It was a favorite with alums when they came back for reunions.



Nov.-Dec. 2008 Reunions were a regular feature in the newsletter — like these members of the class of 1968 who were celebrating their 40th.



It's been 10 years since we came out with the first issue and there's been a lot of good news to share. The best news continues to be the generous spirit of the people who receive the newsletter. Many of you have shared your stories and photos, others have helped track down missing alums and organize reunions. And then there's all the financial support you've given over the years. Jerry believed that if people heard about the good work being done at the school, they'd want to support it. He was right.

On these pages are just a few of my favorite photos over the last decade. If you'd like to see more, the entire collection of newsletters is available online, thanks to Richard Schletty '66 and Chris Stevens '67. Go to www.st-matts.org/the-good-news.

March-April 2008 A special issue remembered the fire that destroyed St. Matthew's Church 40 years earlier. People shared poignant stories and photos, including this photo of Patty O'Day and Richard Clemen's wedding on February 24, 1968.



An Audacious Goal in 2007 — \$150K & 50 New Students

In A&F's first year, committee member Joe Cullen '79 challenged the group to set a goal. "I thought \$150,000 was possible. Fifty new students I wasn't as sure about." To many on the committee, both goals seemed pretty aspirational — but they set to work. At the end of the first year, supporters had given \$120,000 and there were over 50 new students enrolled at St. Matthew's School.



Sept.-Oct. 2009 Coach Jerry Krueger '72 remembers his days as a winning basketball and baseball coach in the 1970's & '80's

"I have never forgotten how my education at St. Matt's was the foundation for what I became as a father, leader and successful businessman. I wanted to give back and help provide the same opportunity for a future generation."

Roy Ferber '59

Founding member of A&F&F committee



March-Apr. 2010 This special edition celebrated our talented artist alums. It also included directions for an art walk in the neighborhood. The above mural, by Richard Schletty '66, is part of a series created along with Craig David '66. The murals hang in St. Matthew's Church.

Winter 2014 COS student shows just how close A&F&F is to raising a cumulative total of \$1M. The National Catholic Reporter featured the accomplishment which is unprecedented for a Catholic elementary school.



March-Apr. 2011 In 1963 members of the Rosary Society make donuts in St. Matthew's church kitchen. It was one of many photos included in a special 16-page issue that celebrated St. Matthew's 125th Anniversary.

July-Aug. 2010 When Tom Smith (back row, 3rd from left) was named St. Paul's Chief of Police, we took the opportunity to stage a reunion of his fellow St. Matt's alums in law enforcement. It was a large and prestigious gathering.



We're THISSSS close!!



Alums & Friends & Families 2017 Annual Report

\$215,459 Raised in 9 Months Last Year – Over \$1.5 Million in 10 Years!

In 2016, A&F&F changed its fiscal year to better align with the school year. That gave us just nine months to raise the funds necessary for tuition assistance that families were counting on. We were a little nervous about hitting the goal in the shortened time span, but once again you came through. In fact, we had our biggest single fundraising year ever.

Working together over the last decade, we've raised a total of \$1,556,355 for tuition assistance. Amazing!

Since 2007, A&F&F's commitment is that tuition will not be a barrier to any family seeking a Catholic education for their child. At Community of Saints, every family pays something but no one is turned away.

We've kept that promise for 10 years now. We've been able to do it thanks to you and your generous support of Catholic education.

PILLAR \$15,000+

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Patricia Rolewicz
Bill Szlajus
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James and Denise Bohrer
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T.J. Doyle
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Daniel Gangl
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Kathryn Grayson
Mary Ellen Gutzmann
Debra and Dennis Hendrickson
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 Clayton Welch
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 Kimberly Youngquist
 Robert E. Zimmerman

IN HONOR OF:

All past families belonging to St. Michael Church and School
 Current students
 Our seven kids who all benefited from attending St. Matt's/COS
 Father Steve Adrian
 Tony and Sue Alleva
 Sister Anne Becker
 Amy H. Brown
 Kaylin Clausen
 Mackenzie Clausen
 Sister St. Luke Copeland
 David family
 John DelVecchio
 Kirk Jones
 Koenen family
 Rev. John Malone
 Tom and Mary McKeown
 Donna Meyers
 Joyce Poechmann
 John Riehle
 William J. and Cel Rindfleisch
 Helen and Donald Tackaberry
 President Donald J. Trump
 Allen Volkenant



IN MEMORY OF:

1950 St. Matthew's classmates
 Deceased members of St. Matt's class of 1956
 Roman Adam
 Hildegard Rosenberger Armstrong
 Vonnie Allie, St. Matthew's class of 1954
 Dick and Betty Ann Bann
 Ruby Bernard
 Lucille and Cornelius Bertrand
 Marilyn Bidingier
 Bob Blaeser
 Joe and Catherine Blaeser
 Virgil and Marian Bloechl
 George L. Bohrer
 Ann and Al Brinckman
 Arnold and Susan Brucker
 Gloria Burgy
 Carol Ruloff Casey
 Jim Clemens
 James and John Cruz (1958-1959)
 Molly Egan Commers
 Magdalen Corrigan
 Gertrude and Francis Cosgrove
 Thomas Cullen
 Patricia Danmeier
 Ed Defoe
 Irene DeNardo
 Sue Doyle
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 Brian Dufour
 Paul and Lisa Feifarek
 Janice Ferber
 Marie Ferber
 Marlene Friedl
 Flis family members
 Paul H. Frank
 Joe and Carol Gabriel
 John Gabriel
 Sadie and John George
 Russell M. Gesell
 Ann Gjere
 Vern W. Glowaski
 Goin family
 Gerard Gutzmann
 John and Elvira Hanson
 Louise Heller Heinrich
 Florence Hinze
 Catherine Jacobs
 Lucy Jones

Honor a Loved One With a Gift in Their Name

This Christmas, give a gift in honor or memory of someone in your life to celebrate their commitment to Catholic education. One hundred percent of your donation goes to support tuition assistance for students at Community of Saints.

Use the enclosed envelope or mail your gift to COS, 335 Hurley St. E. West St. Paul, MN 55118. You can also give online by visiting www.communityofsaints.org/supportourschool

Your contribution is tax deductible and all gifts made by December 31, 2017, will be matched 100% up to \$8,500.



Margaret (Haider) Kelly and William Kelly
 J. Kinlus
 Jerry Klett
 Mary Korman
 Florence Veronica Kunz
 Mary and Ed L'Allier
 Genevieve and Bernard Lotzer
 Lundquist family members
 Estelle and Frank Maranda family
 Jake and Sybilla Mertes
 Jeanne Morin
 Stephen Mudek
 Jane Murphy
 Evelyn Nadeau
 Neff family
 Ralph and Jane O'Brien
 Father John O'Neill
 Marian E. Osendorf
 Ann F. Palumbo
 Robert L. and Edel Ruth Pavlak
 Carl and Delima Petschauer
 Jerome Pietruszewski, St. Matt's 1947
 Charlie Poechmann
 Leanne Youness Pohl
 G. Posel
 Marybeth Potter
 Rob Romero
 Larry Ryan, St. Michael's class of 1946
 St. Matthew's School
 Paul Schmid, St. Matthew's class of 1951
 Bill and Eileen Schmidt
 R. Schneider
 William P. Shaughnessy
 Sister Clarisa
 Sister Edwina Raymond, CSJ
 Sister M. Charlene
 Sister Mary Timons
 Louis and Inez Sitzmann
 Susan Herriges Splinter
 Teresa Jo Sports
 Robert and Jeanne Stadt
 Agnes Stefaniak
 Jay and Helen Stevens
 Gail Sullivan
 Charles and Victoria Thomas
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 Alvin and Dorothy Valerius
 Maria Van Guilder
 Mr. and Mrs. Henry Votel
 Leonard and Catherine Weegman
 James R. Welch
 Amanda Weyer
 Marie A. Willems
 Herman Wolters, class of 1914
 Bill Yezek
 Abe and Lorraine Youness



2016 GIVE TO THE MAX DAY

We raised over \$11,000 on Give to the Max Day in 2016. Donations support our Student Experience Fund and went towards the purchase of 30 new Chromebooks for a mobile computer lab.

Anonymous (2)
 Elizabeth and William Arend
 Ralph and Judy Brown
 Marisa Bryan
 John Capistrant
 Terri Cismowski
 Andrew and Jean Clausen
 Gregory and Cheryl Cosgrove
 Jon DeLuney
 Robert and Argerie Diaz-White
 Richard Dunn and Maggie Lee
 Bruce and Megan Dunsmore
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 JoEllen Flak
 Melinda Frias
 Thomas and Julie Garcia
 Luke and Angela Garvey
 Annie Gettle
 Cathy Goaley
 Mary Grady
 Mary Ellen Gutzmann
 Patricia Hara
 Thomas and Ruth King
 Christopher and Annmarie Kraker
 Bridget Kramer
 Jim and Mary Kaye Kramer
 Matthew Kudwa
 Julie Kuzj
 Stephen and Teresa McCurdy
 Terry and Bebe McTeague
 Katie Miskowic
 Lynn Miskowic
 Joel and Meghan Moore
 Jessica Morales
 Eileen Norton
 Kyle and Emily Reckinger
 Janelle Rohr
 Garry and Barb Ruhlmann
 Ann Schabo
 Elicia Sims
 Nancy Smith
 Mary Kay Sprangers
 Alice Stelling
 Katie Swor
 Barbara Tesch
 Laura and Josh Tesch
 Bradley and Beth Tressell
 Patrick Waldera
 Bill and Karen Walter
 Jim and Carol Yannarely
 Nick Yannarely
 Dan Yentes
 Michael Youness
 Michelle Youness
 Rose Youness



ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout the year we receive additional contributions in the form of restricted and unrestricted gifts. Thank you to the following individuals and foundations for supporting our students.

Elizabeth and William Arend
 Vivian Byers (St. Matthew's class of 1939) Endowment Fund
 Stephen and Ellen Casey
 Catholic Community Foundation
 Catholic School Center of Excellence
 Catholic United Financial Foundation
 Suzanne Clarke
 Heriberto Cortez-Ramirez
 Thomas and Julie Garcia
 GHR Foundation
 Katie and Eric Hartz
 Lyth and Mary Hartz
 Christopher and Annmarie Kraker
 Carlo J. LaManna Endowed Scholarship Fund
 Krissy and Doug Lieser
 Becky Loftfield
 Katie Miskowic
 Lynn Miskowic
 Jessica Morales
 Athena and Daniel Novack
 Dennis and Mary Helen O'Hare
 Paul and Tesa Ramos
 Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
 Caroline Shoberg
 Elicia Sims
 St. Matthew's Education Endowment Fund
 Jeremy Sweeney
 Laura and Josh Tesch
 WEM Foundation
 Angela Youness
 Michael Youness
 Michelle Youness

**\$8,500 Challenge
 thru Dec. 31**

All gifts will be matched 100%. Challenge comes from a St. Matt's School Family with alums from '57, '62, '64, '69, '72 and '73.

**COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

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COS Phone: 651-457-2510

SPONSORSHIP Opportunities

Businesses and organizations are invited to help sponsor *The Good News* and support Alums & Friends & Families' efforts to raise funds for tuition assistance. Sponsorship helps us achieve our goal of making a high-quality, Catholic education available to all families in our community, regardless of their ability to afford tuition.

If you'd like more information about sponsorship, please contact Doug Lieser at DLieser@communityofsaints.org or call 651-457-2510.

Please join us

December 8 at 9:30 a.m. for Community of Saints School Mass.

Mass will be followed by a reception where you can meet some of the students. COS is located at 335 Hurley Street E., West St. Paul. Call 651-457-2510 for more information. We hope you can make it!

