



The Bird Word



Saint Mary's Catholic School

101 No. 10th Street
Belen, New Mexico 87002
505.864.0484
www.stmarysbelen.com



Principal: **Melodie Good**
Pastor: **Rev. Stephen Schultz**

Guided by Catholic traditions and values, Saint Mary's prepares students for the future and for Eternity.

Important Events

Ash Wednesday	5 th
SMS Soup Supper	7 th
Spa day	8 th
Culinary Arts Café	12 th
Consultative Council	12 th
St. Patrick's Day	17 th
Spring Break	17 th -21 st
Dining Out LJ Silver	26 th
Awards Assembly	28 th
Spring Art Show St. Pius	29 th -30 th
SMS Mass noon	30 th
Enrollment Night	31 st

'TIS THE SEASON

Melodie Good

It's that time of year when schools begin their standardized testing. What that looks like at Saint Mary's and what it looks like at a public school is quite different. Unfortunately, in regular public schools, where success has come to be almost totally defined by numbers, from August till now there is little time for anything but test prep. When the test finally arrives for public school students, the atmosphere is strained with rules and regulations about what can and can't go on in the classrooms during the testing. In my last year as a principal at a public school, I was forced to *investigate* three classroom teachers because parents called and reported that their children observed "abnormalities" from the teacher during testing. Apparently a teacher had tapped on a desk indicating that a student had answered incorrectly. Turns out the teacher had incidentally tapped her pencil in a ticking motion that disturbed the child. In the other cases the teachers asked the students to check answers before handing it in— supposedly implying that they had incorrect answers. This was illegally "helping" the students and deemed an irregularity thus not allowed. It's no wonder that teachers are terrified and students are feeling it.

One week in April Saint Mary's will take the ITBS test. It will be a normal week for our students. They will read and answer questions in all subject areas. We will have our scores before school is out, and we will look at how our students performed and where we need to adjust our instruction. Then we will go on with our instruction until May 22nd with an emphasis on developing the whole student. With high-quality teaching in an atmosphere that supports order and educational achievement, our scores will rise the traditional way. And we will continue to study science and social studies, learn cursive writing, make sculptures in art, demonstrate our Catholic faith, make muffins in culinary arts, serve our community, and we will sing.



Watch for our new logo!

Athletic Booster Club Forms

Mr. Victor Mendoza is spearheading a booster club to help our sports programs acquire new equipment and uniforms. The success of our recent Billy Jaramillo tournament was largely in part to the interest of this group of parents. If you would like to join this group and help plan our spring golf tournament and other events for the purpose of updating our sports program, please watch Sycamore and your child's backpack ☺ for the next meeting date.

REGISTRATION ENDS APRIL 1st.

Make sure you have gone on Sycamore and updated all your information, signed the essential forms, and paid the registration fee by April 1st. If this hasn't been done, your last chance will be Enrollment Night on March 31st. You can come in and use our computer lab to update your information, sign your papers and pay the registration fee.



SPRING HAPPENINGS AT SAINT MARY'S



Faith Challenge Bowl Gets Ready

Members have been selected from the classes to join the St. Mary's team in the Archdiocese Faith Challenge Bowl held every year in April. St. Mary's has 10 participants who will square off with 14 other Catholic schools at Saint Pius High School to answer questions about our Catholic faith and to win bragging rights as the big FCB winner. Students from 4th through 8th can participate.

SMS 4-H News

Did you know that Saint Mary's has our own 4-H Club? Pacman 4-H consists of 28 members of our kinder through 3rd grade. They meet every Tuesday after school till 4:30 PM. Some of the activities that they have done this year are service projects, interior design items, emergency preparedness kits, gifts for parents, water safety and seed planting.

Track and Golf Fire Up for Spring

SMS runners, jumpers and golfers are getting ready for their spring sports season. Golf is hoping to attract some girls to join in their spring competition. Golf was brand new to the APIAL league last fall and St. Mary's 6th grader Jacob Lucero is one of the league's top golfers! A tournament is being planned at Tierra del Sol here in Belen. Track always brings out the most competitors for our team. It should be a good season!

Saint Mary's Parents' Association News

St. Mary's Parents Association is gearing up for some fun spring activities to finish off our school year. Our Mother & Daughter event will take place on Saturday, March 8th in our Parish Center with some spa and beauty activities for our girls and their moms. The Father & Son Day will be out at the ballpark on Sunday, April 13th to watch the Albuquerque Isotopes play. Information on deadlines and ticket prices will be going out soon.

Please consider donating your approved school uniforms to our gently used uniform shop at the end of this school year. We have a committee that will be keeping inventory and selling used uniforms back to our school families in the summer and throughout the upcoming years. If you have items now that don't fit your children anymore, you can drop those off at the office at anytime or we will have a collection box set up during the last week of school.

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 5th at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Center. Come by and see how you can get involved!

More Than Giving up Chocolate!

It is much easier for us to simply choose something to give up -- then we can dismiss Lent! "I am giving up TV for Lent." "I am giving up movies... Snacks... Soda pop." We give it up and exercise our willpower for 40 days to prove to ourselves and to God that we can do it. And at the end of Lent we can return to what we gave up. But this year we might reflect and ask the deeper question: What is God inviting me to change this Lent? How do I know what God might be stirring in me? I begin by listening to the movements in my heart. Where am I feeling uncomfortable with the choices I am making? With the things I have done? With the habitual ways I respond? The Lord will be speaking to me in those small nagging moments of discomfort in my heart. God wants to help us transform our lives and make us freer as people -- not just freer with God, but in the way we live our lives and love our families. From Praying Lent—Creighton University

Saint Mary's Wish List

Can you help us get these items?

- Large world globe (with latest countries)
- Band Aids (we go through a bunch)
- Wall mounts for a flag in our gym and hall way
- Legos legos legos!
- We also need a large commercial-type **laser color** printer for our computer lab. (we're good on desk tops)
- Benches for our playground

Tommierae McKnight Wins Oratorical Competition In Albuquerque

One Saturday morning in February, Tommierae McKnight got up to the microphone at the Elegante Hotel in Albuquerque and told the audience about how her passion of cheering impacts the world. It had a big impact on the audience gathered there to hear seven speeches in the finals of the Optimists Oratorical contest. Tommierae won a \$2500 scholarship! We are so proud of our 7th grader!