



December Edition



Pastor: Ft. Clement Niggel  
Principal: Melodie Good

Saint Mary's Catholic School Belen, N.M

At Saint Mary's School, we are committed to the growth of our Catholic identity, academic potential, and community involvement.

**IMPORTANT EVENTS**

Advent Retreat	2nd
Early Dismissal	4th
Adoration	10th
Christmas Shop	15th
District Spelling Bee	16th
Christmas Program	16th
Early Dismissal	18th
Merry Christmas!	

Second Semester begins for students January 5th

### Advent Celebrated with Retreat and Pageant

Saint Mary's students will be participating in an Advent Retreat on December 2nd to begin the new church year calendar. The theme of our retreat is "Anticipating Joy." The day will begin with Mass and continue with various workshops led by Father Clement, classroom teachers, the principal and a Sister from the SOLT community. A special visitor to the retreat could be Archbishop Emeritus Michael Sheehan who will be visiting Our Lady of Belen for the church mission. Students and staff are hoping he will be able to spend some time with them during the day. The middle school students will also participate in a service project in the afternoon.

On December 16th at 6:30 in the gymnasium, students will present the annual Christmas pageant. Along with the traditional Nativity story, there will be some seasonal musical pieces to entertain parents and grandparents.

**Poinsettia Sale**

The SMPA is selling beautiful poinsettias for Christmas. Order yours now and pick it up the night of the Christmas Pageant.



### LOCAL VETERANS WERE HONORED BY STUDENTS



At 11:00AM on 11/11/2015 students at Saint Mary's were showing their appreciation to nearly thirty Veterans representing many different American conflicts. The National Anthem was sung by students Elena Lopez and Ethan Trujillo as flag bearers, Andrew Foster and Kade Benavidez posted the colors. The choir, led by teacher Lora Chavez, sang two patriotic selections. Each of the students made a special memento for all veterans present.

**The Bird Word**  
**Monthly Newsletter**

**SMS Student Council News**

Student Council members served dessert and drinks to a packed house for our annual family Thanksgiving dinner. They also collected several boxes of food for St. Vincent DePaul.



## After School Robotics Club Holds Races



Robots have taken over the hallways of Saint Mary's on Monday afternoons. Students participating in robotics have been competing to see who has the fastest robot in the group. Approximately 15 students are programming Arduino based robots or assembling lego based robots. The Arduino based robots will be competing in the Albuquerque Roborave competition in April. Mr. David Carter, one of our SMS parents, along with Ms. Caitlyn Baca, a recent alum, work with these students once a week to prepare for the spring competition and to carry out our STEM initiative at the school.



**Family Faith Formation:** Advent comes from the Latin word meaning "coming." Jesus is coming, and Advent is intended to be a season of preparation for His arrival. While we typically regard Advent as a joyous season, it is also intended to be a period of preparation, much like Lent. Prayer, penance and fasting are appropriate during

this season.

Advent is not as strict as Lent, and there are no rules for fasting, but it is meant to be a period of self-preparation. The purple color associated with Advent is also the color of penance. The faithful should fast during the first two weeks in particular and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The color of the Third Sunday of Advent is rose. This color symbolizes joy and represents the happiness we will experience when Jesus comes again. The Third Sunday is a day of anticipatory celebration. It was formerly called "Gaudete" Sunday; gaudete means "rejoice" in Latin.

Finally, Sundays during Advent, just as during Lent, should not be given to fasting, but instead to celebration because we celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord every Sunday. This year, make Advent special. Join us for Adoration led by Deacon Michael on December 10th at 6 PM in the church. GOD wants to see YOU there!

### Saint Mary's Parent Association Sponsors the Christmas Shop

Once again on a cold day in December, Santa's elves will be busy putting together a Christmas store for all Saint Mary's students. This year we've been blessed with an abundance of gifts for students to purchase. This is thanks to parent, Janet Cuaron, and Dollar General. On the 15th, students can bring their spending money and make selections from a plethora of gifts for every member of the family. The SMPA will be looking for parents to sign up to help throughout the day. The way to sign up will be announced through weekly parent notes. Watch for more information on Sycamore.

**SAINT MARY'S GIRLS C TEAM BASKETBALL IS HEADING TO THE PLAYOFFS NEXT WEEK IN SECOND PLACE WITH A 7/1 RECORD.**

### ASBESTOS ABATEMENT STATEMENT

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe and Saint Mary's school comply with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) by providing access to the management plan at the school. The plan is kept in the Principal's office and will be updated as various situations develop and inspections are completed. Arrangements may be made with Saint Mary's school to review the materials. Any questions may be directed to the principal of the school or the Executive Director of General Services at the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

### OLB Parishioners:

Thank you for helping us with our Box Tops. Many people mail in or stop by and drop off envelopes of box tops to us. We so much appreciate that. Last year the box tops helped us purchase our reader board in the front of the school.



Come let us  
*Adore*  
Him

