



Academy of St. James of the Marches

Good Afternoon one and all:

I hope everyone was safe after the very challenging Thursday. I appreciate your understanding with early dismissals and snow days. I will always do the best I can in letting families know as soon as possible about changes to schedules and early dismissals. We are dealing with the weather and it is not always predictable! There is only ONE thing that guides me – the safety of our children and staff. That is why before care and after care can be challenging, I can't send home students and leave after care running. Before care will be an option 45 minutes before the start of school before a delayed opening. That will be a given from now on. Also, now that we are in the winter season, please try to set up plans for your children if school should open late or close early. Hopefully it won't happen often but I am confident it will happen sometimes. Be sure the office has the phone numbers of people we can contact if no one comes to pick up your child(ren).

IMPORTANT: Tomorrow are Parent Teachers Conferences so please remember you scheduled time which could be over the next three days. **ALSO, the Scholarship Information Night** is tomorrow at **7:15 PM**. Mr. Patrick Peace from the Diocese will come to our school to discuss and demonstrate how to apply for the Educational Trust Scholarship. If you need assistance – this is one way to get it. Tri- County Scholarship Fund is another and we will briefly discuss that tomorrow night also. **IF YOU NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** this is the time to learn about it. There is no harm in finding out how to seek help with tuition! This is the easiest way to get informed on how to apply. 7:15 PM in the school hall.

Grades: In the past parents have been able to log in and oversee the grades of their students. Powerschool was a relatively easy way to see student progress. The Diocese changed the data collection process to Rediker. It is not user friendly and we have had a challenge getting report cards set up and ready to see. At this moment, I am not encouraging the parental portal. Firstly, I really like parents and students talking together to assess student progress. This will be the first time middle school students (grades 6-8) will be at conferences. They are the older students we are educating and they need to be ready to discuss their progress since September. Also, the lower grades send home a steady stream of tests and work so that should assist those parents in having a clear knowledge of progress. The daily viewing of grades can create undue stress on students also. I will reevaluate my decision about the parent portal as soon as we have a true handle on Rediker.

The **last day for turning in Krispy Kreme orders is tomorrow, Mon. Nov. 19th**. It is my mistake that I stated the 20th. We need to place the order at the end of the day tomorrow. I know we went all out in September with our KK and it was awesome. Do your best and order for the holidays! Freeze them!

Bishop Serratelli celebrated 5:30 Mass yesterday and it was lovely. He gave an impassioned plea regarding the media and it's reporting of Catholic events. He reminded us to not believe everything we read. This is a super stressful time for Catholics over the whole world, not just here in the US. He encouraged us to pray and be grateful in this time for the blessings we share with one another. The Kindergarten class had a great poem today at the 10:15 Mass! Thank you to Miss Nunno and those wonderful kinders! They were super! A big shout out to Sr. Margaret Rose, Sr. Anne and Sr. Mary Ann – they all just keep us going each weekend. Everywhere I look, they are there! Thank you!

Thanksgiving is here and with it a time for reflection. I want to thank the Student Council and Staff, both at school and the rectory, for the kindness they extended to me on Thursday which was Principal Appreciation Day. It was extremely thoughtful and unexpected! I have been at St. James for five months and what a 5 months it has been! I truly believe that the Lord sends you where he wants you. It doesn't always look like you think it is going to - but that is life. It is messy, it is confusing at moments but underneath it all I know we all have a profound faith that God is guiding us and we are his instruments. I don't question the workings of the Lord. I only ask that we smile each day and are grateful for one another. So it is in that spirit I wish each of you a blessed and relaxing Thanksgiving. There are challenges that lie ahead for each of us but with faith, courage and each other we will persevere and grow. Thank you for welcoming me as you have and together let us shine the light of Jesus, Mary and Joseph brightly at the Academy of St. James of the Marches.

Peace and blessings,

Lelia