



A Shamrock Legacy

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

A NOTE FROM THE ST. PATRICK SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Despite these uncertain, unusual, and unique times, we are excited to send our third edition of *A Shamrock Legacy*. We are excited to share how your donations helped us prepare to convert to distance learning when in-person classes were cancelled per the Governor's executive order.

On Friday, March 13, we stopped all in-person classes and closed the school building. Students were able to come into the school that day to collect their supplies, including their Chromebooks. By Monday, March 16, we were fully operating with distance learning, both teachers and students using Google Classroom.

Due to our generous donors, we have a 1:1 Chromebook program in grades 6-12, which allowed us to adapt and transition to distance learning efficiently and effectively. Despite the challenges we faced, our students only missed one day of instruction. We did not panic; we were prepared!

As we prepare for the 2020-2021 school year, we are again asking for your support. Since 2007, we have sent a yearly mailing requesting donations for our Shamrock Scholarship program. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 crisis, we were unable to send out this year's appeal. For that reason, we have included our annual appeal within this newsletter. Please see page 7 for more information. We have many students who will be in great financial need this year due to their parents being laid off or losing their job altogether during this pandemic.

Thank you to everyone who donated after receiving our two previous *Shamrock Legacy* newsletters. To date, we have received more than \$12,500 in donations. Due to these generous donations, we have been able to provide tuition assistance to families in need, we have replaced two outdated Automated External Defibrillators (AED), and we have added funds to the Father Flohe Foundation. Your kindness, thoughtfulness, and generosity are genuinely valued and appreciated.

Finally, we are excited to announce that we will be launching a new planned giving page on our website. Please see the column on page 2 for additional information. On behalf of our Pastor, the Reverend Michael Alber, Elementary Principal, Cortney Smith, our teaching and support staff, and myself, thank you for your continued support of our parish, school, students, and their families.

You have all been in our thoughts and prayers during these uncertain times. We hope that all is well and that you have been able to stay safe. Thank you, and we look forward to the day when we can again gather in person. May God bless you and your family!

Randy Hodge
High School Principal



Fifth grade student, Jorja McCall, received her First Holy Communion, was baptized and confirmed at an all-school Mass in March.

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ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL RECEIVES RECOGNITION FROM THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

St. Patrick High School has been recognized as the only high school in the mid-Michigan area that honored its commitment to host a blood drive after the Governor's executive order closed schools across the state during the COVID-19 pandemic. After being notified by the American Red Cross that they were able to conduct the blood drive with minimal risks to volunteers and donors, we decided to push forward. To allow for social distancing, we relocated the drive from our Parish Hall to the Knights Hall. We're excited to share it was our most successful blood drive to date, collecting 75 pints of blood! It was a great honor for our students and staff to serve our community and save lives during this difficult and challenging time.

ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL RECEIVES FAFSA RECOGNITION FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

The College Access Network and Governor Gretchen Whitmer have recognized thirteen Michigan high schools that produced outstanding Free Application rates for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the deadline of March 1. The College Cash Campaign, a FAFSA completion initiative, ran from November 1, through March 1. With a 100% completion rate, St. Patrick High School was recognized for having the highest rate of completion in its region.

PLANNED GIVING WEBSITE UP AND RUNNING SOON

St. Patrick School has partnered with The Stelter Company on creating a planned giving website. The website is being developed at this time and should be ready to go very soon. To check out the new site, visit:

<https://portlandstpats.com/school/>

Once on our website, click on the 'other links' tab and select 'advancement and development' from the drop-down menu.

ITEMS THAT NEED ATTENTION

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

- Donations for the Shamrock Scholarship Fund as mentioned elsewhere in this edition of *A Shamrock Legacy*.
- Replacing two aging copy machines in the school that no longer have replacement parts available (approximate cost \$9,000). It is becoming crucial that we replace these machines this summer.
- 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.
- Upgrading the current phone system to a digital phone system (approximate cost \$10,000).
- Remodeling the restrooms in the original part of the school building and installing two staff restrooms (estimated cost \$600,000).

Thanks to our generous donors, we were able to purchase the two Automated External Defibrillators and check these essential items off our list.



ST. PATRICK SCHOOL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS



Each year, we have families that need our support to provide their child with a Catholic education. Now, more than ever, due to layoffs and job losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we anticipate an increased number of families will need our support to cover tuition. There is a variety of ways to support St. Patrick School families, including setting up an Endowed Scholarship, which will benefit our students for years to come.

When an Endowed Scholarship is set up through St. Patrick School, the donated money is invested. The school uses 4% of the accumulated interest to fund the scholarships without ever withdrawing from the principal. An Endowed Scholarship is a permanent gift to the school and generations of students to come. The Endowment can be established at \$25,000 or more payable over five years.

Please consider establishing an Endowed Scholarship to assist St. Patrick School families in offsetting the annual cost of tuition.

1. You will be supporting local families in providing their children with a valuable Catholic education at St. Patrick School, which will set them up for success for years to come.
2. You can customize your Endowed Scholarship. Name it for yourself, your family, a cherished loved one, or a person you want to honor.
3. You can direct the funds to benefit students pursuing a specific educational program of your choice, including science, math, english, art, history, etc. Together, with our school administration team, you will create the criteria you would like the students to meet when applying for your scholarship.
4. You can make easy monthly payments through our online giving site.
5. You can fund an Endowed Scholarship with the gift of cash, real estate, life insurance, IRAs, or charitable gift annuities.
6. You will be leaving a legacy at St. Patrick School. Your Endowed Scholarship will benefit students for years to come and will live on forever as a representation of you and your family.

If you are interested in establishing an Endowed Scholarship, please call Mr. Randy Hodge, Principal, at 517-647-7551 to set up an appointment. Thank you for your continued financial support of St. Patrick School!

Teachers at St. Patrick School have completed professional development and implemented additional curriculum pedagogy in literacy, math, religion, S.T.E.A.M., writing, and conflict resolution for the 2019 - 2020 school year. We are also focusing on improving pedagogy and discipline in all subject areas.

Grades K -2

Michael Haggerty Phonemic Awareness

Students in grades K through 2, practice phonemic awareness skills daily with explicit, whole group instruction. This curriculum is developed on a systematic scope and sequence of skills, each level focusing on eight phonemic awareness skills, along with two additional activities to build Letter and Sound Recognition and Language Awareness. Phonemic awareness skills are essential building blocks to success in reading and writing.

Phonics for Reading

Uses a systematic sequence of explicit phonics instruction, providing a consistent routine that allows students to apply each concept in increasingly challenging situations to build accuracy, automaticity, and fluency in reading.

The Phonics for Reading series is intended to be an intervention program that provides explicit instruction in phonics as well as phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension.

Participants developed an understanding of how the science of teaching reading is embedded in this program. Understanding how to interpret data for program replacement and practicing delivering the lesson components are also key components of this training day.

Grades 3-12

Math

For math, inquiry strategies are utilized to encourage students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The following questions were explored as we applied the lens of inquiry-based education in the math classroom:

- How do students acquire the skills necessary to problem-solve with open-ended questions?
- How do students use creative thinking in math class?
- How can we help students to think critically?

Teachers practiced with hands-on materials, discussed methods of teaching math, and tried new approaches. They also learned how the process of inquiry can enhance critical thinking in the math classroom, collaborated with colleagues from various schools, and learned best practices from one another.

Schoolwide Professional Development

Buddy's P.A.L.S.

Buddy's Pet Assisted Learning Services (P.A.L.S.) is a non-profit organization that assigns human and dog teams to schools. Buddy's P.A.L.S. school visits serve many purposes, including crisis response, academic anxiety, reading fluency, arithmetic, staff morale, and more.

Classroom Learning Labs

Classroom Learning Labs have professional development within all subject areas, especially in teacher development and delivery of the curriculum. Teachers also learn by visiting schools throughout the diocese and through observing the best practices of college instructors.

"Open Wide Our Hearts"- Teacher Professional Development

To serve a diverse student body representative of the universal church, our educators have examined the U.S. Bishops' recent pastoral letter against racism and methods for culturally responsive teaching.

Restorative Practice

Involves integrating two practices that are directly applicable to school environments. Deepening Mindfulness Practice - an opportunity to either begin or increase mindful awareness, stress reduction, mindful communication, resilience, and compassionate dialogue. Deepening Restorative Principles with a chance to practice the growth-producing lessons of building a community and resolving problems.

Theology of the Body - Students and Teacher Formation

- The Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II's teaching on God's vision for the human person, will be incorporated into the curriculum next year. In preparation, teachers will study this work.
- A structure for collective engagement in learning through teaching collaborative enactment of practice is central to the design.
- Each school day is structured to allow for groups of educators to grow their crafts in collaboration with one another.
- The following efficiencies will be put into practice immediately in order to explore new ideas and put them into practice:
 - Developing educator learning goals alongside student learning goals.
 - Developing a culture of collaboration among participant teams.
 - Increasing the capacity for educators to integrate new learning into their classrooms.

To learn more about our curriculum standards, please visit: <https://catholicschools4u.org/curriculumstandards>

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020



***SURROUNDED BY HER TEAMMATES,
AND COACH, HEIDI WENZEL, SAMEE
TEACHWORTH SIGNED HER LETTER
OF INTENT TO PLAY VOLLEYBALL AT
AQUINAS COLLEGE.***

***EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE CLASS
OF 2020 HAD FUN AT THE
BOYNE MOUNTAIN RESORT
ON THEIR SENIOR TRIP.***



LEARN MORE ABOUT ST. PATRICK SCHOOL

Would you like to know 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 cortneysmith@portlandstpats.org or Mr. Randy Hodge at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org to set up a tour! All are welcome!

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL BEGINS CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

When enrollment for the 2020-21 school year was rolled out this February, the St. Patrick School Development team started a new program called Continuous Enrollment. Essentially, we are going to continuously enroll all students in grades 1-12 until they graduate from St. Patrick High School. We are excited for the new Continuous Enrollment program because it reduces paperwork and simplifies the annual registration process for our returning families.

SPONSORS WANTED FOR A SHAMROCK LEGACY NEWSLETTERS

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 sponsoring one edition which includes mailing is \$2,400. Please consider sponsoring an edition of *A Shamrock Legacy* or splitting the cost of each production with one or two 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.



**We Pray!
We Learn!
We Achieve!**

ENROLLING FOR FALL 2020 NOW!

- **Preschool - 12th grade under one roof**
- **Big Rock, Little Rock mentoring program**
- **Quality, faith-based education**
- **All are welcome!**
- **Classes begin August 19, 2020**

QUESTIONS?

Contact Cortney Smith (cortneysmith@portlandstpats.org) or Randy Hodge (randyhodge@portlandstpats.org) or call the school office at (517) 647-7551.



@portlandstpatrick
www.portlandstpats.com



STAYING UP TO DATE

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

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 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 |

SHAMROCK SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



St. Patrick School fourth grade students gather for a photo before their annual performance at the Diocese of Grand Rapids' Songfest, held at West Catholic High School.

The Shamrock Scholarship Program, originally named the Alumni Scholarship Fund, was started in 2008 with the belief that a Catholic education should be available and affordable to any family that desires it. The goal remains that every family that wants to send their child to St. Patrick School will be able to do so, regardless of their financial circumstances.

We are committed to partnering with parents to provide their child(ren) with a quality education in a strong, Catholic environment. In support of that belief, we are writing to ask for your support of our Shamrock Scholarship Fund.

During the 2019-2020 school year, over \$150,000 of scholarship money was requested by families who hoped to keep their child enrolled at St. Patrick School. Thanks to the generosity of our alumni, parish members, friends, and family, we were able to meet approximately \$60,000 of these requests. While we are grateful we were able to support some families through scholarships; we unfortunately still had to turn families away that needed our help. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the downturn in our economy, we anticipate the need will be even higher.

Since 2008, donations to the Shamrock Scholarship Fund have allowed an average of 28 students per year to attend St. Patrick School, who would otherwise not have been able to afford it.

Please help us reach our goal of ensuring every child has the chance to experience a Catholic education! This year, we aim to meet 100% of the need, but we need your help. Please consider supporting St. Patrick School students and families by donating to the Shamrock Scholarship Fund.

Our students are the future leaders of the Catholic church and our communities. Help give them an education that will provide a foundation of excellence. Your gift of \$1000, \$500, \$100, or \$50 impacts the lives of St. Patrick students every day! Donations from you – our alumni – are the foundation of our school's continued success. Your gift to the Shamrock Scholarship Fund provides much-needed scholarships to ensure that all students have access to a Catholic education.

Every dollar received from donations will be used to aid those in need. We ask that you donate by June 30, 2020, so that we can help as many students as possible for the upcoming school year. All your donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Due to your thoughtfulness, kindness, and generosity, many students will be able to receive the education they deserve next year. Thank you for your prayers and financial support. Please use the envelope within this newsletter to mail in your donation for the Shamrock Scholarship Fund.