



# All Saints Catholic School

*Behold I make all things new.*

## The Sentinel Newsletter

September 6, 2023

### Principal's Message

The opening weeks of the school year have been a great success, with students learning classroom and school-wide procedures and committing to strong work habits for the year ahead. I am proud of their enthusiastic efforts and grateful to the teachers who continue to foster an environment of high expectations for all of our students.

Next week students in grades 3-7 will begin their first round of standardized testing through NWEA-MAP, an assessment that our school will complete by Friday, September 29. As an adaptive online assessment, the MAP test pinpoints each student's learning level in reading, language arts, and math. As students complete the second and third rounds of testing over the course of the year, the teachers will be able to closely track their progress and plan instruction based upon the needs of each classroom of learners.

The teachers will be posting the dates and times of their classroom testing sessions. In support of your child/ren's success on their assigned days of MAP testing, please ensure that they report to school on time. Additionally, they will be better able to perform to the best of their ability if they are well-rested and have enjoyed a healthy and nutritious breakfast.

Secondly, this week I wish to share a couple of important health related updates.

### Diocese of Arlington COVID-19 Policy

On May 11, 2023, the federal COVID-19 public health emergency ended. In turn, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) retired its Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention for Students, Teachers and Staff in Child Care, K-12 Schools, and Day Camp Settings and replaced it with a referral to the Centers for Disease Control's guidance.

In response to these new circumstances, the Diocese of Arlington and its parishes and schools will respond to COVID-19 under our general sick leave policy, with the addition of the COVID-19 guidance provided by the VDH. This guidance will apply to students and staff in all diocesan entities, including parishes without a diocesan school as well as the Central Administrative Office and its satellite locations.

Our general sick leave policy for students and staff is as follows:

- Those who are ill or have symptoms of illness should remain home until symptoms are improved and the individual is fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
- Per the VDH, those who are formally diagnosed with COVID-19, either by test (including home testing) and/or healthcare provider, will follow the CDC guidance found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html> or the direction of the individual's licensed healthcare provider.
- Those who are formally diagnosed by a healthcare provider with an infectious disease other than COVID-19 will follow the written direction of their healthcare provider.

### **Meningococcal Vaccine**

The Virginia Department of Health is responding to a statewide outbreak of meningococcal disease caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup Y. The first case was detected in June 2022, and the outbreak was declared in the eastern region in September 2022. The same strain has since been identified in the southwest and central regions of Virginia.

The majority of case-patients (18) developed septicemia, and not meningitis, with common symptoms including fever, nausea, vomiting, and muscle aches.

Please use the links below for additional information:

- [Virginia Department of Health Declares Statewide Outbreak of Meningococcal Disease - Clinicians](#) (Clinician Letter 8/23)
- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/meningococcal-disease-outbreak-response/> (Dashboard)

The meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY) can provide protection against *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroup Y. VDH encourages parents and school nurses to ensure adolescents and teens receive the meningococcal conjugate vaccine on schedule upon entry into 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Contact

your local health department if you have questions about your options for accessing the MenACWY vaccine.

While this communication from the State of Virginia is not cause for alarm, it does provide important information for parents to be aware of in ensuring the health of their children.

### **School Safety Update**

I'm pleased to confirm that the new doors at the entrance to the gym/cafeteria were installed last week. This facility enhancement will provide us greater opportunity to secure the gym/cafeteria, particularly in the event of a safety related concern. Again, I wish to thank the Parish Safety & Security Committee for their involvement in this project and the parish for their generous support of this initiative.

Should you have any questions about our testing program or any of this week's topics, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Wishing you continued blessings during this third week of school!

*Behold I make all things new*



### **SchoolMessenger Emergency Notification ~ Results of Test**

Last week's test of the *SchoolMessenger* notification system was a success. In the event that you did not receive messages via phone, text, or email, please contact the school office so that we may assist you.

### **Back to School Night (Grades 1-5) & PTO Meeting (Tomorrow @ 7:00 p.m.)**

Back to School Night for parents of students in grades 1-5 will take place beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 7 in the Parish Activities Center. Following an opening presentation that will include highlights of PTO activities for the year, teachers in grades one through five will provide an overview of their programs in their classrooms.

### **Middle School Back to School Night (September 14 @ 7:00 p.m.)**

Back to School Night for parents of students in grades 6-8 will take place on Thursday, September 14 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Parents are asked to report directly to their son or daughter's homeroom classroom for the opening session. Don't miss what will be an exciting overview of our middle school experience!

## **Important Reminders**

### **Parent- Student Handbook (2023-2024 Edition)**

The 2023-2024 Parent-Student Handbook can be accessed electronically via our website and may be found at the following link:

[HANDBOOK](#)

**If you have not already done so, please take some time to review the policies and procedures of our school and discuss them with your children. Each family is asked to sign and return the acknowledgment form to the office as soon as possible.**

### **New Parent Coffee (September 12)**

All new parents, including those who joined our school last year, are invited to attend "Coffee with the Principal" on Tuesday, September 12 beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Activities Center (PAC). Following a presentation, there will be time for questions and discussion about our school and its many programs. Plan to attend and meet other new families who have recently joined our community!

## **Background Checks – Policies for School Parent Volunteers**

As part of the diocesan initiative to maintain a safe environment for all of our children, all volunteers in the school are required to complete a background check prior to working in the school and to complete VIRTUS training within 45 days of submitting the background check application.

In accordance with diocesan policy, full compliance for an adult parent volunteer is not required for *open* events. (An open event is one that is open to the public, infrequent and publicized, such as Field Day, concerts and special events/assemblies.) However, full compliance is required for adult parent volunteers who wish to participate in closed events. (A closed event is one that is not entirely open to the general public such as classroom activities, parties, field trips, etc.) For this reason, all parents who wish to attend field trips or volunteer in support of classroom activities are required to complete the background check process and attend VIRTUS training.

The online application for the diocesan background check can be found at the following link:

<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/child-protection/background-checks/>

To register for VIRTUS training which is hosted at parishes and schools throughout our diocese, please follow the link below.

<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/child-protection/virtus/>

## **Upcoming Events for John Paul the Great**

### **Adult Bioethics Sessions**

(Active through October 16, 2023) -

All community members are invited to join Sister Malia Grace in six, 90-minute sessions discussing the Dignity of the Human Person. In these six sessions, Sister Malia Grace will present an overview of the first Bioethics course offered at Saint John Paul the Great High School. This course -- The Human Person: A Philosophical Perspective -- is designed to present St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophical understanding of the human person, which gives the basis for understanding human dignity. Topics covered include the relationship of the human body and soul, the distinguishing powers of the human soul and its nature as both a spiritual and immortal entity, and finally, the nature of human love, marriage and human sexuality.

To register, please use this link: <https://forms.gle/WFRjsKXqpq5mCmns7>

**Sessions will be held on Tuesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School in St. Thomas Aquinas Hall. You are welcome to attend all sessions, or as many as your schedule allows. The sessions build upon each other, yet each topic is also its own class.**

- September 12th -- What is Truth?
- September 19th -- The Dignity of the Human Person -- Philosophical Foundations
- September 26th -- From Love to Desire to Joy: The Role of Emotion in the Moral Life
- October 3rd -- The Rational Powers of the Human Soul
- October 10th -- The Nature of Human Love
- October 17th -- Marriage & Human Sexuality

Bioethics Seminar Flyer

### **John Paul's 10th Annual Golfing with Wolves**

*(Active until September 20, 2023) -*

John Paul's annual Golfing with Wolves Tournament is on Thursday, September 21st at Potomac Shores Golf Club, a Jack Nicklaus designed course! Tickets include a boxed lunch and Italian dinner buffet. Proceeds go to supporting the academic and extracurricular activities at Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School. Please contact Amy Thomason at [golf@jpthegreat.org](mailto:golf@jpthegreat.org) or call 703-445-0306 with any questions.

For more information or to purchase tickets, please use this link: <https://jpthegreat.schoolauction.net/golf2023>

Golfing with Wolves Flyer

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Wednesday, September 6**

Faculty Meeting (3:30-5:00 p.m.)

### **Thursday, September 7**

Back-to-School Night for Grades 1-5 & PTO General Membership Meeting (PAC/7:00 p.m.)

### **Friday, September 8**

School Mass – Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (8:30 a.m.)

**Monday, September 11**

Standardized Testing (NWEA MAP) Begins  
Confessions – Grade 8 (9:30 a.m.)

**Tuesday, September 12**

New Parent Coffee (PAC/9:00 a.m.)  
Band Parent Meeting & Registration (Music Room/6:45 p.m.)

**Wednesday, September 13**

Spirit Wear Day  
Confessions – Grade 7 (9:15 a.m.)  
Enrollment Management Team Meeting (PLC/7:00 p.m.)

**Thursday, September 14**

Middle School Night (7:00 p.m.)

**Friday, September 15**

School Mass – Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows (8:30 a.m.)

**Saturday, September 16**

Alumni Reunion (PAC/10:00 a.m.)

**Monday, September 18**

Confessions – Grade 6 (9:30 a.m.)

**Tuesday, September 19**

Band Lessons Begin  
Room Liaisons Meeting (Meeting Room 2/7:00 p.m.) – **Postponed to September 21**

**Wednesday, September 20**

Confessions – Grade 5 (9:15 a.m.)

**Thursday, September 21**

School Mass – Feast of St. Matthew (8:30 a.m.)  
PTO Helping Hands (PAC/9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)  
Room Liaisons Meeting (PAC Atrium/7:00 p.m.)

**Friday, September 22**

**Noon Dismissal**

Professional Development Day for Faculty (Professional Learning Communities)

**Monday, September 25**

6<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip – The EDGE

Confessions – Grade 4 (9:30 a.m.)

**Tuesday, September 26**

After School Advanced Band Begins

**Wednesday, September 27**

Confessions – Grade 3 (9:15 a.m.)

Faculty Meeting (3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

**Friday, September 29**

School Mass – Feast of the Archangels (8:30 a.m.)

**Monday, October 2**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Meeting (PAC/7:00 p.m.)

**Tuesday, October 3**

PTO Executive Committee Meeting (PLC/7:00 p.m.)

**Wednesday, October 4**

Planetarium Presentation (Sponsored by the PTO)

Memorial of St. Francis – Blessing of the Animals (Courtyard/4:00 p.m.)

**Thursday, October 5**

Enrollment Management Team Meeting (PLC/7:00 p.m.)

**Friday, October 6**

School Mass – Memorial of Blessed Marie Rose Durocher (8:30 a.m.)

Uniform Exchange (PAC Atrium/9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.)

Priests' Barbecue

**Saturday, October 7**

Diocesan Pilgrimage to Seton Shrine