



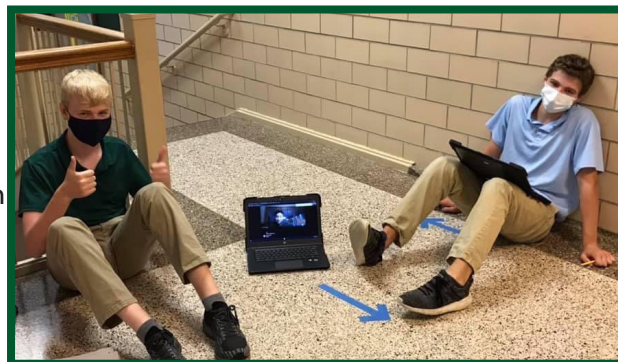
A Shamrock Legacy

Fall 2020 | A Development Newsletter for
Portland St. Patrick Catholic School

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL EXCITED ABOUT RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION

As I write this column, St. Patrick School is back in session for the second day of in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. It has been a long road back with our school administrators and teaching staff working in conjunction with the Diocese of Grand Rapids and the Ionia County Health Department to create a plan for our students' safe return.

Our students' safe return was made possible by so many people and businesses who reached out and were generous with their time, talent, and treasure. Here are a few examples:



Freshman Shawn Frawley and Riley Mosser use their Chromebooks to complete an english assignment with their virtual learning partner.

THK provided clear plexiglass shields for our administrative assistant's desks and our elementary classrooms to keep students safe while they are in reading groups. A generous donor adopted a school family so they could continue their education at St. Patrick School. Another generous donor provided five Chromebook computers for elementary students who opted to do remote learning when the school reopened. Many generous donors responded to our last newsletter's request for scholarship money. We have received more than \$26,000 in donations ranging anywhere from \$5 to \$10,000. Every donation counts as these donations allowed us to provide the necessary scholarship money for all who requested it. We are still accepting donations for our scholarship fund as we hope to keep some in reserve. We have allocated almost 95% of our dedicated scholarship funds for the 2020-2021 school year. We anticipate there will continue to be a need throughout the school year.

Our most sincere thanks to our school's teaching staff, administrative assistants, maintenance and custodial staff, Fr. Mike, our parish staff, and the generous individuals and businesses who helped our students return to school safely in-person and remotely.

As we have grown accustomed to here at St. Patrick Parish and School, there are always those who step up in a time of need. Thank you for making a difference in our students' lives to those who've been incredibly generous throughout the Coronavirus Pandemic.

We recently launched our planned giving website. If you haven't seen it yet, you can check it out at <https://spsfoundation.mylegacygift.org/>. There are many ways to give a gift that keeps on giving and will impact students for years to come. Some examples include naming St. Patrick School as a beneficiary on your savings, checking, retirement accounts, mutual fund, CD, will, or estate.

If you're interested in making a major contribution to the St. Patrick School general budget, for capital improvements, to an endowed scholarship fund, or the Father Flohe Foundation, please contact Mr. Randy Hodge at randyhodge@portlandstpat.org or Mrs. Courtney Smith at cortneysmith@portlandstpat.org. You may also contact them by calling the school at (517) 647-7551.

On behalf of our pastor, the Reverend Michael J Alber, PS-8 Principal, Mrs. Courtney Smith, and myself, thank you for giving a gift that makes a huge difference in our students' lives now and well into the future.

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A SHAMROCK LEGACY SPONSOR WANTED

We plan to continue to produce three editions of *A Shamrock Legacy* each school year. We are looking for a business or several businesses to sponsor our production. The cost of supporting one edition, which includes mailing, is \$2,400. Please consider sponsoring an edition of *A Shamrock Legacy* or splitting each production cost with up to three other businesses. If you are interested in being a sponsor, please contact Mr. Randy Hodge by phone at (517) 647-7551 or by email at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org.

ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL SPONSORING THREE AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES

The St. Patrick High School Chapter of the National Honor Society will be sponsoring three American Red Cross Blood Drives during the 2020-2021 school year. The blood drives will take place on November 24th, January 19th, and March 23rd in the St. Patrick Parish Hall. Blood drives begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. Please contact any St. Patrick School National Honor Society member to sign-up or email randyhodge@portlandstpats.org.



Congratulations to the St. Patrick School Class of 2020.
They gathered on the gym steps for a photo following their outdoor graduation ceremony.

STAYING UP TO DATE

Stay up to date with current events taking place at St. Patrick School and Parish, by following us online:

School/Parish websites: Portlandstpats.com

School Facebook: [St. Patrick School – Portland, Michigan](#)

Parish Facebook: [St. Patrick Parish, Portland MI](#)

Alumni Facebook: [St. Patrick Alumni and Friends](#)

AN AFFORDABLE WAY TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT

If there's one thing we can count on in life, it's change. Life's constant changes can make it challenging to balance caring for your family and supporting the organizations you care about. Fortunately, there's a solution. Instead of giving a fixed amount to our organization, consider gifting a percentage of your estate, retirement account, life insurance policy, or donor-advised fund.

Percentage Giving and Your Will:

If you want to remember us in your will, there are two ways you can support our mission with a percentage gift:

1. Gift us a percentage of your estate in your will or living trust.
2. Leave our organization a percentage of your residual estate (the portion that remains after all estate claims are settled).

Gift us a Percentage of Other Assets:

You can also remember us in your future plans by naming us as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets, life insurance, or donor-advised fund. Naming us as a beneficiary is as easy as filling out and returning a piece of paper.

1. Request a copy of your provider's change-of-beneficiary form (or download a copy from their website).
2. Fill out the form, naming us, along with the percentage you'd like us to receive, on the form.
3. Sign and return the form to your plan administrator, insurance company, or sponsoring organization. Be sure to keep a copy for your records as well.
4. Notify us of your gift, so we can thank you for your support and for being a part of our school legacy.

Every Gift Matters:

From 1 to 100 percent, gifts of all sizes make a difference for our students, faculty and staff, and school parents. Please contact us by phone or via email if you have any questions about naming us a beneficiary in your plans.

ITEMS THAT NEED ATTENTION

We are often asked at St. Patrick School and Parish to provide a list of needs for donors to contribute towards either in part or in full. Below you'll find a list of St. Patrick School's current needs. This list is in order from highest to lowest priority. There are several important projects under review currently, including:

Upgrading the current phone system to a digital phone system (approximate cost \$10,000). We have approximately \$4,000 in committed donations for this project.

Replacing any older lighting that remains in the school building (estimated cost \$15,000). Replacing these lights will pay for itself over time through energy savings.

Remodeling the restrooms in the original part of the school building and installing two staff restrooms (estimated cost \$600,000). We have approximately \$75,000 in committed donations.

Replace the teaching staff members' laptop computers for the 2021-2022 school year. We will be working on getting quotes for these devices for the next Shamrock Legacy newsletter.

Also, please consider a gift to our new Shamrock Scholarship Endowment Fund or to the Father Flohe Foundation Fund.

Please note that we have received enough donations to replace our copy machines in the school. Thank you very much to everyone who contributed!

A few members of the senior class enjoy lunch outside while getting some sunshine and fresh air.



The St. Patrick School Library has undergone a big transformation. Based on much research, the library's physical space and collection have been reorganized. Thanks to volunteers, we have been reconfiguring the shelving and the collection of materials to create a space that suits all students at St. Pat's. With the new organization, there is a place for students in every grade.

Improvements to the library include the following:

- Shelving Reconfiguration
- Reorganized Age-Level Sections
- Collection Maintenance
- Seating Improvements and Regrouping
- Centrally Located Librarian Area
- Genrefication of Materials

Shelving Reconfiguration

The beautiful wood shelving that is original to the library's current location has been reorganized to provide a more open space with lower shelving for younger students. The tall shelves now line the walls with some shelves jutting out, forming study alcoves. Short shelving is peppered throughout the library for younger students who can now maneuver around each small section easily. Not only does the new configuration allow younger students mobility and easier access to age-appropriate books, but there is more light and a view of the church from almost everywhere in the library. This format also allows for the flexibility to move shelving more easily when needed.

Reorganized Age-Level Sections

The grade levels have been grouped into sections. As students walk into the library, they are on Easy Street, where the picture books are on low shelves down the middle of the library ending at Curtis' Corner, a space full of books dedicated in memory of Curtis Schmitt by his family. Next to Curtis' Corner is Early Bird Nest, which contains early reader chapter books for first-time readers. As students move up, they land in Junior Junction, an alcove for third through fifth grades in the northeast corner. There is an alcove for middle school students (Tween Turf) along the north wall, and two sections for high school/adults (Adult Fiction Alcove and Adult Nonfiction Nook).

Collection Maintenance

Over the last year, the library collection has been reviewed, including removing irrelevant, outdated, and inappropriate materials for our school library. Through library supporters' generous donations, we are continually updating and adding new and relevant materials to our collection. The library is a living organism, and its maintenance is a continuous activity. Financial donations are currently needed to purchase Catholic books, a current encyclopedia, and other reference materials.

Seating Improvements and Regrouping

With new sections dedicated to each age group, we now have various new seating options throughout the library, including individual tables in quiet areas.



Principal Cortney Smith donated floor cushions, soft stools, and a small rocker for students to use throughout the library. The regroupings and new alcoves allow for study areas, especially for an after school study time for secondary students. When elementary classes are searching for books on Easy Street or in Junior Junction, middle and high school students will have some privacy in Tween Turf, Adult Nonfiction Nook, or Adult Fiction Alcove.

Centrally Located Librarian Area

The librarian's desk and work area have been moved to be more centrally located along the south wall to see students in every part of the library while working at the desk. This new location also allows for a reference alcove and better traffic flow near the library entrance.

Genrefication of Materials

Within each age-level section of the library, the fiction books have been separated into genres. For example, Easy Street has eight genres: Go and Grow, See and Do, You and Me, Imagine, Animals, Adventure, Celebrate, and Around the World. Now students who know that they like books about farming can easily find more farming books. This method of organization has proven to allow students to be more independent in their book search. Each book has been identified by a color-coded sticker to identify its genre. The stickers are transparent and fit over the existing call number. This method gives us the flexibility to adjust the genres as needed while still giving patrons the option to search in the catalog by author's name. The catalog record identifies the location of each book (e.g., Easy Street Animals). We are currently working on signage for each area and genre.

With the support of many volunteers and donors, we have created a library that will appeal to all age levels. We appreciate all the financial donations throughout the years and future contributions for books, technology, and curriculum materials.

A SHAMROCK LEGACY Q & A

Q. What is the difference between The *Shamrock* newsletter and The *Shamrock Legacy* newsletter?

A. The *Shamrock* newsletter was created to keep our more than 2,000 living alumni located around the world up-to-date on current St. Patrick School happenings. It gives us a platform to share news of births, marriages, ordinations, deaths, and alumni's major life events. The newsletter also helps keep our benefactors informed of major school events.

The *Shamrock Legacy* newsletter was created to ensure all current students and their families, alumni, and donors are up-to-date with all happenings at St. Patrick School. This newsletter highlights any school needs and ensures that our school remains viable and affordable.

To achieve our goal of being the best possible educational facility in our area, we need the support of our alumni, friends, and family in addition to those currently attending our school or in our parish community. Thank you for your continued support, and please continue to pray for us, share your expertise, and contribute financially if you're able.

Q. What is the difference between the Father Flohe Foundation Fund and the Shamrock Scholarship Fund?

A. The Father Flohe Foundation Fund was established in the 1980s to ensure the viability of St. Patrick School. It was created to ensure that any money used by the school would benefit all students. The money typically goes to the school's general fund or toward general improvements.

The Shamrock Scholarship Fund was established to help any family in need to cover the cost of tuition to attend St. Patrick School. Families must apply for this assistance through our SmartAid Student Management System. These funds are disbursed based on the need of each family from a report generated from SmartAid. Our goal is that no child will ever be denied the opportunity to attend St. Patrick School because they cannot afford to do so. Currently, 15% of our school families receive some financial assistance, and the need has increased each year since the fund started in 2008.

Please note that the Shamrock Scholarship Fund was not set up to take away from the Father Flohe Foundation Fund in any way. We encourage donors to still give to this fund, if they so choose, as it has a different purpose. The Shamrock Scholarship Fund was established to work in conjunction with the foundation and not in opposition to it.

Q. What are some of the accomplishments of the St. Patrick School Advancement and Development team?

A. Our advancement and development team has accomplished a lot in our first year, including the following:

- Established a Planned Giving website with the support of the Stelter Company
- Created a donor database with the help of DonorPerfect
- Sent out three *Shamrock Legacy* newsletters

Q. What are the upcoming plans for the Advancement and Development team?

A. The team will continue to evolve, thrive, and grow. Our upcoming plans include, but are not limited to:

- Continue to send out three *Shamrock Legacy* newsletters each year with a holiday appeal in our midyear edition
- Begin scheduling meetings with benefactors to talk about planned giving options
- Add new members to our Advancement and Development Committee
- Set up an Enrollment Management Committee to recruit students to St. Patrick School
- Establish an endowment fund for scholarships to ensure any family can afford to send their child(ren) to St. Patrick School

LEARN MORE ABOUT ST. PATRICK SCHOOL

Would you like to learn more about St. Patrick School and all that we offer? Let's meet to talk about your specific hopes and dreams for your child's education.

Call 517-647-7551 or contact Mrs. Cortney Smith at cortneysmith@portlandstpats.org or Mr. Randy Hodge at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org to set up a tour!

All are welcome!



Preschool student, Allena Smith, enjoys her snack during a break.