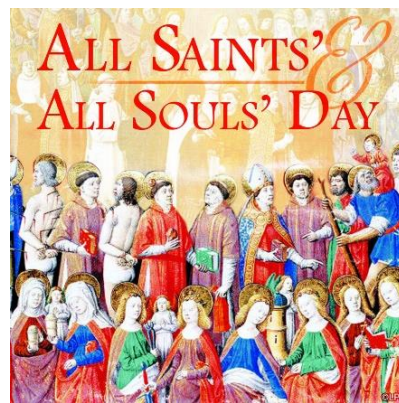


Dear SMS Families and Friends,

November is the month that we remember and pray for all those who have died. The Church has a long and rich tradition of praying for the dead as well as honoring the Saints in heaven, dating from its earliest days. In Mark 12:27 and in Matthew 22:32, Jesus reminds the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, “what was said to you by God, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.” The author of Hebrews also reminds us that “we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1), whom the Church has always read as the Saints.



St. Augustine famously said, “The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.” We further see evidence of the Jewish people of the Old Testament praying for the dead, especially in the account of Judas and his army praying for the men who had been slain and had “amulets sacred to the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids Jews to wear” (2 Maccabees 12:40 – see also verses 38-46). Judas and his army prayed for these fallen brothers in order to atone for the dead’s sins. We, as members of the Church on earth, are referred to as the Church Militant, working out our salvation with the Grace of God.

Our celebration begins with Halloween or All Hallow’s Eve, the vigil of All Saints Day, October 31. Traditionally, Catholics would go from house to house, carrying candles (perhaps in hollowed gourds or pumpkins...) promising prayers to those who resided there, especially for the dead in their family, in exchange for a tasty treat. The “trick” in “Trick or Treat” would come from a bit of tomfoolery if the person refused a treat. It was a night to mock the devil, showing him we know that Christ always triumphs over sin and death! While Trick or Treating with your child this year, pray for the people whose houses you visit and their intentions.

All Saints Day, November 1, is the day that we celebrate those people who have made it to heaven! This is such a holy day, the Church has proclaimed it to be a Holy Day of Obligation: we are called to Mass on this day and it holds as much weight as a Sunday Mass. A person in heaven is called a Saint. There have been many people whose lives have been meticulously investigated by the Church through a process that could ultimately lead to canonization. This process includes living people’s recognition of a person’s holiness while on earth, interviews with anyone still alive who knew the person, a careful reading of anything that person had written, evidence of heroic virtue, and unexplainable miracles – usually of the medical type. This is a day of great rejoicing as well as one to study the lives of these people, who are so close to the Holy Trinity, and be inspired by their witness to the Faith. It’s also a day to ask for their prayers, for supplications to cheer us on through to the finish line in heaven. We call them the Church Triumphant!

All Souls Day, November 2, is sometimes called the Day of the Dead. Traditionally in the Church, families visit the graves of their loved ones, bring flowers, light candles, pray for those who have died, and sometimes spend the entire day there along with going to Mass. Part of our job as the Church Militant is to pray for those who have died, whom we call the Church Suffering. All people choose eternity either with God in heaven or without Him in Hell. Those going to heaven may still have reparation to make for sins they committed on earth. Nothing unclean can enter heaven. If a person died not in a state of Grace, they must be purified in Purgatory. Because they can no longer make reparation for their sins, they rely on us, the Church Militant, to pray and offer sacrifices for them. We all, as the Body of Christ, work together toward salvation!

If you want to learn more about what Catholics believe about these three days, I encourage you to listen to this episode from The Lila Rose Podcast entitled [E65: Should CHRISTIANS Celebrate Halloween? with Fr. Ambrose Criste](#).

Looking back on October. This past month, we...



- ✿ enjoyed a Trunk or Treat with over 150 kids (despite the rain!),
- ✿ raised \$1,249 for our PTO "Nothing Bundt Cakes" Fundraiser (top sellers were Kennedy C in PreK3, Ethan S. in PreK4, and Greysen S. in Kindergarten),
- ✿ had a *Day of Beauty to Awaken Wonder* for our teachers to model how to lead with beauty in all our lessons, and so lead our students to God,
- ✿ sent our teachers to IU5 for a diocesan-wide Professional Development Day on *Doubling the Speed of Learning with Formative Assessment*,
- ✿ got our pictures taken for the yearbook on Picture Day,
- ✿ celebrated House Saint Bl. Carlo Acutis' feast by collecting socks and blankets for those in need in our local community,
- ✿ learned about Fire Safety and Prevention from our local Greenville Police Department, who brought one of their firetrucks,
- ✿ FILLED Lateran Hall with our students and their grandparents for our Grandparents' Brunch featuring a homemade meal made with love and served by our moms and dads as well as crafts and BINGO!,
- ✿ had 2 giant Irish Ideal BINGOs totaling 33 students who were rewarded with Shamrock Shoutouts as well as Pajama Days, keychains, sweets, and a virtual tour of Miss Zgonc's house – decorated for Halloween,
- ✿ sent our PreK and Kindergarten classes to Apple Castle in New Castle for a day filled with apple fun and a tractor hay ride,
- ✿ raised money for Stray Haven (\$200.53!!!), our October's Casual for a Cause,
- ✿ welcomed Deacon Marty Aubel to our teaching staff as our 7th Grade teacher,
- ✿ hired Mrs. Terry White as our new PreK3 Aide, allowing us to accept additional PreK3 students,
- ✿ enrolled 3 new students,
- ✿ collected flowers to lay on the graves of those buried in our cemetery as a way of celebrating Bl. Chiara Luce Badano's feast on October 29 with the girls of Badano House,
- ✿ kicked off our Side-By-Side/\$20,000 Raffle, set to be drawn on February 10,
- ✿ reminded families about 40 Club and the SCRIP Rebate Program,
- ✿ and, of course, continued the wondrous adventure of learning in all our subjects this year! 😊

We are officially forming a NEW Saint House! On November 1, all PreK students will be sorted out of the K-7th Grade Houses and into a House of their own! When students come to Kindergarten, they will be sorted into Badano, Galgani, Frassati, or Acutis House. The new House is named in honor of the youngest/non-martyr Saints in the Church to whom Our Lady of Fatima appeared and gave a special message to the world: especially to pray the Rosary. These two little Saints were brother and sister and just 9 and 10 years old when they died.

MARTO HOUSE



St. Francisco and St. Jacinta Marto

Feast Day: February 20

Heads of House: Mrs. Dorio, Mr. Neral, and Mrs. Forsythe

House Members: All PreK3 and PreK4 students!

I asked each teacher to share something fun they did in October with our students.
Here's a little peek into our classrooms:

- ✿ PreK3 with Mrs. Forsythe explored pumpkins and made a book about the life cycle of a pumpkin in Science.
- ✿ PreK4 with Mrs. Dorio used dice to do "Monster Math". Each student took a turn rolling the dice, counting the dots, and drawing the corresponding part of the monster.
- ✿ PreK4 with Mr. Neral used their 5 senses in Science/Nature Studies to explore pumpkins inside and outside.
- ✿ Kindergarten with Mrs. Toy was very excited to share that they learned and can recite our town, state, country, and zip code! They also wanted to share that they learned about the life cycle of an apple, pyramids in Egypt, and why leaves change color.
- ✿ 1st Grade with Mrs. Maloney has traveled from Crete to Greece to learn about Homer and the Trojan Horse. They used a pumpkin to learn about the states of matter and have been visiting the trees in front of Fr. Brandon's house to discuss the changes of Fall. They also started reading their first book: *Little Bear*!
- ✿ 2nd Grade with Miss Zuschlag used their Science class to explore pumpkins. In ELA, they just finished a book about learning to read and how fun it is.
- ✿ 3rd Grade with Mrs. Endicott did Math crafts to explore standard, expanded, and word form of numbers with candy corn and pumpkins. They used sunflower seeds for addition and subtraction and are enjoying *Charlotte's Web*.
- ✿ 4th Grade with Mrs. Knicely journeyed through the Renaissance period in History through the New World. They also wrapped up a fun story of friendship found in *Cricket in Times Square*.
- ✿ 7th Grade with Deacon Marty chose a Founding Father to write an essay on their life and identify them as a Federalist or anti-Federalist. The students then presented their papers to each answer and fielded questions.
- ✿ Music classes with Mrs. Giffone saw and heard instruments up close in preparation for our orchestra trip.
- ✿ In Gym classes with Mrs. Giffone, students are working on locomotor skills by imitating different animals.
- ✿ Art classes with Mrs. Cawley have worked on projects incorporating the Principle of Art: Pattern. In their Art History Extension classes, students (K-7th Grade) have worked on Sumerian tablets, Minoan fresco, Roman Empire Eagle drawing, Byzantine church drawing, Renaissance stained glass window cookies, and an Aztec mask respectively. PreK Art listened to *Chocolatina* and made Play-Doh candy.



Mark your calendars for these upcoming events!

No Shorts November

(and all the months until April)

Shorts are not permitted to be worn in the months of November, December, January, February, or March.

All Saints Day

All families and friends are invited and encouraged to join us for 9:00am Mass on **November 1** for All Saints Day! SMS students and staff are asked to come to school wearing their Saint costumes and stay in them for the day. All students (PreK-7th Grade) will process into Mass, present a project or presentation to their classmates about the saint they dressed as, and have an All Saints Day party, complete with food, games, and activities! I'd like to encourage students to dress as their House's Saint or class's patron Saint this year! (See the [October Newsletter](#) for a list of those).

November Jeans Day

The following Thursdays are Jeans Days for the remainder of November:

- November 2
- November 9
- November 30

Please follow the dress code in our [handbook](#) for what is permissible for Jeans Days.

School Masses

Each Friday, a different Saint House provides greeters and gift bearers. For October, the following Houses will serve at Mass:

- [November 3](#): Frassati House
- [November 10](#): Acutis House
- [November 17](#): Galgani House

Students love when their parents and other family members and friends attend Mass!

First Friday Eucharistic Adoration

Every **First Friday** of the month, St. Michael parish offers Eucharistic Adoration. Students love visiting Jesus in the Eucharist on these days. Each age group has an opportunity to talk to Him, voice personal intentions, be silent, sing, and meditate on Scripture. We also have the tradition of celebrating these days with doughnuts or cookies! 😊

Election Day!

Election Day is Tuesday, **November 7**. Along with the nation, SMS students will also be voting... for their favorite food: chicken nuggets, pizza, or mac and cheese?! AND favorite super hero: Batman, Superman, or Captain America?! What and who will be voted in?!?

First Quarter Ends

The first quarter grading period ends on Wednesday, **November 8**. Report cards will be coming home the following week.

November Hot Lunch

November's Hot Lunch on Thursday, **November 9**, will feature sloppy joes, carrots and celery with ranch, and a cookie.

PTO Spaghetti Dinner

The PTO will be hosting a Spaghetti Dinner open to all on Saturday, **November 11**, from 4:00-7:30pm at Lateran Hall. In addition to the dinner, the PTO will also be hosting a basket raffle. All classes will be putting together a basket to be raffled off. Basket donations need to be turned in by Friday, November 10.

November Casual for a Cause

The Cause we'll be adopting on Thursday, **November 16**, Hunters Sharing the Harvest ([sharedeer.org](#)). "Since 1991 Hunters Sharing the Harvest venison donation program, (HSH) has coordinated the processing and distribution of donated deer meat and wild game from hunters and municipal herd reduction sources to hungry people throughout Pennsylvania." In order to participate, students and staff need to bring in *at least* \$1 on that day. See our [handbook](#) for what is permissible for Casual for a Cause days.

Homelessness Awareness

Friday, **November 17**, is Homelessness Awareness Day, in conjunction with National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. According to an article in [phila.gov](#), "Every year, we recognize [National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week](#) (Nov. 12-20) right before Thanksgiving. The timing is intentional. As many

safely gather with families, we can also take time to think about those who do not have a safe place to call home or know when they will enjoy their next meal." SMS will be participating in this movement by wearing **red** shirts to school.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on the evening of Tuesday, **November 21**, from 4:00-7:00pm, and on Wednesday, **November 22**, from 8:30am-12:00pm.

Thanksgiving Break

School will not be in session from Thursday, **November 23**, to Monday, **November 27** in honor of Thanksgiving. Classes will resume on Tuesday, **November 28**.

Open PTO Meeting

All parents, grandparents, and teachers are invited to join us on Tuesday, **November 28**, for an Open PTO Meeting at 6:30pm in Lateran Hall. PTO works hard to make sure that our students get to experience all of the extra at school. Please consider lending your voice at the meeting. We also need your hands to volunteer for the events planned throughout the year.

Monthly Calendars

I'm sending home all the monthly calendars from November to the end of the year. These will give you a pretty good outline to plan for the year. I will send out updated calendars each month to reflect changes for the month. Please put these monthly calendars on your refrigerator so you can refer to them often throughout the month.

STILL WANTED!!

So many of our students, staff, and families would LOVE to see a **strong athletic program** thrive again at SMS! Since the pandemic, our athletic offerings have been limited to Little Dribblers in the Spring – which our students have really enjoyed! This year, I would like to provide more choices. With our class sizes, sports that require individual competition or small teams are ideal. We can **only** offer these with VOLUNTEERS! Ideas I came up with that would fit this individual/small team category are:

- ♣ Running Club
- ♣ Archery
- ♣ Little Dribblers
- ♣ Cheerleading



- ♣ Bowling
- ♣ Track
- ♣ Golf
- ♣ Tennis/Badminton/Pickleball

If YOU or SOMEONE YOU KNOW is willing and able to coach one of the above OR offer another sport I didn't list, **PLEASE** contact me!! All volunteers will need to complete their clearances and have them on file in our school office. *THANK YOU to Mrs. Kayla Duarte and Miss Kyla Zuschlag for offering to coach cheerleading!*

May God richly bless you, your child, and your family!
Mary, Cause of our Joy, pray for us! St. Michael, pray for us!

Love,

Miss Emily Zgonc, Principal :)

"Open wide the doors of your heart to Christ! Do not be afraid!"
-St. John Paul the Great

