



THE GOOD NEWS

January/February 2012
Issue 28

FROM ST. MATTHEW

The community of St. Matthew exists in the world as a visible expression of God's love

Regional School Update

Check out the
Regional School
Planning Website –
www.sprcs.org

A new website has been established to provide up to date information about plans for the Regional School. The site lists the many committees that are engaged in planning, who's serving on the committees, their responsibilities and weekly updates on progress. The site will also provide an update on the naming process and offer instructions on how people can offer their input.

From the Editor

In the last newsletter we presented information about the Archdiocese's decision to create a Regional School in our area. Since then, a lot of work has been done to make the new school a reality. In this issue, we'll fill you in on the latest progress, plans and changes.

One thing's for sure, there is no roadmap for this process — it's dynamic. Success is dependent upon the good will and hard work of the many people who are committed to establishing a strong Catholic school in our community; one that will be available to students for decades to come.

One hundred and twenty five years ago, the founders of St. Matthew's were in the somewhat similar situation of starting a school without having all the answers or knowing exactly where it would lead. Today we follow in their footsteps. Our challenges may be different but we share the same goal: for now and into the future, to provide children on the West Side with a rigorous Catholic education that develops the minds, hearts and spirits of our children in a faith-centered community.

Four Parishes Commit to Creating 21st Century Catholic School

The biggest change since the Archdiocese's original announcement is that Holy Trinity will not be participating in the Regional School. Holy Trinity's approach to religious formation, among other issues, diverges significantly from the other four parishes. As a result, the Archdiocese has removed them from the process.

The remaining parishes, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. John Vianney, St. Matthew and St. Michael, are now in a position to come together with a common vision. Members from all four communities have been working on committees to address the many different tasks necessary to create the Regional School.

The new school will continue to occupy two sites, one at St. Michael and one at St. John Vianney, but the way those sites are used will be different from the original concept of two buildings that each house a K-8 program. Aside from that, the change does not significantly alter the plans for the Regional School. The Archdiocese is working with the Board to make any adjustments necessary concerning the financial structure to compensate.



Keeping the Kindergarten House

St. Matt's parent and alum, Brian Osborne, serves on the Facilities Committee which will discuss how to recreate St. Matt's kindergarten house in the new building. What St. Matt's traditions do you want to see in the Regional School? You can send in your ideas to: regionalschool@st-matts.org

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

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MESSAGE FROM **father steve**



Fr. Steve's homilies are available on-line at www.st-matts.org



**Fundraising Update:
Almost \$40K Raised!**

That's \$20K ahead of where we were last year at this time. Thank you for your continued support of tuition assistance. Your contribution has made Catholic education a reality for families on the West Side.

Join us for Mardi Gras Mass & Dinner

February 18 at 4 p.m.

Last year's dinner and dance were so much fun — we're doing it again! Mark your calendar so you won't miss this year's party held the Saturday before Lent begins. The Social Hour will begin at 5 p.m. immediately following Saturday Mass. The evening will include great food, live music and lots of fun. Bring your friends! For more information, call the Parish Center 651-224-9793. Or check our website www.st-matts.org.

Dear Saint Matthew School Alums and Friends:

The Saint Paul Regional Catholic School

Catholic Schools of the West Side of St. Paul, West St. Paul and South St. Paul have taken a bold step to insure the stability and excellence of Catholic Education in our communities for decades to come.

Four parishes — Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Michael, St. John Vianney and St. Matthew — are the sponsoring parishes in this innovative and exciting enterprise. Other parishes were invited to participate, but they were either unwilling or unable to get their "ducks in a row" at this time.

A founding board has been meeting weekly for months to put in place all that needs to happen for this new school to open in September of 2012. Currently the school is "The Saint Paul Regional Catholic School" — reflecting the sites of the four sponsoring parishes — St. Paul, West St. Paul and South St. Paul. A community wide consultation is being undertaken to find a permanent name for the regional school which we hope will be announced by the end of January.

Articles of incorporation are being drawn up as I write you. This regional school will have the sponsorship of the four parishes, but will be its own 501c3 corporation. Thus it is a Catholic school, but not a parochial school.

Transportation issues are being worked out and I am confident that transport for students will be readily available. Associated with the K-8 school is a pre-school and a before and after school program.

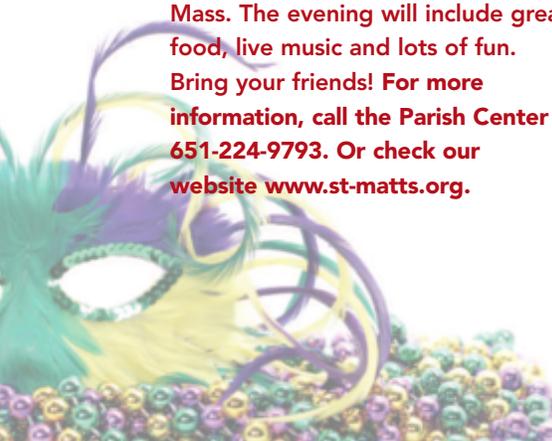
Registration for The Saint Paul Regional Catholic School will begin in late January and early February. We are committed to the proposition that no family will be denied a Catholic education at the regional school because of financial issues.

The Archdiocese is a partner in this school and will invest close to a quarter of a million dollars annually to financially assist our school.

After the first of the year, there will be a variety of opportunities for school parents and interested parties to meet in small groups and express their suggestions, ideas and concerns about this new and bold effort at developing a model for sustainable Catholic education. Over the coming years more than a dozen other regions in the Archdiocese will be meeting to plan shared resources to strengthen Catholic education.

I am proud of my brother pastors and leaders of all four parishes and schools who have the courage and wisdom to act at this time to make sure that the heritage of Catholic education is strengthened and grows for generations to come.

Yours truly,
Stephen Adrian
Pastor





Shannon Morrissey reads a children's version of the Gospel. The number of children who participate each week can vary from two to 15.

L to R: Gloria DeZiel, Cheryl McNellis and Autumn Koch all volunteer to lead the weekly Children's Liturgy. Other volunteers include Shannon Morrissey (see photo above) and Lisa Klein (not pictured.)

Volunteers Bring Liturgy to Children

Every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Mass, from October until Mother's Day, St. Matthew's offers a Children's Liturgy for young people ages three to six years old. The ministry is made possible by a committed team of volunteers who work with the children every week. Several have been leading the ministry for years, including Cheryl McNellis, Gloria DeZiel, Shannon Morrissey, Lisa Klein and Autumn Koch.

The program, initiated by Michele Brachins in 1978, was founded on the simple idea that children should understand what's going on in the Liturgy so they can feel like they're part of the Mass.

"It gives them a sense of belonging to the parish," said Cheryl McNellis. "They're connected, they feel important." Cheryl, a teacher at St. Michael's, has been volunteering since the program started in 1978. She has taken this year off while she brings her own two year-old granddaughter to Mass.

Gloria DeZiel joined St. Matt's 14 years ago when she moved into the neighborhood and has been leading the Children's Liturgy for 11 years. She now lives in Woodbury, where she has her own preschool, but she continues her commitment to St. Matt's and the children's ministry. "We break it down and try to emphasize the most important point of the Gospel," said Gloria. "I get a lot out of just preparing for the Children's Liturgy."

The number of children each week can vary considerably, but regardless of how many show up, the routine remains the same. The leader greets the children and together they light a candle as a visible reminder that God always loves them. Next, the children sing the forgiveness song and get ready to receive The Word. Then the leader reads a simplified version of the Gospel and talks about it with the children. Students each have a chance to offer petitions and they close with a prayer before returning to their families.

"During the year, it's great to see as the children graduate from praying for their dog or cat, to praying for people," said Cheryl. "They'll start to include brothers and sisters — even ones they're not happy with that day."

While the program was designed to benefit children, the leaders agree the ministry serves the whole family. "I've been on both ends, as teacher and as a thankful parent," said Gloria. "It's an important ministry to both children and parents. It allows the parents to focus and pray."

Having taught the Children's Liturgy for so many years, both Cheryl and Gloria appreciate the experience of getting to watch children they've taught grow up, and in some cases, become active members of the church. "When I see kids get up and do a reading or get confirmed, I think 'I remember you...'" Gloria said. "You've seen this child's faith journey through adulthood."

Mary Maher Recognized for her “Beautiful Mind”

Mary (Hughes) Maher PhD. (‘42) is one of those people whose phone number you should keep on speed dial for when you’re having a bad day. At age 83, she’s had her share of challenges, but you wouldn’t know it to talk to her. She exudes a love of life that transcends any hardships she’s experienced, including the loss of two husbands, one son and a bout with cancer.

Mary was one of ten recipients of the 2011 Beautiful Minds award, part of a national campaign that celebrates individuals age 55 and over, who are keeping their minds strong through a healthy, socially engaged lifestyle. Award winners are recognized for using their minds to do beautiful things without letting age be a barrier. (Check out the website and read Mary’s profile at beautiful-minds.com)

To keep fit, Mary swims three times a week, plays golf and rides horses; despite having arthritis, two hip replacements, one knee replacement and major reconstruction on her foot last year. Three years ago, Mary was inspired by her own granddaughters to take up the violin. “It’s not as easy as it looks,” she says, adding that her instructor’s next oldest student is 15.

But Mary’s real passion is education, and even though she’s retired (three times,) she continues what has been a lifelong commitment to helping children learn. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, Mary tutors St. Matt’s students in reading, and as with everything she does, she projects a powerful enthusiasm for her work. “I love kids,” she says emphatically. “I have not worked with one I didn’t love.”

A St. Matt’s Grad in ‘42

Mary is a rare creature — a St. Matt’s graduate from 1942 whose family was Irish. Her family moved into a house on Hall Avenue when she was in third grade, and even though they lived much closer to St. Matt’s, Mary was expected to attend St. Michael’s with the other Irish Catholics on the West Side. But Mary had poor health as a child and her mother didn’t think she could walk that far to school. Mary’s mother talked to Fr. Ziskovsky, who said she must get written permission from St. Michael’s pastor to enroll Mary at St. Matt’s. Mary still recalls Msgr. O’Neil’s response to her mother, “He said, ‘St. Matt’s can have her, but you’ll never get it in writing.’”



For the past few years Mary has volunteered as a tutor for St. Matt’s students every Tuesday and Thursday.

After high school, Mary married, had five children and got a job as a secretary for the West St. Paul Schools. She had wanted to go to college but her high school counselor told her she was not college material. Mary good naturedly observes, “Based on my performance at the time, it was probably a good prediction.”

Her interest in college never went away though, and with the encouragement of her family, she enrolled in Inver Grove Community College when it opened in 1970; she was 42 when she started. “Once I was there I absolutely loved it,” she says. “I continued to work part time so everybody had to pitch in if Mom’s going to school and working.”

Mary received a scholarship from Hamline where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1974. She wanted to be a psychologist so she attended the University of Wisconsin River Falls for her Masters, which she completed in 1975. “The students were all age appropriate except for me,” she says. “But they were very gracious and always made me feel part of the group. It was a grand experience.”

Her next stop was the University of Minnesota where she started working on her PhD in 1976. All the while she went to graduate school, she also worked full-time, first as a school psychologist and then as an administrator, which meant taking classes at night.

About the time she was to start working on her



Mary (center) is pictured here with family members including some of her children, their spouses, five of her 11 grandchildren and the newest member, her great granddaughter.

dissertation, Mary's husband became ill. He died after six months and within the same year, she also lost her son in an accident. She gave up working on her PhD. "I didn't need it. It was our goal," she explains, referring to her husband.

By this time, her youngest child was in college and Mary was the Director of Special Services at the Burnsville School District. After a few years, Mary met a widower and they married, but soon afterwards she was diagnosed with cancer. She decided to retire from her job to undergo treatment for the disease which was a success. After her recovery, retirement didn't last long. "I had too much energy," she says, almost apologetically. She took a job as a school psychologist in Moundsvie and was soon promoted to Director of Special Education.

With her husband's encouragement, she resumed work on her dissertation, earning her PhD in 1986 at age 58. She retired again; this time it lasted for one and a half

Most Beautiful Mind

Dr. Mary (Hughes) Maher '42 was one of ten recipients of the 2011 Most Beautiful Mind Award, sponsored by the National Center for Creative Aging (NCCA), which highlights the relationship between creative expression and increased quality of life for people 55 and older. NCCA has partnered with brain-health research firm Martek Biosciences to recognize people who are "keeping their minds beautiful" and raise awareness of activities that help maintain the most important organ in the body — the brain. To learn more, visit their website at www.beautiful-minds.com.



Mary Maher, age 83, rides horses regularly as part of an active lifestyle that helps her maintain a healthy brain.

years before she resumed work as a consultant. After several more years, her second husband became ill and subsequently died in 1998. After his passing, she retired for the third time at the age of 70. This time it stuck.

Mary continued to be active. She was already a school volunteer when a friend suggested she help out at St. Matt's, which was much closer to her home in Mendota Heights. She points out that she benefits as much from the experience as do the kids. "You cannot teach children without learning from them," she says. "They think so concretely. It's a lesson in how simple it can be even though we like to make things so complex."

Mary is not one to spend a lot of time looking backwards, but she does so briefly when recounting her career. "I have worked as a lunchroom lady, a secretary, a psychologist and administrator," she says. By the way she says it, you can tell that as far as she's concerned, it's all been a grand experience.

Rosary Society is Hosting a Women's Lenten Retreat

Saturday, February 25, 12:15–3:30 p.m.

St. Matthew's Social Hall

A Salad Luncheon will be served – Cost \$20

St. Matthew's Rosary Society invites the women of St. Matt's, St. Mikes and Our Lady of Guadalupe to a Women's Lenten Retreat. The theme for the retreat is The Friendship of Women and it will be facilitated by Sharon Horgan, formerly the Director of Catechesis for the Archdiocese. For more information call Marge Blenkush at 651-455-4712.

Regional School Planning Highlights

The following represents the information available at the time this publication went to press, but plans are moving swiftly. For the most current updates, visit the Regional School's website which will post weekly updates from the Board of Directors and other committees. The website is www.sprcs.org.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION: The board has identified an administrative structure that includes a President, who will report to the board and be responsible for development and enrollment; and a Principal, who reports to the President and is responsible for the school's day to day operations. In recognition that the first year of operation will be transitional, the Board has invited the three principals from the participating schools to work as a team to administer the school together. If all three principals accept, the new structure will begin in the second year.

SCHOOL NAME: The Board and Archdiocese have given this top priority. A process has been implemented that will culminate in a name selection by the end of January, in time for Catholic Schools week. School families, alums and parishioners are all invited to participate in the process by either submitting names or identifying their preferences. For the most current information, visit the Regional School website at www.SPRCS.org. This process will move quickly so if you have an opinion, don't delay.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION: These forms have been drafted and will be available by Catholic Schools Week. Student registrations have already been accepted for next year.

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP: Normally this is held in January or February but this year it will be delayed until early March in order to allow the administration time to identify the Regional School's Kindergarten teacher(s). There will be a number of opportunities for parents with future kindergarteners to visit the school, learn about the curriculum and meet the teacher(s).

Regional School, *continued from page 1*

Regional School Committees

The following is a summary of all the steering committees that are at work and what they are doing. For names of committee members or more current updates, visit the Regional School website at www.sprcs.org.

Board of Directors: The Board is responsible for governing the Regional School. It includes the pastors from each of the four parishes as well as a lay person from each parish. The Board is responsible for establishing a budget, hiring administration and overseeing all facets necessary to launch the Regional School. The Board will have the final say on all actions proposed by the steering committees.

Advancement Committee: This group is responsible for establishing effective development and marketing strategies. Initial work includes establishing a process for choosing a school name, creating a website, developing registration materials and procedures, and maintaining effective communication among the committees, school families and parish communities.

Climate for Learning Committee: This committee is working to ensure that students, parents, staff and parishioners feel welcome in the new regional school and that they feel God's presence in every aspect of school life. In January, the committee is sending out a survey that parents can respond to online or in writing, in both Spanish and English, asking parents to identify what they value most at their present school.

Academic Excellence Committee: This committee, made up of teachers from St. Matt's, St. Mike's and St. John's, will establish a curriculum and identify the resources necessary to support an academically rigorous program. Members will look at how to best combine the current high-quality curriculums and how to effectively align the Regional School curriculum with common core standards to ensure excellence and accountability.

Co-Curricular Committee: All sports activities for the Regional School will be organized by this committee, which includes representatives from each of the three current schools. The committee will look at what sports to offer, what uniforms will be needed and what the activity fees may be.



Beyond sports, the committee will also survey students and families to determine their interests in other clubs and after school activities.

Preschool Committee: This committee will be responsible for managing the logistics of establishing a new site for preschool. Members will also look at how to best combine current preschool programs at St. Matthew and St. John Vianney.

Extended Day Committee: All three schools currently offer extended day programs. This committee will determine what is necessary to combine all three programs including how much space might be needed and what resources are available.

Facilities Committee: This committee will evaluate the physical sites and make recommendations on how best to use the space available as well as possible upgrades or accommodations that may be needed.



So....Why Are We Doing This Again?

The costs associated with providing academic excellence in a 21st century school is more than most parishes can afford. As demographics change and technology advances, even those parishes that have money are going to have trouble. By transitioning from parochial schools to a regional school, St. Matthew's community along with the three other parishes, are working to ensure that a financially sustainable, high quality Catholic education is available to all students. The Regional School is also embracing St. Matthew's philosophy that no child will be turned away because their family cannot afford tuition. The Archdiocese is firmly committed to this approach.

Naming the New School

The Regional School's Board of Directors has requested a rapid process for identifying a new name for the Regional School. For practical purposes, a transitional name has been established: The St. Paul Regional Catholic School. This will be discontinued once a permanent name has been identified. Suggested names will be accepted until January 9th. Names will be posted on the website and members of the community can indicate their preferences. The Board of Directors will make the final selection. The goal is to announce the name during Catholic Schools Week, which begins January 30.



PARISH COMMUNITY OF
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St. Matthew's School

Director of Education &
Formation: Doug Lieser

School Office: 651-224-6912

www.st-matts.org/school

The Community of St. Matthew

Hall Ave. and Robie St.
St. Paul, MN 55107

Pastor: Fr. Steve Adrian

Parish Office: 651-224-9793

Weekend Liturgies:

Saturday - 4 p.m.

Sunday - 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

www.st-matts.org

EVENTS calendar

METROPOLITAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA — January 29 at 3 p.m.

Join us for a FREE Family Concert in the church! After the concert, children are welcome to meet the musicians and try out some of the instruments.

"THE BIG GAME" PARTY — February 5 at 5 p.m.

The Men's Club invites everyone to watch the biggest football game of the year in the Social Hall on the BIG screen. There's games and food for kids so bring the whole family. The cost is \$10 per adult, \$5 per kid ages 13-18 and free for kids under 13. Doors open at 4:30 p.m.

MARDI GRAS MASS & DINNER — February 18 at 4 p.m.

The Social Hour begins at 5 p.m. immediately following Saturday Mass. See pg. 2 for details.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES — February 22

Masses with ash distribution at 6:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Prayer services with ashes at 9 a.m. (with the school,) 12 p.m. & 7 p.m. (with Religious Education students.)

WOMEN'S LENTEN RETREAT — February 25, 12:15-3:30 p.m.

See pg. 5 for details.

LENTEN FISH FRY, FRIDAYS FOR 6 WEEKS STARTING ON — February 24 plus Fish & Chips on April 6

Regular serving time is from 5-7:30 p.m. with a Senior Citizen Special from 4-5 p.m. Take out dinners are available. The Fish Fries will be co-sponsored by the Rosary Society, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and Home & School. We also dedicate a portion of our profits to the Street Children of Bucharest.

MEN'S CLUB WINTER DEBT REDUCTION DINNERS

The Men's Club is sponsoring a series of Debt Reduction Dinners for the Parish. Watch the parish bulletin for an upcoming Debt Reduction Dinner. Planning and dates are in preliminary stages.