



THE SHAMROCK

A Shamrock Legacy Publication

ST. PATRICK SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2023



Thank You for Your Support

On Wednesday, December 20, St. Patrick School will be halfway through the 2023-24 school year. The first half of the school year has been filled with achievements and accomplishments. Here are some of the highlights to date:

- St. Patrick High School, with an increase of almost 20%, won a diocesan award for having one of the largest increases in enrollment.
- The elementary school also won a diocesan enrollment award for success in retaining current families and increasing enrollment of new students over the past five school years.
- The Infant/Toddler Daycare Room opened for service this fall and is full, with eight children utilizing this program.
- The BenQ Boards, which were installed in August, are being utilized in all classrooms.
- The church roof, which was damaged from a storm, was replaced utilizing the insurance policy.
- The football team won their league and advanced to the regional finals before losing a hard-fought contest and finishing 9-2.
- Two cross-country runners, Laynie Meredith and Isaac FoxElster, advanced to the state finals.

- We hosted the new MEGA Bowl Flag Football tournament, and the revamped Detroit Lions Fall Festival tailgate.
- We had 1,624 socks donated for our Socktober Fundraiser. We worked with the Michigan State Police to donate these to the Homeless Angels in Lansing.
- The St. Patrick High School students attended the Michigan March for Life at the state capital (pictured above).
- The MEGA Rock Raffle has brought in \$44,132.50 more in revenue than last year to date. These funds will be split between the parish, school, and Athletic Association.

All these accomplishments would not have been possible without your continued support. Thank you for all the generosity you have shown St. Patrick School with your prayers and financial contributions. If you have any questions about all that is taking place at St. Patrick School or would like to schedule a tour of our facility, please contact Mr. Randy Hodge by phone at (517) 647-7551 or by email at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org.

School News!

Mr. Hodge Wins Faith Based Administrator Award

Congratulations to St. Patrick High School principal, Mr. Randy Hodge, who was awarded the Sr. Dorita Wotiska Faith-filled Administrator Award at the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools (MANS) Principals conference on October 11. This award recognizes an administrator who demonstrates the very best in faith-based education and is recognized as a servant leader in their building and the broader education field.

Mrs. Cortney Smith had this to say in her nomination speech: "Our Catholic faith guides Mr. Hodge's decision-making, and the way he approaches solutions is hyper-focused on how we can lead each other closer to Christ. To drive innovation and improve St. Patrick School, through his witness, he has inspired the creation of a Campus Ministry Team to assist our Campus Minister in providing encounters with Christ to our students within the school. This is a group of high school students who are on fire for their faith and are, in turn, witnessing to others just as Mr. Hodge has done for them."



Little Shamrocks Day Care Now Open

St. Patrick School is excited to announce the expansion of the Little Shamrocks Day Care! This program is open year-round for children ages six weeks to three years old. The program is located within St. Patrick School and is open weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

We are excited to make Catholic education more accessible for our families. There is undoubtedly great demand nationwide for daycare, especially infants.

The infant/toddler daycare is already full, with eight children enrolled. We will have spots open on a rolling basis as children grow and move into our preschool program. The first spots were offered to families who responded to the daycare survey this past spring and committed to a full-time schedule, which offered us more efficiency and stability in staffing and scheduling.

With the expansion of our programming, we now offer daycare for children ages six weeks to school age! Preschool students can stay all day if they are enrolled in our 3 and 4-year-old daycare. We also offer before and after-school childcare for students enrolled in grades K - 5.

If you are interested in joining the Little Shamrocks waitlist, please contact our director, Mr. Aaron Thelen, by calling the school at 647-7551 or email at aaronthelen@portlandstpats.org.

We thank everyone for their continued support as we aim to extend our mission and outreach to our community.

First Blood Drive of the School Year A Success

The National Honor Society hosted its first Red Cross Blood Drive of the school year on September 26. The blood drive successfully brought in 19 units of desperately needed blood. Thank you to our awesome NHS members for running a smooth drive and all our donors who rolled up their sleeves to give!

Our second blood drive occurred on November 21. Our remaining blood drives for the current school year are scheduled for January 23, March 19, and May 21. Please sign up to donate blood at redcrossblood.org.



Class of 1973 Enjoys 50 Year Reunion

By: Mr. Randy Hodge, H.S. Principal and Development Director

Each September since 2003, the Father Flohe Foundation has hosted a wonderful celebration for the St. Pat's graduating classes celebrating their 50th class reunion. The Class of 1953 was the first class to graduate from St. Pat's High School and the first to be honored at this party.

This year, the class of 1973 celebrated their 50th class reunion on Saturday, September 9. Classmates met at the school at 2:30, and then I had the opportunity to show them around and talk about what has changed since they graduated and what has stayed the same. Many of the grads had not been in the school since they graduated and were surprised by how much changed. These tours have become a highlight for me because as the guests tell their stories, they enlighten me about the school's history.

Following the school tour, the classmates attended the 4:30 Mass together. Following Mass, our alums trekked out to the Wagon Wheel, where they enjoyed a delicious prime rib and chicken dinner. The classmates had the opportunity to sit, socialize, catch-up, and discuss their favorite memories of the good old days.

I always enjoy this annual event. It's a reminder that everyone entering our school has a story and personal history to tell. Hearing these stories and learning about these former students is an excellent reminder of what makes St. Patrick School such a special place.

Congratulations to the Class of 1973 on your special night, and thank you for an enjoyable evening. May God continue to bless you.

The Father Flohe Foundation was founded in 1988. Its primary function is to keep Catholic education available to the people of St. Patrick Parish and surrounding

communities by funding some school expenses. The organization funds The Shamrock alum newsletter and manages the endowment fund, which helps financially assist the school.

Pictured above are the members of the class who attended the reunion.

Back row (from left to right): Nancy Nyenthuis, Donna King, Charlene Fedewa, Linda Goodwin, Alice Stanke, Patty Kissane, Peg Fox, Jon Brown, Dan Lenneman, Russ Willemin, Tom Russman, Joe Lawless, Tony Fedewa, Mike Cook, and Keith Cook.

Front Row (from left to right): Jim Tallmadge, Julie Denny, Ann Fedewa, Sue Heiden, Deb McClurg, Lillian Castronova, Gladys Fisher, Judy Gensterblum Benner, Denise Schrauben, and Larry Schafer.

Shamrocks for Life



Student SPOT LIGHT

Timothy James Chamberlain



Our student spotlight is on sophomore Timothy James Chamberlain (TJ). TJ is the son of Jason and Jennifer Chamberlain. He has three siblings: Reese (8th), Bree (6th), and Ethan (4th). TJ's namesake comes from his uncle, Timothy Michael Chamberlain, who attended St. Patrick from 1992 to 2003. He passed away in 2003 after colliding with

a semi on his way home from Lake Odessa. Even though they never met, TJ is comforted to hear all the beautiful stories about his uncle and is proud to be named after such an inspirational person.

TJ keeps busy with a variety of extracurricular activities, including being a member of the baseball, bowling, cross country, and Quiz Bowl teams. Last fall, he was Honorable Mention All-Conference; this fall, he was 2nd Team All-Conference in Cross Country. He serves as the sophomore class president and is a student council member. He is active in church ministry as an altar server and a member of the high school choir and campus ministry team.

TJ had this to say about his time at St. Patrick School: "I really love all the opportunities St. Pat's has to offer. The blessing of being able to go to Mass and participate in the Eucharist with the rest of the student body is something I look forward to every week. I started attending Praise and Worship on Tuesday nights, which has proved to be a powerful experience that I would HIGHLY recommend attending. I love and appreciate how understanding the faculty and staff are about me leaving early on Fridays to go to adoration from 2-3. The atmosphere and promotion of faith at St. Pat's is incredible! I would not want to be anywhere else!"



Classes of 1987, 1988, 1989, and 1990 Celebrate Their Reunions Together

On Saturday, September 30, the 1987-1990 classes tried something new for their reunion. Instead of a class reunion, they had an all-high school reunion. After a tour of the school and attending 4:30 Mass, the schoolmates gathered at the home of Randy and Michelle Hodge. Approximately a quarter of the high school turned out for the reunion. Food was provided by "Not Just BBQ" catering, and DJ Mr. Brian Fahey provided music and karaoke. Class of 1987 alumni Beth (Supina) Valdes recently returned to Michigan from Wisconsin and provided a special treat with Sprecher Root Beer. It was great for everyone to see and catch up with each other and reminisce about the good old days.

Fall Festival Recap

The St. Patrick Athletic Association Annual Fall Festival had a new look this fall. The Athletic Association decided they wanted to create a new activity instead of a traditional Fall Festival. The Detroit Lions Tailgate was held at the Portland Conservation Club on Sunday, October 8. Tickets included two hot dogs or brats, plenty of desserts, and two drink tickets. Those attending were able to purchase squares to see if they were able to pick the correct numbers to win a cash prize at the end of each quarter. The first MEGA winners from the MEGA Rock Raffle were also announced. All who attended had fun, and the Detroit Lions helped make the event a great success by winning the game.

Development Wish List

We are often asked the question, what does St. Patrick School need currently? Here is an updated list of what the current needs are:

- Our need for tuition scholarships continues to grow each school year. The Tuition Angel Fund and the Former Pastors Scholarship Endowment Fund are crucial to our long-term success in supporting students who are unable to afford the full cost of tuition.
- We would like to continue with our classroom remodel. There are still classroom floors that need carpeting, tiles, and the old chalk boards removed and the concrete floors polished and finished, and new white boards installed.
- We currently budget \$25,000 for "Wherever Funds are Needed the Most" for any unexpected expenses that come up throughout the school year.

If you have any questions about how to donate or support St. Patrick School in any of these endeavors, please feel free to contact Mr. Randy Hodge at (517) 647-7551 or by email at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org.

Why St. Patrick Catholic School?

- Preschool through 12th grade on one campus
- The only Catholic high school in Ionia County
- Leading standardized test scores
- Earn college credits through dual enrollment classes
- STEM curriculum
- Inclusive clubs, activities, and athletic teams for all students
- Safe and supportive environment
- Low staff turnover

Our education is centered around virtue, respect, prayer, and traditional family values. Come and see for yourself.

Take a guided tour, explore academic and extracurricular opportunities, meet school teachers and staff, talk to current school families, review scholarship and tuition options, and learn about a school where a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is fostered.

Schedule a private tour by contacting Cortney Smith cortneysmith@portlandstpats.org or (517) 647-7551.

We Pray! We Learn! We Achieve!



Kindergarden students had a blast making turkey puppets to show what they are thankful for.

How to Stay in Touch!

It's easy to stay up-to-date with what's happening at St. Patrick School and Parish.

School website: www.portlandstpats.com/school
Parish website: www.portlandstpats.com/church
School Facebook: St. Patrick School-Portland-MI
Alumni Facebook: St-Patrick-Alumni-amd-Friends

How to Contact Us

School: 122 West Street, Portland, MI 48875
Church: 140 Church Street, Portland, MI 48875
Phone (517) 647-6505 Fax (517) 647-7807
Text: (517) 575-8000 (Be sure to say who you are.)
E-Mail: shamrockeditors@gmail.com
Alumni site: www.portlandstpats.com/schoolalumni



St. Pats Mega Raffle Winners

St. Patrick Parish, St. Patrick School, and the Athletic Association thank everyone who has supported the MEGA Raffle this school year. The raffle this year has been a great success. So far, we have grossed \$44,132.50 more in sales than last year's raffle.



Currently, there are 266 tickets left for purchase. You can still purchase tickets online at <https://one.bidpal.net/megarockraffle2023/welcome> or by visiting the school or parish offices.

We want to congratulate Rocky Beckhold and Alice Zimmerman (on a shared ticket), who were the September monthly winners, Jim and Doreen Spohn, the October monthly winners, and Mrs. Erin Martin, the November winner. The next monthly drawing will occur on Friday, December 15, and the next MEGA winners will be announced at the Marriage Gala on February 10, 2024.

Congratulations to our first MEGA winners, announced at the Fall Festival:

Douglas Smith	\$5,000
Nick and Brandi Bengel	\$2,500
Keith Cook	\$1,000
Kristen Smith	\$750
Germaine May/Janet Pung	\$500
Jerry and Jan Bozung	\$500
Daniel Schafer	\$250
Sue Vanlente	\$250
Christine Rockey	\$250
Randy Sandborn	\$250



Purchase your ticket today!



START WITH 10 MINUTES A DAY TO DEVELOP KEY READING SKILLS.

CREATE A READING ROUTINE.
TALK ABOUT PICTURES & ASK QUESTIONS.
SHARE A VARIETY OF BOOKS.
READ WITH EXPRESSION/SILLY VOICES.
TOGETHER FIND WORDS HE/SHE KNOWS AS YOU READ.
READ FAVORITE BOOKS AGAIN & AGAIN!



Has Your Life Changed? So Should Your Estate Plan

Have you ever looked at the calendar and marveled at what year it is? Has that much time really gone by? Time continues to go faster as we get older.

With time's passage comes change: Babies are born, loved ones depart, we move to a new town, we start a new job, laws get revised, we discover a new passion or cause; things are constantly changing. When changes happen, your estate plan must reflect them. Here are key categories to consider:

Timing: Did you write your will before 2001? A lot has changed in the world of estate taxes. For example, the amount you can leave to heirs without paying federal estate tax rose from \$675,000 to almost \$13 million in 2023.

Relationship status: A change in your marital or long-term relationship means you may want to alter your will and beneficiary designations.

Children: Perhaps you now have children or grandchildren and want to ensure you have provided for them. Or you created a will when the kids were young, and they are now grown and financially stable. Do you need to redo or update your will? Did you update your beneficiaries? Are your beneficiaries aware that they have been named as such?

Residence: Legal requirements and taxes vary by state. If you've moved to a new state since creating your will, you'll want to see what impact that may have.



Family and friends: Our connections with people sometimes shift over time. You may want to increase or decrease the amount left to specific individuals or add or remove them from your will or beneficiary designations. Is there a particular organization you wish to leave money to now but did not want to when you first completed your estate plan?

Pets: Ensure that your pets are cared for after you're gone. Name a guardian you trust and assign assets to provide for your pet's food and veterinary care.

Charitable causes: If you have formed new or stronger connections with specific nonprofits and want to take your support to the next level, you can set up gifts in your estate plan to ensure your values endure after your lifetime.

If St. Patrick School is part of your plan, we'd love to celebrate! Contact Randy Hodge at randyhodge@portlandstpats.org or (517) 647-7551 today to let us know or to get our help while revising, updating, or establishing your estate plan.

Important Tax Updates 2024

The Internal Revenue Service recently released updated income tax brackets, standard deduction, and retirement contribution limits for the 2024 tax year. While these taxes are not due for some time, it may benefit you to start thinking ahead to the upcoming fiscal year.

Below are a few of the most critical tax bracket and retirement contribution limit changes.

Tax Bracket Inflation Adjustment: Overall, tax brackets have been adjusted upwards by 5.4% for 2024. The primary purpose of this adjustment is to account for inflation, which is based on the Consumer Price Index. The government's goal is to keep income taxes in sync with consumer buying power.

Standard Deduction: The standard deduction has increased to \$29,200 for married couples filing jointly, up \$1,500 from the previous year. For single filers, this number increased by \$750 to \$14,600.

Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs): IRA contribution limits are up \$500 in 2024 to \$7,000. Catch-up contributions for those over age 50 remained at \$1,000, bringing the total limit to \$8,000.

Roth IRAs: The income phase-out range for Roth IRA contributions increased by \$8,000 to \$146,000-\$161,000 for single filers and heads of household. For married couples filing jointly, phase-out will be \$230,000 to \$240,000 (a \$12,000 increase). Married individuals filing separately see their phase-out range remain at \$0-10,000.

Workplace Retirement Accounts: Those with 401(k), 403(b), 457 plans, and similar accounts will see a \$500 increase for 2024, bringing the total maximum contribution to \$23,000. The catch-up contribution for those aged 50 and older remains at \$7,500, bringing their total limit to \$30,500.

Gift Tax: The annual gift tax exclusion is now \$18,000 for 2024, an increase of \$1,000 from the previous year.

In all there were more than 60 changes.





St. Patrick School

2023-2024

Staffing Plan

In the fall edition of The Shamrock Legacy, we introduced our new staff for the school year. This led several readers to inquire about the rest of our staffing plan for the current school year. Here is the St. Patrick School staff for the 2023-24 school year.

Rev. Michael Alber.....	Pastor	6-8 Science/2-5, 8 STEM.....	Mrs. Judy Fleischer
High School Principal.....	Mr. Randy Hodge	6-8 English/PF/LS/K-5 Library.....	Mrs. Erin Martin
PS-8 Principal.....	Mrs. Cortney Smith	6-8 Religion/Math.....	Miss Chloe Cross
School Counselor.....	Mrs. Mary Brown	6-8 Social Studies.....	Mr. Pat Russman
Classroom Aide.....	Mrs. Kaylyn Livingston	9-12 Math/12 Physics.....	Mr. Paul Osbourne
Classroom Aide.....	Mrs. Christina Cote	9-12 Math.....	Mr. Terry Austen
Preschool Lead Teacher.....	Mr. Aaron Thelen	9-12 Social Studies/PF/Capstone.....	Mrs. Kaye Sandborn
Preschool Aide.....	Mrs. Carol Kahn	9-12 Science.....	Mr. Jordan Smith
Preschool Aide.....	Mrs. Kendall Martin	9-12 English/Yearbook.....	Mrs. Christine Rockey
3/4 Yr. Daycare Lead Teacher.....	Mrs. Teresa Knoop	9-12 Theology.....	Mr. Dan Rockey
3/4 Yr. Daycare Aide.....	Mrs. Cortney Macomber	K-12 Art/6-12 Computers.....	Ms. Melissa Schellberg
3/4 Yr. Daycare Aide.....	Ms. Kaitlyn Simmons	K-9 PE.....	Mr. Bob White
Toddler/Infant Daycare.....	Mrs. Wendy Mallek	9 Health.....	Mr. Brett Pettit
Toddler/Infant Room.....	Mrs. Shelly Corbeil	K-5 Music/Choir.....	Mr. James Tavadze
Multi-Age Kindergarten.....	Mrs. Stacy Russman	K-5 Computers.....	Mr. Bob Powers
Multi-Age Kindergarten.....	Mrs. Amy Weems	Administrative Assistant.....	Mrs. LuAnn Kinsman
1st.....	Mrs. Mary Cook	Administrative Assistant.....	Mrs. Janet Pung
1st.....	Mrs. Jena Schafer	5-12 Athletic Director.....	Mr. Pat Russman
2nd.....	Mrs. Casey Lenneman		
3rd.....	Mrs. Karen Scheurer		
4th.....	Mrs. Khristie Cook		
5th.....	Mrs. Margaret Besson		
AM/PM Childcare.....	Mrs. Mary Hengesbach		

Christmas Cards Coming Soon

Please note that St. Patrick School Christmas Cards will be mailed out soon. Junior Olivia Rockey drew this year's card. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dan and Jessica Rockey.

We also would like to inform you that we will no longer be placing remittance envelopes in our Christmas Cards. We are mailing all our benefactors and supporters a card to thank you for your continued support of St. Patrick School, and we want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Our preschool students had fun dressing up for their Noah's Ark Unit.



Some members of our National Honor Society while working on their Adopt a Highway Project.



Our high school students recently went on a retreat. The boys participated in a bike ride with various stops along the way. The girls visited the Dewitt Retreat Center.



The church roof being replaced after storm damage.

#shamrockpride

We Pray! We Learn! We Achieve!



The 5th-grade students show outstanding leadership in the library by taking turns reading stories to the younger grades.



Congratulations to Laynie Meredith and Isaac FoxElster on participating in the cross-county state finals. Laynie finished 89th out of 637 runners, and Isaac finished 162 out of 751 runners. Congratulations to our Cross Country Team on a great season!



Our afternoon preschool class got into the holiday spirit by helping Mr. Aaron and Mrs. Kendall decorate the classroom Christmas tree.



The Freshman physical science class recently tested their engineering skills in the annual egg-drop competition.

Our education is centered around virtue, respect, prayer, and traditional family values.



Our multi-age Kindergarteners had fun dressing up to celebrate Grinch Day!



St. Patrick School students with the 1,624 socks collected during Socktober to be donated. We partnered with the Michigan State Police Training Division on this corporal work of mercy.



The High School Quiz Bowl team recently finished their season with a league tournament hosted by Laingsburg, in which they finished in 4th place.

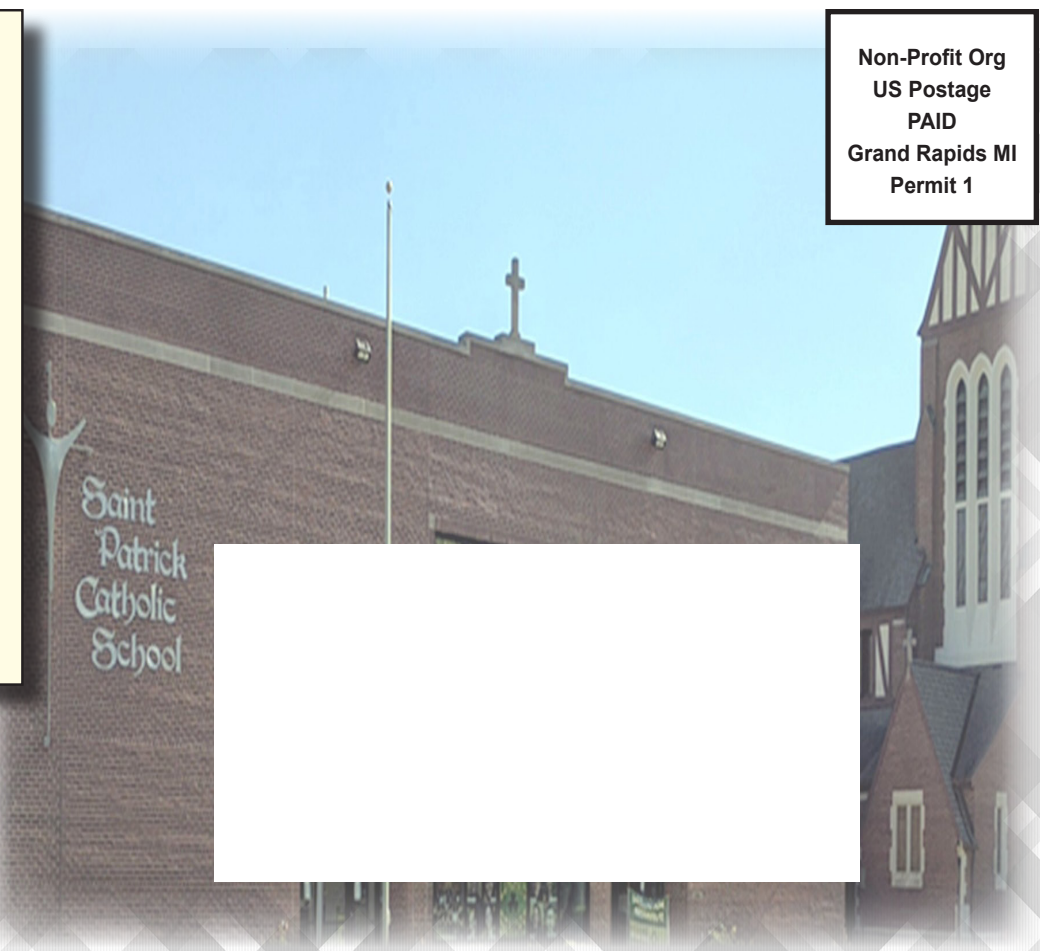


In celebration of Veterans Day, St. Patrick Catholic School honored our Veterans. Thank you to all who attended our Veterans Day observance, which featured our high school and middle school choirs singing the national anthem and treats for our Veterans and their families.

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