



Back to School
Edition-2015
August

Pastor: Ft. Clement Niggel
Principal: Melodie Good

Saint Mary's Catholic School Belen, NM

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

IMPORTANT EVENTS

Fall Fest Meeting	6
Cons. Cncl Mtg	11
Back to School Night	12
OLB Fiesta	14-16
School starts for 1-8	17
Railrunner/Bus mtg.	19
Kinder/Pre-K start	20
Bus service begins	24
Consult. Cncl Wkshp	29

Saint Mary's Gearing up for a New Year

This year will be an important year for Saint Mary's. For the first time ever, Archdiocesan schools are being accredited by the Western Catholic Education Association. In the past Advanced Ed/North Central, which is the same group who accredits New Mexico's public schools, accredited Catholic schools. The WCEA process is similar although more stringent in its academic requirements of its schools. The WCEA will also look at how well Catholic identity is integrated into the school day. Saint Mary's started the process with the self-study last school year. The next step is to write an action plan based on the deficits that were evident from the self study. The goal areas will include more integration of technology and more data driven instruction in the classrooms. After the process is over, and the school has been visited and reviewed, there is a follow up process that happens yearly until the next accreditation in five years. With enrollment up from 140 last year to 164 as of press time, more families are finding that a Catholic school is a good place for their children. At Saint Mary's the teachers are excellent. The curriculum is rigorous and faith filled. The 2015-16 school year will be a good one for Saint Mary's.

Middle School Academic Binders will be available for \$12 at Back to School Night.

Fall Fest Tickets distributed on the 12th

Ms. Charlene Baca Secures a Grant to Provide New Chairs



For the third time in as many years, Ms. Baca has written a grant and submitted it to the Catholic Foundation. Two years ago, Ms. Baca was able to get a series of books for each classroom teacher. Last year, she wrote a grant for materials to update our bathrooms. This year, Ms. Baca received a grant to get a new chair for every student K through 6th grade. These aren't just any chairs. They are rocking and ergonomically correct for our students. Thank you Ms. Baca!

Angela Padilla Wins Award From Catholic Foundation



Catholic Foundation of New Mexico recently selected Ms. Angela Padilla for the Catholic Award for Teachers. Ms. Padilla was nominated by Ms. Good for her commitment to students that goes above and beyond the classroom. Ms. Padilla is multi talented and shares her art skills while also serving as the middle school math teacher. "Our math scores in middle school are off the charts." stated Ms. Good.

The Bird Word
Monthly Newsletter

Introducing Saint Mary's Fabulous Teachers for 2015-16

PRE-K Teacher: New this year is **Ms. Elizabeth Cordova**. She has a degree in Early childhood education and has taught Pre-K-3rd grades at Belen Schools. We are excited to have her.

Kindergarten: **Ms. Kellie Lopez** is our returning kinder teacher. She has taught for Los Lunas Schools before coming to St. Mary's. Ms. Lopez does a great job getting our students ready for first grade.

1st Grade: Beginning her 14th year as first grade teacher at SM is **Ms. Charlene Baca**. Our first graders all end the year at or above grade level and are reading an average of 60 books a year.

Second Grade: **Ms. Arleen Sanchez** is back for her fifth year. The children love her stories in religion class and they all get a solid foundation in reading and math for moving up.

Third Grade: For twelve years, **Ms. Heather Sanchez** has taken on the important job of 3rd grade. This is the last grade where kids actually learn to read. After this, they read to learn. She also teaches the First Holy Communion class.

Fourth Grade: **Ms. Melanie Chavez** is known for her strengths of getting kids organized and making sure they learn good study skills. When they leave 4th grade, they are ready for upper elementary skills. She has been at Saint Mary's for seven years.

Fifth Grade: Our fifth graders are very excited to have **Ms. Kristy Cordova** as their teacher. She is moving from middle school to 5th grade. Ms. Cordova is beginning her second year of teaching and is looking forward to this new challenge.

Middle School Science and Social Studies : **Ms. Lisa Bockisch** will begin at Saint Mary's this year. She has a Masters in Chemistry from NM Tech. She taught at UNM-VC as well as for Los Lunas Schools before home schooling her children. She has big plans for implementing STREAM projects. She is the 6th grade homeroom teacher.

Middle School Language Arts and Literature: Back for a third year is **Mr. Jared Schmock**. Mr. Schmock has a degree from Santa Fe College of Art and Design. His interest in the arts has enhanced his program here at Saint Mary's with art projects and class plays. He is the 7th grade homeroom teacher.

Middle School Math and Art: **Ms. Angela Padilla** has built a solid math program for our students in the 20 years plus that she has been at Saint Mary's. Our students go on to high school in advanced math classes. Even the most struggling student is at grade level when they leave our school.

Spanish and Choir: **Ms. Lora Chavez** will continue this year to offer our kinder through 8th grade an opportunity to learn a second language. Our middle school gets three classes a week and are expected to pass the entrance Spanish test that Saint Pius offers for placement in advanced classes.

PE, health and Athletic Director: **Mr. Joey Fresquez** is back again to continue our TEAM nutrition challenge. It was started last year to put an emphasis on healthy eating for our kids and families. He also helped get our booster club started again. In addition, our kids all participated in a fitness program in PE..

Our returning Educational Assistants are Janet Sanchez and Rose Trent..



For more information about Saint Mary's Catholic School go to www.stmarysbelen.com or see our Facebook page