



St. Mary's Academy

December 2007 Newsletter

Volume II

Number 2

Message from the Director

Remarkably, the Parents' Guild International Day surpassed all previous records for attendance and revenue. Thanks to Co-Convenors Anne Copps and Debra Marr and the host of pavilion convenors and volunteers who made the event such a success.

Coming soon to SMA - towing signs in the parking lots and driveway! If your daughter expects to park her car on the grounds she must have purchased a parking pass and she must park in her designated spot with the parking pass visible. At present, all parking spaces on the grounds have been allocated. Students who take other people's spots, or who park where there is no designated stall, or on the driveway, risk being towed at their expense.

Please visit the new SMA website www.stmarysacademy.mb.ca if you have not yet done so. I think you will find it helpful. Click on the calendar

Principal's Message

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth requires all schools to fully implement a policy on *Middle Years Assessment of Key Competencies in Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, Expository Writing, and Student Engagement*. How does this look for students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 at SMA? To become an independent learner, students need to be involved in the assessment process. The Middle Years Assessment Policy is intended to engage students, through classroom-based assessment processes, to build awareness and confidence in their own learning. Reporting student performance is done through individual student's performance reports that will be provided to students and parents with school reports forwarded to MECY. These will both be completed by the end of February.

If you have any questions regarding key competencies, please call or email your daughter's mathematics (Grade 7) or English language arts (Grade 8) teacher and for student engagement questions contact her

Love as Jesus Loved

This year at SMA, we are integrating the Candy Cane with the wreath as our Advent symbols. The candy cane is layered with meaning for us – it can be used to help someone (we are People of Service!); it is shaped like a J for Jesus, Justice, and Joy; and it has a great story about how it came to be (which is part of a trivia game we are playing throughout Advent). During our Advent services, the community heard a story about what the Messiah looks like today. What

to enlarge it and then run the mouse over the dates to get more information. You can sort the events by category. If you want an inside look at the school on any given day check the daily bulletin that is posted in the News section. If you have another daughter to enrol at SMA you can download the admissions package and bursary application form.

This month we said good-bye to Mrs. Francesca Creta and welcomed Mrs. Willie Duffy as school office secretary. Parents will get to know Mrs. Duffy quickly as she is the person who will track attendance and detentions. She was SMA receptionist a few years ago and her daughter is a graduate so she knows the school well.

Wishing you a happy Christmas and God's richest blessings in the New Year.

homeroom teacher (Grade 7).

Our highly successful musical production tradition continues! This year, *High School Musical* performed to four sold out shows of engaged and highly entertained audiences. We are very proud of our cast and crew of 110 students, faculty, parents, and musicians. I would especially like to highlight the exceptional contributions of the director, Ms. J. Thibedeau-Silver, and music director, Mr. R. Kuklik. Gratitude to all for all that you do for our SMA community!

The advent season is upon us, a time of waiting, a spiritual waiting for the birth of our Prince of Peace. As we wait for Christ's coming in us, in others and in the events of each day, may our openness to His coming guide us to be instruments of His peace in our world.

Merry Christmas and a Healthy, Joy-filled 2008!

would it be like if we treated everyone as though she or he was the Messiah? We were challenged to think of ways that we could, "love like Jesus loved" this Advent season, so that when Christmas arrives we are as ready as possible to welcome the Christ child. Thus, on each classroom door hangs a gift bag suspended from a candy cane. Inside the bag are Scripture passages for each day that remind us about how we are to "love as Jesus loved".

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Dates to Note:

<i>Dec. 14 - Come & Go Reconciliation Service 12:35-1:35 in Holy Names Chapel</i>
<i>Dec. 19 - Taize Advent Prayer in Holy Names Chapel</i>
<i>Dec. 19 - Choir Caroling @ Holy Names (Despins) Residence</i>
<i>Dec. 19 - Christmas Coffee House 3:30 - 6:00pm in cafeteria</i>
<i>Dec. 21 - A Journey from Advent to Christmas Service 11:35 am</i>
<i>Dec. 24 - Jan. 4 - Christmas Break</i>
<i>Jan. 7 -Classes Resume</i>
<i>Jan. 8 -11 - Gr. 12 ELA Standard Exams</i>
<i>Jan. 11 - 2:30 p.m. Dismissal</i>
<i>Jan. 17 - SMA Open House 7:00 p.m.</i>
<i>Jan. 23 - Feb. 1 - Exam Period</i>
<i>Feb 4 - Term 2 begins</i>
<i>Feb 5 - Parents' Guild - 7:30pm</i>
<i>Feb 6 - Ash Wednesday Service 11:35</i>
<i>Feb. 15 - Catholic Schools' In-Service No school</i>
<i>Feb. 15 - Report Cards & February Newsletter Mailed</i>

The January 2008 Exam Timetable will be available on the SMA website on Tuesday, December 18, 2007.

Grade 9 Welcoming Evening

Each year, in September, the new and returning Grade 9 students get an opportunity to spend time getting to know one another in an evening full of fun and exciting activities. In previous years the students gathered for a sleepover, however this year the Grade 12 Special Events Team organized an evening full of fun events. The girls played games, danced and ate together and got to know new names and faces throughout the course of the night. The night ended with a spooky tour of the school led by Sister Susan!

Take Our Kids To Work

This special experience organized nationally for Grade 9 students on November 7th was a great success. The feedback from the students and parents was very positive. What a wonderful opportunity we have given our daughters. The students enjoyed their "work placement" as well as learning from their classmates upon returning to school the next day and sharing their work experience. Ms. Beaucage-Pena would like to extend a big Thank You to all the parents who helped support this learning experience.

School Closure - Inclement Weather

If it is necessary to close school due to severe weather conditions or failure of an essential service before the school day begins, an announcement will be made on various radio stations including CBC, CJOB and HOT 103, as well as, the SMA website.

When a storm develops during the school day, the school will remain open until 3:30 p.m. Students will not be dismissed until parents pick up their daughters.

When a service fails during the school day and it is determined the school should close, students will phone parents to make arrangements before leaving the school. On these occasions the school will remain open until 3:30 p.m.

Young Neighbours in Action

Submitted by Mel Love and Christine Lam

This past summer four students, accompanied by Sister Marylyn had the opportunity to go to Toronto for a Mission trip. In Toronto our evenings were spent in the dorms of Lorretto College but when morning came we were up at 6:00 a.m. to prepare for a day at work.

The program, Young Neighbours in Action, is where we met many other teenagers from the USA (and even Brazilians studying English there). Throughout the week, all participants went with their assigned parish or school team to different service agencies in Toronto - organizations such as homeless shelters, drop in centers, and Rosalie Hall.

The SMA team was fortunate enough to be assigned to an organization that is very similar to our very own Villa Rosa here in Winnipeg. Just like Villa Rosa, Rosalie Hall is a place for young mothers and pregnant teens to be educated and learn how to raise their children. Rosalie Hall is also a place where they can live to have a safe environment to educate their children, therefore

breaking the cycle of the young unwedded mothers.

Young Neighbours in Action really opened our eyes to the poor and the vulnerable in our world. We learned to reach out to those who need us and to help in whatever way we can, even if it is giving a granola bar to a man begging for money. Seeing someone lying on the street, half clothed, under a blanket and being stepped on is a scene we don't want to have to see again. We need to change our thinking, because that man lying on the street may not be able to help himself. This program helped us open our eyes, our hearts, and our ears to God and His word. By respecting the people around us, no matter what social class, or race, or appearance, we are living the Gospel. By listening to scripture each day and night, by going to our organizations and being with the poor, the helpless, and the needy, and by carrying out actions to help the people who needed us, we gave and received.

SMA Athletic Highlights

The snow is here and the grass has disappeared; however, the memories of a successful cross country season will always be there for everyone involved. We would like to thank Mr. David Campbell and Mrs. Mona Linton for coaching and motivating all those students to get out of bed and run so early in the morning. The students' dedication resulted in Varsity team finishing in second place in the conference and fourth at Provincials. The Junior team won the conference championship and tied for first at the Provincial Championship, but lost out in the tie breaker. Runners, keep up the training during the winter months. You have worked so hard and you don't want to lose what you have gained.

The golf team was reestablished after a 15 year hiatus when we finished 2nd at Provincials back in 1992. This year, as you might know, the St. Mary's team won the Provincial Championship on a cold and wet day on September 21st at Gilbert Plains. We would like to thank Mr. Saj and Mr. Villa for supervising and working with

the team. You can see a great picture of them in the new Manitoba sport magazine [Manitoba Score](#).

The basketball season is under way with many of the teams finishing tryouts or practicing for their first tournament before Christmas holidays. We have the following coaches for the various teams: Billy Phan and Katelyn Demers coaching the Varsity team; Andrew Phan and Cleo Leslie coaching the Junior Varsity team; Nav Grewal, Kim and Ron Padua-Bedona coaching Grade 9; Mr. Saj, Mr. Villa and Mr. Danyluk coaching Grade 8; and Emilie Cook coaching Grade 7.

Good luck to all those teams. Remember, games are prepared for and won at practice.

The hockey team is having a good start to the season. Players are still molding into a team and they are working hard to develop their individual and team skills. Thank you to Mr. Bob Johnson, Mr. Eric Pele, Miss Richelle St. Croix, and Miss Kyla Fraser for their commitment to St. Mary's Hockey.

International Day 2007 - A Huge Success

December is a great time to count our blessings. We would like to thank everyone who participated in the record breaking financial success of the 33rd Annual SMA International Day. At day's end, we had realized a profit of just over \$21,000. We were blessed with great weather and the overwhelming generosity of time, talent, and treasure from the Academy community. We look forward to continued success in the years to come.

As convenors of International Day, we would also like to take this opportunity to say a huge THANK YOU to all of the committee/pavilion convenors and all of the volunteers and donors. Without all of you this fabulous event would not materialize. Wishing you a Joyful and Peaceful Christmas and the very best in the New Year.

Ann Copps, Convenor and Debra Marr, Co-Convenor, International Day 2007.

“Volleying” the Ball at SMA

As you read this newsletter nine teams, 95 athletes, two teachers and ten volunteers are neatly folding and putting away volleyball uniforms, storing knee pads on the top shelf, and hanging up their volleyball court shoes. As of December 8th the 2007 St. Mary's volleyball season came to a close. All teams experienced a wide variety of success with positive experiences on and off the court, whether it be establishing new relationships or maintaining old ones, learning about volleyball extensively, and developing active and healthy lifestyle practices.

Here is a run-down of how our teams finished their season: 45 Grade 7 athletes participated in three developmental, friendly tournaments within the Pembina Trails School Division.

The Grade 7 traveling team participated in the Grade 8 “B” league and made it to the semi-final league match. The Grade 8 team finished in 1st

place and won the Pembina Trails Championship Banner. It participated in Provincials on December 7/8th. The Grade 9 team also finished in 1st place and won the Pembina Trails Championship banner. It too participated in Provincials on December 7/8th and came away with the Provincial Championship Gold Medal. The Junior Varsity Team and the Varsity Team each finished 4th within the West Winnipeg Athletic Conference.

A very large amount of time, effort, commitment, and dedication were devoted to the 2007 Volleyball program and the Athletic Department would like to thank everyone who supported the athletes and coaches in their quest for success. If you have any questions, concerns, or if you are interested in getting involved in our programs, please don't hesitate to call.

Continuing on a Mission

Since the last publication, our UNICEF campaign, endorsed by the Catholic Bishops of Canada, was kicked off by the Prairie Regional Director, Nuala Nazarko, alumna of St. Mary's. Our girls, more fully aware of the needs of Malawi/Rwanda schools, responded generously. Three of them were pleased to win our Hal-lowe'en goodie bags with Rossbrook House receiving the proceeds from the October 31st collection. Four students accompanied Mrs. Dart and Sister Marylyn to Rossbrook's open house. Here we were warmly welcomed.

S.M.A.C.K.E.D. Having a Great Season

The St. Mary's Academy Competitive and Kilted Elocution and Debate team has been exceptionally busy this term. At the McGill Tournament in Montreal, November 2-3, there was great effort and results. Kirstyn Koswin placed 3rd in the country, and 5th as a team along with her partner, Kayla Ketcheson. Sam Hale placed 18th overall. Fabulous performances from Brittany Goodman, Zoe Prefontaine, Alana Poon, Anna Solmundson, Alanna Hommel, and Natasha Rossol. Kirstyn Koswin participated in the World's National Team Qualifier in Vancouver on November 20 - 21. The results to be announced next term.

Mr. Jordan Burg, coach of the Manitoba Provincial team, was in Vancouver/Victoria at the CSDF National Seminar from November 21 - 26. Three SMA girls represented the province - Sam Hale (English), Zoe Prefontaine (Bilingual), and Gabby Morrill (French).

On November 25 Kirstyn Koswin, Brittany Goodman, Anna Solmundson, Alana Poon, Katrina Lark, and Sarah Martin participated in

We have now begun our Christmas Hamper campaign for inner city residents who attend the Immaculate Conception Drop In. Each student was given a sheet indicating the contents needed for individual hampers with the hope of a generous response yet again. We are grateful to Red River Packaging Products for providing 600 gift bags. Special thanks goes to Keith Wolbaum and Gordon Bunt for making this possible for another year!

Blessings upon each of us as we journey through Advent.

the Rupert's Land Public Speaking Tournament at BHS and Kirstyn Koswin and Anna Solmundson represented SMA at the Asper Cup Tournament hosted at the Gray Academy on December 1-2. Juliet Daet represented SMA on a Provincial Team participating at the Western Canada Seminar in Edmonton from Dec. 3-7.

As you can see, the club has been very busy and very successful. Congratulations go out in particular to the girls who earned spots on provincial teams, and of course, to Kirstyn, who we are hoping will make the National team and participate at the Worlds next year in Athens, Greece. A special thank you goes out to former national debating champion Catherine Metycki (07) who took time out of her studies at UBC to come out and judge at the National Seminar in Vancouver. We also learned that her partner, Andrea Wilson (07) is participating in a major debating event in Malaysia on behalf of the University of Toronto, and we wish her all the best.

*Ever notice how we quickly
tear the wrapping off the
gift or dig into the bag and
barely spend any time
savouring the
“unwrapping”? This Christ-
mas, leave this prayer on the
fridge or on the table to re-
mind everyone that we need
to slow down and enjoy the
gift and each other.*



Opening gifts

*Let me just for a
moment, Lord, hold
this time in my heart.
It is about mysteries
and gratitude,
unknowing and wrong
sizes, snippets of
ribbon and screams
of delight.
Help me to remember
the immense love you
have for each of us in
this room and for those
who can't be here.
With each gift that is
opened, no matter how
perfect or not, let me
feel again the many
ways you gift us each
day, especially with
your presence in our
hearts and the
presence of each other
in our lives.*

Christmas Coffee House

This year we will be getting in the Christmas Spirit with Special Events' Second Annual Christmas Coffee house for Winnipeg Harvest. Students of St. Mary's (Grade 7-12) and St. Paul's (Grade 9-12) are invited. From 3:30 to 6:00 on December 19th students will be given the opportunity to mingle with their peers while listening to performances by SMA and SPHS students. Free fair trade coffee, hot chocolate, and Christmas treats prepared by students will be available. There is an entrance fee of 1 non-perishable food item which will be donated to Winnipeg Harvest.

If you are willing to provide some baked goods for this event please have your daughter tell her special events rep this week.

SMA Uniform Shop

Friday December 14th will be the last day the uniform shop will be open before Christmas holidays. The uniform shop will re-open on Friday January 11, 2008. Our hours over the lunch break are 12:35 – 1:35 p.m. The shop will not be open January 25 or February 1, 2008.

Mark your calendars, the **SPRING UNIFORM SALE** will be held **April 15, 2008 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm.**

Please remember that you can pay with cash, debit card, Visa or Mastercard. **Cheques are not accepted.** If you are paying with your parent's credit card you must have the actual card and a note signed by a parent authorizing you to use the card.

Christmas Wish

The Christmas season is quickly approaching and our time of anticipation is drawing to a close. Each person in our school community is waiting anxiously for the special day when we celebrate the birth of the Jesus, the Light that dispels the darkness.

Our fondest wish is that the light of life shine brightly for you while you celebrate this joyous and blessed season.

We look forward to working with you and your daughters in the New Year.

Merry Christmas!

Staff of SMA

Message From The Parents' Guild

I encourage more parents to spend an evening with us at our meetings throughout the year. Events are planned which enable each of you to choose something that fits into your schedule. The more hands we have involved, the less "work" it is and the more "fun" it becomes. The Guild provides opportunities to give a bit of yourselves to better the educational experience for each of Sister Susan's 589 "daughters", one of which is yours.

The Guild hosted a well received Parent Information evening on Sept 13th. Thanks to a generous donation by Tina Jones, from "Banville and Jones", who supplied all the wine and treats. It was a wonderful evening. We cannot thank you enough, Tina! Thanks also to the Hospitality Committee, chaired by Nicola Gutormson and Maggie Mahon, who put the evening together so elegantly.

You may have noticed that the annual Fashion Show has been deleted from our slate of events this year. The executive brought forward concerns to our general membership where it was unanimously voted to cancel. A "welcome" BBQ will take place next Fall as a community building event. Should you have any fun/fund raising ideas please email them to me at kddane@mts.net.

International Day was a huge success under the leadership of conveners Ann Copps and Debra Marr. Thank you to the overwhelming number of volunteers required to make this day not only fun, but profitable too!

God bless each of our families as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour and remember to serve those less fortunate than ourselves.

Katherine Dane, President

Accounting Office

Charitable donation receipts for the **2006-2007** school year, for inclusion with your **2007** tax return, are being prepared and will be mailed in late January. Receipts for the **2007-2008** school year, for inclusion with your **2008** tax return, will be issued in **January 2009**.

If your daughter(s) received a bursary and/or scholarship for the **2007-2008** school year, we will be issuing a T4A in your daughter's name. Look for these slips in your mailbox in January. The accounting office will be closed between December 24, 2007 and January 1, 2008.



If you need to contact us during the Christmas break Ms. B. Van Raes will be available as follows:

Wednesday, January 2nd
to
Friday, January, 4th
478-6042

Please note that tuition payments will be withdrawn from your account on January 2, 2008.