From the Principal’s Desk

Mrs. Nilma Osiecki

January 25, 2021

God is Great! God is good! And I am grateful for all of you. Together we have overcome many trials, and together we have showered in many of God’s blessings. One of those blessings is the fact that come September of 2021, we will be celebrating St. Bartholomew School’s 100th Anniversary! Wow! Can you imagine how wonderful this is? We will be celebrating one hundred years of existence! One hundred years of excellent Catholic School Education and Faith Formation!

After going through a long and hard process of Renew My Church, receiving the news last month that St. Bartholomew School was going to remain open in the fall of 2021 was truly God’s blessing. Hallelujah! God listened to every single one of our hopes and prayers and now we get a second lease on the life of our beloved school. The faculty, staff, and I are extremely motivated and excited to engage with this second chance received. We all love our school and love what we do, and because of this, we are ready and recommitted to work harder and smarter than ever.

Thinking about the 100th Anniversary and walking into our school our first day back from winter break was a bit emotional for me. I imagined the hundreds and thousands of children and adults that have walked through our hallways. I imagined the hundred of thousands of games played in our gym. I could almost hear the gym shoes squeaking and the cheering and rooting for the Crusaders while playing sports. I imagined the many loving relationships and friendships that were born and nurtured each of those one hundred years; some that are still lasting to this day. To be able to witness current students whose parent and grandparent were students at Barts is a privilege. This is truly a remarkable place. St. Bartholomew is truly special, and I am inspired by the love and devotion our families have for our school. Therefore, the coming months will be filled with information, news, and updates related to our 100th Anniversary. Keep an eye our and begin sharing this wonderful news.

Next week is Catholic Schools Week and again, we celebrate another great thing. This year Catholic Schools Week is celebrated from January 31st through February 5th. This gives us a chance to share with our family, friends, and community what it means to be Catholic and why a Catholic Education is such a blessing. It also gives us an opportunity to promote our programs and engage new families. During Catholic Schools Week we give focus to our community, students, nation, vocations, and our devoted faculty and staff. Daily special events take place in celebration of these groups and soon you will receive detailed information on each of those.

We have much work to do ahead of us to continue the St. Barts legacy of being a welcoming faith-based community that provides high quality Catholic education for another 100 years. I know that together, we will continue to pull our resources and support each other so that our beloved school community continues to grow and thrive. I am so certain of this. Again, God is great! God is Good! And I am grateful for all of you.



Blessings,

Nilma Osiecki

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| **COVID-19 UPDATES / IMPACTS** |

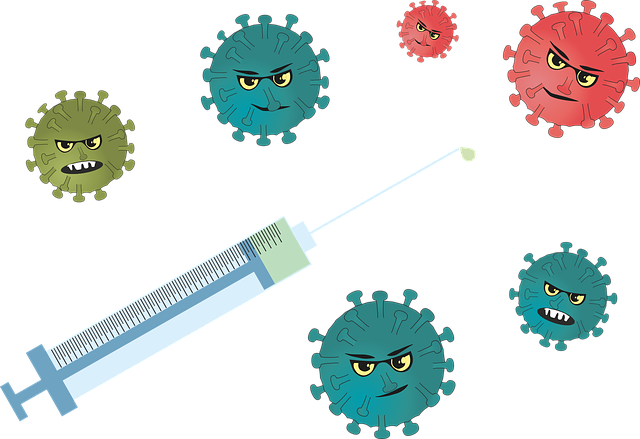


* **Covid-19 Health and Safety Compliance Audit**

I am happy to report that we passed our Covid-19 Health and Safety Compliance Audit with flying colors. A representative of the Archdioceses of Chicago’s Covid-19 Task Force visited us last week where he spent some time going through the safety processes and procedures we have in place. He did a walkthrough looking for the signages in the building, safeguards for sanitation such as use of hand sanitizers in each classroom and hallways, social distancing in classrooms and hallways, bathrooms, and lunch procedures, and the wearing of masks. He also looked for procedures implemented for visitors.

The gentleman shared with me how impressed he was with our school, the student, and the faculty and staff. He said he learned much from our visit and was going to share his strong and positive experience with others in his team. He said he could tell our team was “mindful, thorough, thoughtful, and strategic” when putting the procedures and processes together. He said we went above and beyond. It was nice to hear the great news. We were all pleased with this news as we continue to work hard to put health and safety first. It has paid off! A special CONGRATULATION to all our members of the Health and Safety Team and particularly Mr. Chris Butz for leading this tremendous effort. Congrats!

* **Covid-19 Vaccination Program for School Personnel**



The Office of Catholic Schools has shared the good news about the City of Chicago COVID-19 vaccination program. We have received assurance from the Chicago Department of Public Health that private and public-school personnel will be prioritized equally in the scheduling of vaccinations. It is their expectation that vaccination of all school personnel will begin in mid-February, along with other vulnerable populations.

* **Changes in your attendance status: Virtual or In-person Learning**

Kindly be reminded that students will be transitioned from virtual to in-person or in-person to virtual per your written request at the end of the trimesters. Only under specific circumstances approved by me, the principal, will students be allowed to switch their attendance status prior to this time. All absences are considered out of school. In-person students who are absent can attend virtual learning with principal approval only. Please direct all questions related to attendance, absences, and change to your student’s attendance status to Mrs. LaVerne Johnson.

* **Quarantine Revisions**

You should have received a notice from the Office of Catholic Schools reminding everyone of the revised quarantine guidelines. Here they are in case you missed them.

**QUARANTINE CLARIFICATIONS – Jan. 20, 2021**

* A quarantine of 10 days is required for any/all domestic travel (i.e., travel outside of the state of Illinois)
  + Quarantine is required regardless of whether there is a negative test result, and no matter how much time is spent in another state.
  + Quarantine starts the day after return home.
* International travel quarantine remains 14 days.
* Close exposure quarantines remain 14-days at the recommendation of all departments of public health in those jurisdictions in which the Archdiocese operates and our own medical advisors.

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| **NEWS AND UPDATES** |

* **Tax Credit Scholarships**

In our efforts to continue serving and strengthening our school community we need your help in spreading the word of the great things happening here at St. Bart’s. Also, this is a great time to remind your family, friends, co-workers, company, and community members of **the 2-for-1 Matching Grant.** Remember that every taxpayer donation is **TRIPLED**. For example, if we were to receive a total of $2000 in donations from family, friends, co-workers, businesses, community groups, etc., we would receive a total of $6,000 in scholarships for a Catholic education. With this, we can provide financial support to at least 3 families. The Matching Grant donors have more money to match and are waiting to triple our donations, but we must act fast, the program ends **February 28, 2021**.

Please, Please, Please, let us put our efforts together so we can get more of our donations matched. Remind the donors that when they donate, they earn a **75% Tax Credit and reduce their Illinois state income tax**. This is a total Win-Win; everyone benefits. The 2-for-1 Matching Grant program ends **February 28, 2021.** Our hope is to help one hundred percent of the families who apply. We sincerely appreciate your generosity and efforts. God Bless you all!

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| **HEROES WORK HERE** |

**We Love our PreK Teacher Aides, Mrs. Kathy Basgall and Mrs. Donna Ryan!**

It is known and well documented that a student’s early years and school experiences can set the tone for whether the student will love or hate school. I can tell you that the youngest learners in our building love their school, their friends, and their teachers. This is part because of the team of adults they see, learn, and play with each and every day. Two of those ladies are the amazing teacher aides that support Mrs. Monique Mueller. Ms. Kathy and Ms. Donna, as the children call them, are phenomenal! Together they bring over 63 years of experience and dedication to our school. Ms. Kathy has been a St. Barts parent, parishioner, and employee for 48 years. Talk about extraordinary devotion! Every day these lovely ladies share their love and compassion with the students. Their tenderness and nurturing care make all the kid’s boo boos go away. We are so thankful and so blessed to have them.





THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!

WE LOVE YOU BOTH!



**Farewell to La Señorita Erika Rios**

We are sad to see Ms. Rios leave us but we are excited for her as she moves forward with her future goals of attending graduate school and other endeavors. We are thankful for the time she spent with us and are grateful for all her wonderful contributions to our students and school culture. We will surely miss her. Buena Suerte!



**Welcome Mr. Daniel Certain**

Please help me give a warm Barts welcome and “Bienvenido a San Bartolomé” to Mr. Daniel Certain. He will be joining us and provide Spanish classes to our student body. Please see his brief bio.

*Hello, my name is Daniel Certain. I was born in Caracas, Venezuela and now live in Chicago, Illinois. Being from Caracas, my native language is Spanish. I started working with Little Linguists Arts Academy in 2014 while doing my Optional Professional Training after completing a master’s degree at the University of Illinois at Chicago.*

*Prior to working with children, I worked as a teacher for 7 years at the high school and college level. I keep teaching because I find teaching to be the highest profession of all. Transmitting knowledge to a student who is later going to use it and make it their own knowledge is a process I love to watch. On the other hand, I had never worked with younger children before, and after doing so, I learned children are the utmost of teachers.*

*In my spare time, I like to write scripts and stories. I am also a cryptocurrency enthusiast and I am currently creating a YouTube channel with friends in Spain and Venezuela.*

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| **ACADEMICS** |

These past several weeks our teachers have covered various sensitive topics. We gear up to Black History Month in February beginning with the celebrations of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the month of January, and all his fruitful contributions to our nation and all people. Our teachers have implemented lessons with integrating the catholic teaching of being kind, loving and peaceful, and those of our current social realities. They have done an effective job covering the inauguration of our new President and First Lady and Vice President and Second Gentleman. Our students have engaged with much learning related to their roles and the process of civic engagement. They have also discussed democracy and the unfortunate events that took place at the Capitol a couple of weeks ago.

The one thing that we at Barts pride ourselves in is our ability to provide a safe space or platform for students to voice their opinions, feelings, fears, and reactions. Students are curious beings, and they pose questions all the time. They want to know about social equity, justice, violence, racism, and riots. As a school entity, we cannot be bothered by how uncomfortable the questions are and we cannot ignore their curiosity and so we anchor our discussions in who we are as Catholic beings, and not as politicians. We teach that every life is valuable, and we must protect and nurture one another. Our children are our future and at Barts, our teaching staff is profoundly aware of the responsibility we carry to prepare and guide our children for the bright and unified future they seek to live in and lead. We pray for our nation and each other!