

September 24, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This past Monday, at the request of Bishop Michael Hoepfner, the teachers in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Crookston gathered at Cathedral School for a day of formation. Bishop Hoepfner emphasized the importance of our ministry as an extension of the Church and of himself. Fr. Bob Schreiner challenged us to be sure that Christ is in all that we do. Our Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Al Foley, reviewed the Code of Ethics for Catholic Educators developed by the National Catholic Education Association. In this the year of our diocesan centennial (as well as in the years past), I give thanks for our St. Philip's School staff who daily grace us with their faith, commitment, and love. I hope you do, too.

THE FALL FESTIVAL: Our great parish get-together, the Fall Festival, is this coming Sunday, September 27. Everyone is invited, and from food to auction items to games to varied festivities, there will be something for everyone to enjoy. Please join us sometime between 10:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M.

If you'd rather help out than play, volunteer hands are still needed. Sign up in the narthex or contact Jodi Maki at 444-4262 for a job. If nothing else, please send a cake, bag of candy, or a bake sale item. All will be used. Thanks.

THE MARATHON FOR NONPUBLIC EDUCATION: Following on the heels of the Fall Festival is the first of our school's fundraisers, the Marathon. This activity, scheduled for Saturday, October 10, gives families the opportunity to show their support for St. Philip's School. Join us for a short outing where you may walk, roller blade, or bike with other St. Philip's supporters and then enjoy a delicious hot dog lunch provided by the Knights of Columbus. We encourage you to obtain monetary pledges or donations in advance and turn them in the day of the Marathon. Information packets will be arriving at homes next week with complete details. Please help us make our community aware of St. Philip's School!

H1N1: Much has been said about the H1N1 flu virus. Without panicking or over-reacting, I ask that everyone follow sound, preventative healthcare measures: 1) wash your hands often with soap and water; 2) get plenty of rest, exercise, fresh air, and nutritional food; and 3) stay home if you are sick.

Parents, if your child has a fever greater than 100 and has a sore throat or cough, please keep him/her home. As always, notify us about the absence, including information about the symptoms. If your child gets sick at school, we will call you and have you take him/her home. These symptoms, however, do not necessarily require a trip to the clinic.

Due to privacy issues, we are only able to discuss individual student health information with the child's parents and teachers. Parents of students with compromised immune systems may confer directly with Heidi Fladeboe about the general health of the school. It is my understanding that testing for H1N1 is only being done on persons admitted to the hospital. As happens yearly in northern Minnesota, influenza-like symptoms will show up, with or without H1N1.

SAFETY ISSUES: Have you noticed the patrol crossing guards? Every morning from 8:00 A.M. until 8:20 A.M. and at the end of every school day from 3:00 P.M. to 3:15 P.M. our patrol members assist students and adults in crossing Beltrami Avenue. Please allow them to help you. Walking between buses and through a busy street are not safe procedures. Take a few extra steps to cross with our guards and set a good example for the youth who watch....A recommendation from the transportation department of ISD #31. When crossing Paul Bunyan Drive, please use the lights at 10th or 5th Streets, or at the very minimum, the corners of 8th or 6th Streets. Though it is marked, the crosswalk which comes out by our parish offices and parking lot (at what would be 7th Street) is extremely dangerous. Walk a bit farther to be safer....We will begin our fire drills and lock down drills this week. We are mandated by State laws to hold a minimum of five fire drills and five lock down drills throughout the school year....Students will have completed their in-class bus safety training by the end of the month and will practice what they've been taught in October....A mock school evacuation is planned for Thursday, October 22. In the afternoon of this day, we will practice evacuating the entire school with the assistance of ISD#31. Parents will need to pick their children up at BHS. Detailed information will be forthcoming....The Safety Concerns Committee meets tonight at 6:30 P.M. in the Kateri Room.

AFTER-SCHOOL ROUTINES: Please notify the school office or your child's teacher if there is a change in the regular after-school routine. For example, if your child normally goes to Noah's Ark two days a week, but you'll be picking him/her up one of those days, let us know by way of a note. Or, if your child does not regularly attend Noah's Ark, but you'd like him to do so on a particular day, send a note informing us. (Also, a Noah's Ark registration form must be on file). That will help alleviate confusion. **SPEAKING OF NOTES:** Athletes in grades 6-8 need a note from parents to allow them to leave school early for a competition.

LET ME MENTION... Eighth grader Erin Jones, daughter of Trish and Terry Jones, accompanied our cantors Anne Will and Linda Wolf for several songs during yesterday's school Mass. Several other pianists are planning to share their talents in this manner throughout the year. How wonderful! Thank you, Erin.....Our sixth graders are presently training our fifth graders to be patrol guards. Seeing to the safety of our students is the very important duty that these students perform. (Please see the previous entry.) This year's captains are Sam Boyer, Bruno Cheney, and Nate Gubbels. Thanks, patrol guards!

MID-TERMS: Already? Mid-term grades for students in fifth through eighth grade will be sent home with students on Wednesday, October 7. Parents, please discuss the grades with your student, sign the form, and return it to school within one week. This is one way to keep you as parents informed of the progress of your child. Please call if you have concerns.

RECONCILIATION PARENT MEETING: If your child will be preparing for the sacrament of Reconciliation this year, there is a parent meeting next Wednesday, September 30, beginning at 6:30 P.M. in the social hall. One parent from each family must attend.

OUTWARD BOUND: Next week our eighth graders will challenge themselves physically and mentally as they work toward team building at Outward Bound near Ely. This trip is the culmination of our conflict management program. Good Luck, Eighth Graders!

PARTY REMINDER: Birthday parties, holiday parties, or sleep-overs create a great deal of buzz and excitement for those invited and much heartbreak for those not. Parents, please be considerate of the feelings of the children in a class. Unless everyone (all the boys or all the girls) is being invited, mail invitations, rather than sending them to school for delivery. If at all possible, schedule the event for the evening or the weekend so that items do not have to be brought to school and students do not have to change regular after-school routines. Your understanding is much appreciated.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS: I can always use a few more substitute teachers on my list, especially if the flu hits. If you or someone you know might be interested, please contact me.

MATHCOUNTS HAS STARTED: This is a before-school activity for seventh and eighth graders and a few selected sixth graders. Its purpose is to foster an interest in math through study and competition. The first Math League competition is scheduled for Monday, October 12. Our coaches are Mr. Terry Belanger and Mrs. Karen Williams. Go, Mathletes!

SAFE ENVIRONMENT: Diocesan Safe Environment Certification is needed by every adult who wishes to volunteer or work in any and all programs involving children or vulnerable individuals. To receive certification one must 1) complete an Acknowledgement and Consent form; 2) pass a short quiz after reviewing this year's training materials; and 3) have a valid background check (which we run) on file. This year's training is Component A: Signs of Abuse. The materials may be accessed online at www.crookston.org or obtained in hard copy in the parish, RF, or school offices. Certification is good for one year from the date issued. Please keep your certification up to date. Thank you.

FEDERAL MEALS PROGRAM: I encourage every family who may be eligible to receive the benefits from the Federal Meals Program (free or reduced meals) to complete an application and apply. Benefits that carried over from last year expire at the end of this month. Please keep your meal account up-to-date.

VILLAGE FESTIVAL: Calvary Lutheran Church will host the Ten Thousand Villages fair trade festival on Saturday and Sunday, October 10 & 11. There will be live music, children's crafts, and a bicycle clinic. Check it out after the Marathon.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Fall Festival workers; Marathon participants; hot lunch volunteers; PK lunchtime help; RF teachers and assistants; classroom chaperones; Information Desk help.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS: The Nyberg and Hoody families and all others who have recently lost loved ones; those who are ill, injured, or hurting; those whose lives have been affected by the fires and floods; those who are without employment; and those who are new American citizens.

“Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.” James 2:18

Very truly,

Carol Rettinger
Principal