



Weekly Words

“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it by the handle of anxiety, or by the handle of faith.” ~ Unknown

Newsletter Number 21

January 27, 2012

Dear Parents,

Last Sunday the Faculty and School Board welcomed eight individuals to St. Mark's to serve as our SAES Visiting Team for reaccreditation. On Wednesday, School Board Chair Michele Hardtner, Dean Jake, and I met with the Visiting Team Leader and the SAES Associate Director of Accreditation Services for the preliminary oral report. The team's report was extremely favorable; they truly could not have been more complimentary of what they observed and learned about our school. I will receive a draft of the written report within a week or so and will have the opportunity to request any clarifications or corrections of factual errors. The revised report will then be forwarded to the Standards Committee of SAES, which will then recommend to the SAES Board that our accreditation be extended for another ten years. SAES accreditation is recognized by the Commission on Accreditation of the National Association of Independent Schools

The final report includes commendations (areas of excellence which exceed the SAES standards), recommendations (which SAES will expect us to follow), and suggestions (which are simply that, suggestions). I am delighted at how positive the commendations were and at how sensible and appropriate the recommendations (of which there are relatively few) are. Here is a summary of the commendations in the report:

- our understanding and use of our Mission Statement in all aspects of our school
- the clear Episcopal character of the school and the excellent Church-School relations
- our excellent communication with parents and especially our use of electronic communications
- our outstanding faculty and administrative team
- the positive and nurturing environment observed at all levels
- the structure and appropriate focus/tasks of the Board of Trustees
- the excellent financial health and exceptional fiscal management of the school
- the exceptional maintenance of the school and the role that the maintenance staff plays in the creation of a welcoming and nurturing environment (rules prevent their naming individuals in the written report, but they wanted us to know how wonderful they think Calvin is!)
- the sense of belonging and ownership that all constituencies of the school feel
- the commitment to embracing necessary change
- the improvements to the facility

The members of the Visiting Team all individually praised our outstanding teachers and the overall atmosphere of the school. They also complimented students of all ages for their evident poise and confidence, as well as their manners and offers to help team members find their way around the school when they were lost!

The accreditation process is exhausting and at times tedious, but it is healthy for us to review all aspects of our operations and programs in such a thorough way and to receive the objective evaluation and input of expert educators from other schools. Thanks to all of you who were involved in any way, including wishing us good luck and smiling at our visitors! And a final public thanks to the Faculty and Staff for all their hard work! Our very hardworking Steering Committee included Jennifer Burrus, Darlene Fair, Olivia Bradley, and Judy Kane and was led by the fantastic Jessica Russo—thanks to each of you!

If you have any questions about the accreditation report or process feel free to contact me. In the meantime, have a great weekend!

Chris Carter

Focus on . . . Christian Faith

“Hope Springs Eternal” by Chaplain Kane

“Let your mercy, O LORD be upon us, just as we hope in you.” Ps 33:22

Just about this time of year I begin to turn toward the hope of spring. I start thinking about the first jonquil pushing up through soil. Around my March birthday I remember my Daddy would go outside where he planted the bulbs and start looking for the first flower. He would always pick it just for me and say, “Hope springs eternal.” That always tickled me and I would giggle and smile. Later in life, I discovered this came from one of my now favorite poems by Alexander Pope (An Essay on Man, Epistle I, 1733). But in my heart they will remain the wisdom of Daddy.

For the Christian, our hope rests in God alone who is our comfort, our strength and our Redeemer. The Bible encourages us to “hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.” Hebrews 10:23 The scriptures also teach us that we are called and commissioned to participate in the ongoing story of hope; to respond in gratitude from the mercy we have received and to be moved from soul to action. Our response is anchored in the words of Jesus who said, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father...for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” Matthew 25:31-46

When I look around me every day I see children, friends, and strangers participating in hope. I marvel at the joy that is possible when someone takes the time to see a person and their needs and respond to them with loving kindness and real solutions. Whether it is the nurse at bedside, the limo driver at the funeral, or simply a child sharing food with a friend who forgot their lunch, those little buds of hope are popping up all around us from a rich soil of faith and love. Hope is coming into being before my very eyes.

Different traditions express the biblical works of mercy with different traditional words. The Anglican expression follows St. Matthews Gospel and frames the corporal works of mercy this way: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, harboring the stranger, visiting the sick, ministering to prisoners, and burying the dead. I appreciate the Methodist sense that concern for people at the margins is closely related to worship. The Methodist tradition names the works of mercy this way: 1) Doing good. 2) Visiting the sick and prisoners. 3) Feeding and clothing people. 4) Earning, saving, and giving all one can. 5) Opposition to slavery. No matter the particular words, we as the human community are exhorted to reach out with kindness, care, and humility.

“Esperanza” is the word in Spanish which means hope. This year during Lent our Service Leadership Club is sponsoring an original idea for community outreach. Each year we have students come forward and ask to do things or collect things for something that has touched their heart. As this has organically evolved, our SLC in collaboration with our Christian Education Department announces our 1st Student Mercy Fair we are calling, “Esperanza.” Our 7th grade Christian Ed class, which studies biblically based Christian ethics and living, will form the basis for some of the Lenten projects directly rooted in the works of mercy. Students in the 4th grade and up will also have an opportunity to participate and submit their ideas for responding to human need. There will be more on this soon. (The buds of hope are stirring in the soil as we speak.)

At the end of the day, we can reflect on the many ways we have responded faithfully as students, parents, and the faithful people of God. St. Paul reaches out to us with words of encouragement saying, “May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.” 2 Thessalonians 2:16

THIS WEEK:

Monday, January 30 – Friday, February 3 –

Morning Greeters: Missie Soignier and Kempton or Beck Schwab

Monday, January 30 –

Lunch Volunteer: Sarah Burford

Tuesday, January 31 – White House Bedtime Stories and Snacks at 6:30 PM

Lunch Volunteer: OPEN

Wednesday, February 1 –

Lunch Volunteer: OPEN

Thursday, February 2 – K9 Bake Sale at all lunch shifts

- Parents' Club meeting at 8:15 AM in the Parish Hall

Lunch Volunteer: OPEN

Friday, February 3 – St. Mark's Middle School Valentine's Dance

Lunch Volunteer: Darcey Pavlick



Lions' Basketball

Monday, January 30

5th grade boys vs. St. Joseph at 6 PM at St. Mark's

6th grade boys vs. Providence at 7 PM at St. Mark's

8th grade boys vs. St. Joseph at 8 PM at St. Mark's

Tuesday, January 31

5th grade boys vs. First Baptist at 6 PM at St. Mark's



SMCS VALENTINE'S DANCE: SMCS Valentine's Dance will be held on Friday, February 3 from 7-9 p.m. Students should wear red, pink or white. Parents who would like to chaperone should email Olivia Bradley at obradley@stmarksschool.com or call 218-2305 to sign up for one or two shifts. Shifts are 6:45-8:00 and 8:00-9:15.

Notes and Notices

LUNCH HELP NEEDED

We really need your help!!! Details can be found on the web site sign up. Any questions call or email, Darcey Pavlick-617-3767, dnpavlick@gmail.com

[.http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/lunch469](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/lunch469)



St. Mark's Cathedral News

Attention 4th and 5th graders:

Join your friends in C.I.A. for roller skating on Sunday, January 29. Meet at the Cathedral at 2:00 p.m. We will travel to Hot Wheels Bossier South where we will have the entire rink to ourselves from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. Plan to be back at the Cathedral by 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$10 per person (bring an additional \$3 if you want to rent inline skates). Parents are encouraged to attend.



Time to clean out those closets! - [The Shreveport-Bossier City Rescue Mission](#) is in need of gently used coats (men's, women's and children's) and purses now that winter has arrived! The Rescue Mission is a ministry that reaches out to feed, clothe, shelter, and provide healing services to homeless men, women, and families with children in our area. Over 1,200 people sought help at this facility in 2010 and they served over 135,000 meals. Whether you or your child has outgrown a coat or you realize you don't need 15 purses; this is a great opportunity to clean out and give someone a step up! Collection containers will be available from **January 17-January 31** in the rear of the Cathedral and near the church office. Questions? Contact **Jennifer Beruvides** at jennifer@stmarkscathedral.net

Notes and Notices

“WALL OF GLORY” PICTURES WANTED



Dear 5th-8th Grade Parents,

Our Wall of Glory banner is in and looks great. Unfortunately some of our students and parents missed the boat on the deadline. I have listened to your request and want to respond in support. And, since we want this to be a “good” and joyous experience for all, I will be working on getting the banner reprinted to include those who would like to participate. As such, please inform your students that we will give them until **Friday, February 3rd** for a LAST CALL for this year’s banner. After that they will have to wait and to be included in 2013 banner.

The pictures should be a regular 4 x 6 and not more than 2 per student. They may picture your child’s participation in any sport even those not offered as a school sponsored team. Please have them deliver the pictures directly to my office and place them on my table. I will be on the lookout.

Chaplain Kane

Thank You!!

Thank you to our wonderful parent volunteers for providing Teacher Treats this month: **Connie Gerald, Teri Pringle, Ashley Turner, Cherise Swander, Leann Baker, Darcey Pavlick, Kelly Crawford, Stefanie Walker, Brandy and Robert Stroud.**

Notes and Notices



**The next Fiesta planning meeting will be
Tuesday, January 31, at 9:30 a.m. at 594 Oneonta.
All are welcome!**

All White House students will be photographed by [Casey Harville](#) on Thursday, February 9, for portraits to be sold at Fiesta. Thanks to Casey and [Photography by Scarlett](#) for contributing their talents to our fundraiser!

Would you be willing to create a Shutterfly album of your child's class play or special event to be auctioned at Fiesta? Contact Ashley Turner at aturner257@yahoo.com.

Important Dates:

February 10 Class basket themes due

March 1 Class baskets due

April 1 Online bidding begins

April 10 Online bidding ends

April 14 Fiesta!

Do you have season tickets you are willing to donate to the auction? Contact Elizabeth Davis at eljmdavis@yahoo.com. All donors will receive receipts for tax deductions.



"We Love Our Teachers!"

Dear Parents,

Teachers are one of the most important adults in our children's lives. We have the BEST Teachers and staff here at St. Mark's!!! We want to show how much we LOVE and appreciate them during Teacher Appreciation Week, which is right around the corner (February 6 – February 10)! The theme for the week is "We LOVE our Teachers!"

The Parents' Club, with the help of parent volunteers, will provide a catered lunch, a light breakfast, and a snack each day that week. They would also LOVE to send each teacher/staff member home with a gift card to use on their own time. (Of course, feel free to do ANYTHING ELSE on your own: notes, flowers, treats, etc.!)

Your Room Mothers will be calling on you for help to substitute in your teacher's classroom during lunch each day. They will also be asking you for monetary donations to help cover the cost of the gift cards. Finally, parent volunteers will be asked to help with the breakfast and various other refreshments for each day.

THANK YOU in advance for helping to show our LOVE and appreciation for our wonderful teachers and staff!

The Parents' Club, Amy Williams, and Stefanie Walker





Turn in Your Box Tops!!

It doesn't matter if you have 5 or 50. Turn in your Box Tops to the office by Friday, February 10th.

We are submitting our Box Tops and currently have 3,000+ and counting. That's \$300+ for the school.

Great Job Everyone!

And if you haven't started collecting the Box Tops, Start NOW!
Every little bit helps.

Parents' Club Meeting
February 2nd @ 8:15
Parish Hall

Teacher Appreciation Week – Feb. 6th – 10th
Amy Williams & Stefanie Walker

Chocolate Sales – Feb 21st – March 6th
Elisabeth Wicker

Fiesta – April 14th
Elizabeth Davis

Please join us!
Our next meeting is March 15th @ 8:15 in the Parish Hall.

Notes and Notices

Camp Fern Winter Party!!!

Visit with Camp Fern counselors, directors and friends.

Set amidst the rolling hills and tall pines, on a private lake in northwest Texas, Camp Fern is a residential summer camp for children ages 6 to 16. Founded on Christian principles with respect for all faiths, Camp Fern strives to enrich the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social lives of all its campers.

When? Sunday, January 29, 2012 from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Where? 7225 Old River Drive

Shreveport, LA 71105

(in The Villages - between 70th & Kings near Bert Kouns)

Contact Person: Ashley Rockett

Phone Number: 318.560.3454

E-mail: ashley@sheertechnology.net

Camper Activities: Camp Games, Crafts projects, prizes, and.....

SMORES!!!!!!!!!! (weather permitting)

Hope to see you there!!!

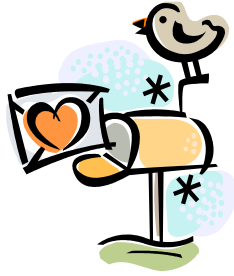
Friends Welcome



Join us to learn
about Camp Fern!

Meet other Ferny
parents.

www.campfern.com
info@campfern.com
903.935.5420



February



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 K9 Bake Sale Parents' Club Meeting at 8:15 in the Parish Hall	3 SMCS Middle School Dance	4
5	6 Luv Pop sales begin Teacher Appreciation Week	7	8	9	10 Last day for Luv Pop sales	11
12	13	14 Valentine's Day Luv Pops delivered	15	16	17 Middle School dance at St. Joseph WINTER BREAK	18
19 8 th graders to ride in the Highland Parade	20 President's Day WINTER BREAK	21 Chocolate Sales Fundraiser begins	22 Ash Wednesday Eucharist Service	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 4 th grade to National Weather Service Regional Station 8-10 AM			

