



The Bemidji Catholic Community

St. Philip's School

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August 18, 2011

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students,

At the risk of sounding presumptuous, let me ask, "Where has the summer gone?" The days on the calendar have disappeared rapidly. I truly hope you were able to experience sufficient sunshine, plenty of play, and an abundance of enjoyment anyway. No matter how long or short the time frame, there is always so much for which to be thankful.

WE'VE BEEN SERVING THE BEMIDJI COMMUNITY FOR EIGHTY-FIVE YEARS! In 1926, Father Joseph Fraling and the Benedictine sisters opened St. Philip's School for 180 students in grades one through eight. Eighty-five years later, St. Philip's School has an enrollment of over 270 students from prekindergarten through eighth grade. Despite the years, St. Philip's School, still using the original building, continues its mission of providing a quality Catholic education - its tradition of excellence. How thankful I am for God's many blessings upon St. Philip's School.

SCHOOL STARTS ON SEPTEMBER 1ST! PARENTS, you need to provide the transportation for Thursday and Friday. Thanks. Remember – No School on Monday, September 5th. Enjoy Labor Day.

WELCOME, NEW FAMILIES AND NEW STAFF: New faces are everywhere! We cordially welcome all our new students, new families, and new staff. Please take time to strike up a conversation and greet someone.

New staff members are: Mrs. Michelle Plotts, who will be teaching Language Arts and having a seventh grade homeroom; Mrs. Susan Baird, our new music teacher; Mr. Derek Wangberg, our physical education teacher. Mrs. Suzy Bormann, our new school secretary; Mrs. Ericka Pickett, our library/technology coordinator; and Mrs. Stacy Ness, our assistant cook. Please keep in mind that both our priests, Fr. Don Braukmann and Fr. Craig Vasek are relatively new, too! Be patient and kind as everyone learns the ropes.

HERE'S WHERE EVERYONE WILL BE FOR 2011-2012: PK-Jennifer Parks and Trisha Wherley; Kdg-Susie Balstad and Doris Swedmark; 1st-Sue Hengel and Emilee Lindseth; 2nd- Chris Hinnens and Marilynne Hodapp; 3rd- Heidi Hiscock; 4th-Susie Dahle; 5th-Geri Clairmont; 6th- Sue Swartz (science); 7th – Ron Laituri (math) and Michelle Plotts (language arts); 8th- Karen Williams (social studies); Music-Susan Baird; Phy Ed – Derek Wangberg; Art-Ruth Oschwald; Algebra-Pat Snell; Conflict Management-Margaret Hins; Library/ Technology-Ericka Pickett; Health Para-Heidi Fladeboe; School Secretary-Suzy Bormann; School Aide-Denise Kern; Cook-Michele Minogue; Assistant Cook-Stacy Ness; Dishwasher-Les Evans; Facilities Supervisor-Larry Mack; Custodians-Greg Allen and Jim Shaw. What an awesome group!

OPEN HOUSE: Please visit us on Tuesday, August 30th from 2:00 to 5:00 P.M. This is a great opportunity to tour the school, visit classrooms, meet teachers and classmates, ask questions and get answers, drop off school supplies, register for Noah's Ark, reduce the first day jitters, pay those beginning of the year fees, and sign the required forms. PLEASE NOTE THE TIME – **2:00 – 5:00**. Hopefully, this will accommodate the families picking up students who are returning from Camp Corbett.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS: Students in grades 6-8 are eligible to participate in sports and activities at Bemidji Middle School. To do so, parents and students must attend a meeting on Monday, August 22, at 6:00 P.M. in the Middle School cafeteria. The forms for the required physical (needed every three years) and the insurance waiver are available at St. Philip's. There is a fifty dollar participation fee, also. Forms and fees may be turned in at St. Philip's (rather than given to a coach).

I encourage all our middle schoolers to participate in at least one activity – athletic, artistic, or educational. You'll meet new people and perhaps discover a new talent. Go for it.

IN THIS ENVELOPE: Accompanying this letter are a number of other important papers. Please take time to read over the information on the Free or Reduced Meals, Safe Environment Certification, the calendar and supply list, and the ever important class list.

BEGINNING OF THE YEAR FEES: Please plan ahead for the beginning of the year fees which are payable at Open House. These fees cover snacks, snack milk, technology, music, science, and hot lunch. Amounts vary depending on the children's grades in school. New this year will be the opportunity to have the fees spread out over several months through an automatic withdrawal of funds. Kermit Erickson, the parish bookkeeper, will have information at Open House.

FREE OR REDUCED MEALS: Through federally funded programs, families may apply for Educational Benefits which would reduce their costs for breakfast or lunch. I urge all parents to look over the eligibility criteria and, if you qualify, apply for the benefits. The choice to take advantage of the benefits remains with you. But besides reducing your family's costs for breakfast or lunch, we benefit as a school through Title allotments. It is a very beneficial program. All application information is confidential. Please ask if you have questions.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT CERTIFICATION: All individuals who volunteer at St. Philip's School must attain Safe Environment Certification annually. The entire process has been put online, but may also be done on hard copy. All the directions are on the enclosed sheet. As a staff, we will be completing our Safe Environment training on Wednesday morning, August 24th, after the Prayer Partner Mass. You are cordially invited to join us. If not, please do it on your own before the time to volunteer is at hand. Thanks for your cooperation.

INTERSECTION CLOSING: Beginning Monday, August 22nd, the intersection of Beltrami Avenue and Eighth Street will be closed for approximately two weeks. Vehicles will have to use Seventh Street to exit from the Beltrami side of the school. Eighth Street will be accessible from Paul Bunyan Drive, allowing us to get to the parking lot. The great news is that by Labor Day the intersection should be open again.

PRAYER PARTNER MASS and SCHOOL MASSES: Please worship with us at the Prayer Partner Mass on Wednesday, August 24th, at 8:30 A.M. At this Mass, we, the staffs of the school and parish, ask the members of our Catholic community to pray for us throughout the year. After Mass we all gather for hospitality and community members have an opportunity to meet those they are praying for. We'll have another Prayer Partner Mass at the close of the school year. Believe me, prayers are much appreciated.

Our first school Mass will be at 8:40 A.M. on Friday, September 2nd. After that the majority of our Masses will be on Wednesday mornings. We invite you to be a part of our celebrations.

RACHEL'S CHALLENGE: Mark your calendars for Thursday, September 29th. On this day, our students and staff will participate in a program stemming from the tragedy at Columbine designed to increase kindness and compassion. Parents and community members are invited to attend an evening presentation at 7:00.

CAMP CORBETT: Students in grades 6-8 are welcome to join Fr. Craig for a couple of days of fun and faith at Camp Corbett, August 28th-30th. Information is available at the Parish Office.

NOAH'S ARK: The St. Philip's afterschool childcare program, Noah's Ark, will be available for all school families again this year. The program runs from the end of school until 5:30 on days school is in session. Families may use the services daily, sporadically, or on a drop-in basis. Just fill out the registration form so we have the pertinent information on hand. The cost is \$6 a day, with a family max of \$15 a day.

SUMMER PROJECTS: For an eighty-five year old building, ours looks mighty fine! A huge THANK YOU goes to our custodial crew Larry Mack, Greg Allen, and Jim Shaw for making us shiny and spiffy.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Hot lunch workers; Information Desk personnel; PK lunch volunteers; Parent Association members; volunteers for the Fall Festival and the Marathon; office copy people; help with Rachel's Challenge;

May you continue to enjoy the moments of summer.....

Very truly,

"Look and be utterly amazed." Habakkuk 1:5

Carol Rettinger
Principal