

— S m s j weekly newsletter —

Saint Mary – Saint Joseph School - Willimantic, CT

A Magnet school for values!

November 9, 2011

Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome

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Dear Boys and Girls: Is it possible that there would be a feast day for a basilica? Do you even know what a basilica is? The word ‘basilica’ literally means “the hall of the king” because it was a structure so large and beautiful, made with the finest materials and decorated in gold. It was where justice was carried out in the days before Christ at the time when Roman Caesars ruled. Today, we can still refer to our Catholic basilicas as ‘the hall of the King’, because they are magnificent churches dedicated to worshipping the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. I have been privileged to visit all four of the major basilicas in Rome and two minor ones in France, Sacré-Coeur on Montmartre in Paris and the Basilica of the Grotto in Lourdes. One of the major basilicas, St. John Lateran, is associated with the feast we celebrate today. We honor this church because it is the Cathedral of the Pope. There is so much to be told about these basilicas, each with its own history, each with its magnificent structures. You could fit several churches inside of each of these basilicas, since they are so huge. When you walk inside one of them, you feel like a little peanut, since their buttresses are so huge, their ceilings so high and the floors covered with huge slabs of marble. What I want you to reflect on today and think about is how magnificent and awesome must be the ‘hall of the King’ in heaven, far more majestic than any of these grand basilicas on Earth. This should also help us to think of how awesome God is in our lives. Pray that you will always remember that He is our Creator, the One Supreme Being who deserves our worship. We can make our own splendid basilica within our very souls whenever we praise God and give Him the worship that is due to Him. You may not be able to visit these basilicas now at your young age, but you can always visit the Catholic churches in your home town where Jesus is just as really present as He is in a grand basilica. He invites and welcomes you each Sunday. Come, let us worship!

9 Enclosures: Craft Fair (2), Scrip (2), Walk for Warmth (2), 8th Grade Spaghetti Dinner, Spirit Jacket Order Form, Student Council Food Drive

Spirit Jackets – The spirit jackets have come in and look great. A few families have asked if they could still order one, so I checked with the company and have enclosed another order form. If you are interested in placing an order, please return the order form by November 16th with a \$20.00 deposit. If you have already received your jacket and owe a balance, please send it to the office as soon as possible. Thank you.

Annual Mother Seton Scholarship Dinner, sponsored by the Office of Development of the Diocese of Norwich, will take place this year on November 18th at the Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station in Haddam, across the bridge from the Goodspeed Opera House. Last year many families were able to send their children to a Catholic school in the Diocese because there was \$40,000 more of scholarship monies available, raised from this event. If you are a family that received one of these scholarships, you know how grateful you are. If you are a family that can contribute to this event or you have relatives, business partners, etc. who might want to attend this “classy” dinner, do consider purchasing tickets for it. The price is \$150 per person and the proceeds will go directly to scholarships for our Catholic school families. If you own a business

and want to advertise in the dinner program, prices range from \$75 - \$250. Contact the DSO at 860-887-4086 and ask for Ann Crooks for tickets and an opportunity to advertise. Last year's event was very successful, not only financially, but socially as well.

Walk for Warmth – Join our SMSJ team for this year's Walk for Warmth. The opening service will be held at St. Joseph Church on November 20th at 2:15 p.m. Get your friends together and try to raise as much money as you can for this very worthy cause. Registration forms are available in the office. All money raised will be used for WAIM's Energy Assistance Program.

Wine Tasting – The final numbers aren't in yet, but it was a great success! Lots of people, great wine and wonderful hors d'oeuvres! Thank you to Dave & Kathleen Johnson for chairing this event and to all parents who helped make this fundraiser such a success!

Student Council Food Drive – The SMSJ Student Council will be sponsoring their annual Thanksgiving food drive. Please see the enclosed paper which indicates what each class should bring in. Please try to be as generous as possible.

Basketball Programs – The first practice for all boys and girls are being held today (boys) and tomorrow (girls). Next week and from now on the practice schedule will be as follows: boys will practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. and girls will practice on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Please remember that commitment is a must!!!!

Scrip Program – Our Scrip program is underway. Please review the new Scrip order forms that are enclosed. This is a great way to stock up on those gift cards for Christmas and birthdays. The next orders are due by November 10th.

50/50 Club – There are still many chances to win – it's not too late to join the Club. For more information, please call Roland Huard at 423-8479.

Christmas CD – The Sisters of Charity have just released their Christmas CD. The CD contains 13 beautiful arrangements, featuring our own Sister M. Gabriela. The CD's are yours for just \$15.00 and are available in the school office.

8th Grade Spaghetti Dinner – The 8th grade will sponsor a Spaghetti/Meatball dinner on Saturday, November 12th from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Please see enclosure if you would like to purchase tickets in advance.

Holiday Craft Fair – Mark your calendars! Our Christmas Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, December 10th from 9:00 – 3:00 p.m. What a great way to get all your Christmas shopping done.

Thought for the Week
(From the Wit and Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin)

On criticism: "Love your enemies; for they shall tell you all your faults."