

January 10, 2019

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year!

Our school rang in the new year in a special manner. Fr. Matt blessed our school and classrooms by using holy water and then using chalk to write above the entrances 20 + C + M + B + 19 when we returned to school on Monday. The tradition is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home/school and to be a part of our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows. By way of explanation, there are two meanings of the letters C, M, and B. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, or "May Christ bless the house." What a wonderful way to begin the new calendar year! To see a glimpse of the tradition, pictures have been posted on our FaceBook page. Happy with your family's experience at our school, please share with others and future SJB families by posting a review on our school FaceBook page. We have so much to be proud of!

Speaking of pride, there is good news to share from the Catholic Schools Office. In analyzing mass attendance, it was found that St. John the Baptist has one of the highest percentage increases of students attending mass (13%) among our Diocese of Joliet Catholic Schools for the time period March 2014 – April 2018. This is a testament to your commitment to nurturing faith development. We truly are blessed by the amazing school community at Saint John the Baptist. Let us carry this blessing into the new year. As I mentioned in previous letters, strengthening weekend mass attendance is an ongoing goal at our school and throughout the diocese. One of the benefits of attending weekend Mass is that you will see other families at mass, have the opportunity to engage in conversation, and in turn, our community is strengthened.

There is so much happening at our school in the next few weeks; there is surely something for everyone. As a reminder, the window for submitting tax credit scholarship applications opens on Tuesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Our computer lab will be open beginning at 6:30 PM on Tuesday and assistance will be available in both English and Spanish to begin the two part process. Part one is a brief reservation form which will timestamp applications. Part two of the application process begins on Friday, January 18; through the new portal on empower Xchange. Our computer lab will be open throughout the day until 4:30 PM. If planning on attending, please use our main entrance, to gain access to the school. A separate email with more information will be sent today.

As we get closer to Catholic Schools Week, members of our school community will be speaking at local Catholic Churches which don't have parish schools. We need two volunteers to speak at Resurrection Catholic Church in Wayne next weekend and we are currently looking for volunteers to speak at Mass at St. Mary's Church in West Chicago in both English and Spanish about the wonderful experiences at our school. Talking points have been prepared and a choice of Masses is available. At this time, we are in need of eight more volunteers. Please consider volunteering. Your donation of time may have a great impact on SJB as parents are the best ambassadors. We are also looking for speakers for Masses at St. John the Baptist on January 26 and January 27. If you are interested or want more information, please contact me at [Jpolicht@stjohnwinfield.org](mailto:Jpolicht@stjohnwinfield.org) or 630-668-2625, extension 617.

As a kick off to Catholic Schools Week, the annual Winter Carnival hosted by the Parents Club is on Saturday, January 26 in Sebahar Hall following the 5:00 PM Mass. Admission price is \$10 per family. I have heard that it is an evening filled with fun complete with food, games, and an opportunity to join SJB family and friends. I look forward to experiencing it for the first time!

Our Open House for Catholic Schools Week is scheduled for Sunday, January 27 from 10:00 AM -1:00 PM. Please plan to come to the pancake breakfast hosted by the Knights of Columbus and then visit your child's classroom. Student work will be on display and highlight the learning that is taking place. Teachers will be there to visit with you and answer questions. Please plan to join us. Additionally, it is the perfect time to bring any friends who might be interested in attending our school. Student ambassadors will be on hand to provide tours.

More information about the many fabulous activities planned for Catholic Schools Week activities will be sent today in a separate email. One event I want to bring your attention to is the Talent Show. Mark your calendar for Thursday, January 31 at 1:00 PM for this annual event, which showcases our talented kids! You should have received information and permission slips to participate in the talent show this week. If not, one can be found within this posting.

It is wonderful to be back at school with your children. I am truly excited to take part in the many upcoming events and activities.

May 2019 be filled with abundant blessings,