

# Saint Brigid Newsletter– Sixty-Fifth Edition, 12/21/2020

At Saint Brigid of Kildare, nourished by the Word and Sacraments, we find life in Christ by gathering disciples for worship, service, and education.



## From the Principal's Desk

As the Christmas season is upon us and the year is drawing to a close, it is a time to look back at the year and remember, not only the hardships of 2020, but the many blessings. This year's challenges have highlighted for me the amazing people that are a part of my life. I am forever grateful to the teachers who, without any training or time to plan, figured out how to make the magic of the classroom virtual. This effort required almost double the time that in person learning required and was a source of stress for them. However, they did it knowing that this was what needed to be done. I am delighted that a benefactor to the Diocese donated \$53,000 to the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan to be dispersed to all teachers within the Diocese.

The Diocese, and I recognize that all school staff members play a role in the success of the school. The benefactor of this money wanted the money to be used specifically for teachers. However, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge Tracey Shark as one of the people I have been blessed with this year. Tracey performs many roles: attendance clerk, nurse, secretary, counselor, test administrator, paperwork juggler and giver of the Magic mint to name a few. But the one I will cherish most is the role of friend, confidant, and karaoke queen. Tracey has been a blessing to me and to the school!

Our maintenance staff has truly been a blessing. Our maintenance staff has always had a list of jobs that cannot be contained within this box: cutting the grass, blowing or shoveling the snow, cleaning the building, fixing the lights, maintaining the boiler, greeting students upon entry to the building and other duties as necessary (which encompasses about a hundred other things). This year we have added sanitize the building, sanitize after mass, sanitize between reconciliation groups, sanitize the door handles and high contact areas, sanitize after a student is sick, etc., etc. All of this they have done without complaint and reward. It is fair to say that we could not have been face to face for this long without their hard work. I am truly blessed by them.

I am blessed by our kitchen staff, down one this year, who have picked up the extra duties and continued to keep our children well fed and healthy while also maintaining high standards for cleanliness and sanitation.

I am blessed by all of those who give to students to make sure they are all achieving academically. They give of their time, research, education and enthusiasm to find new ways for students to be successful. They are our reading tutors, our kindergarten parapro, and our volunteers. I am grateful to each of them.

I am blessed by those who stand outside each day to monitor students on the playground to keep them safe and healthy.

I am blessed by our business manager/HR manager who works tirelessly to be sure that we are all paid, that we have funds for what we need and to develop a plan for us to continue to be successful. I am thankful for our faith formation directors and staff and especially Fr. Andy who is supportive of the school and its efforts and continues to remind us to keep God first and foremost in our lives.

I am greatly blessed by our students. This year, more than in years past, I have had the honor and privilege of subbing in so many of our classes. This has been a great reminder of the importance of what we do. I witnessed a student bring in money that she had earned through chores to contribute to a service project, I saw students bring an injured friend into the office, students praying for those who are sick, students helping each other list their homework, and students patiently allowing others to go ahead of them in line. I am proud to say that these students are our future because they are full of kindness and love.

Finally, I am blessed by school families who have dedicated their time and efforts to raise money for the school, to volunteer every day in a math class, volunteer for recess duty, email me to ask what they can donate to help us meet PPE needs, to organize gifts for teachers to let them know how much they mean to them, families who trust us with their most precious gift, their children. This Christmas, I count my blessings and I encourage you to do the same. The blessings of Christmas and the peace of Jesus to each of you!

*Laura E. Wilkowski*

## ***Saint Brigid Goes Virtual***

Just a quick reminder that our first two weeks of January will be virtual to allow everyone to quarantine after the Christmas holiday. Families should plan to be home from any travels by January 3, 2021 to allow for two weeks quarantine following the Christmas holiday. From January 4 -January 15, we will have virtual classes. Teachers will send home virtual schedules no later than Monday, December 21,2020. Many teachers will also be sending home packets of copied materials to assist families with printing needs. Younger students will also have “go bags” of math manipulatives.

In addition, some students will have an additional check in from Saint Brigid staff members to assist with completion of work or to ensure that they are able to access technology.

Teachers have been hard at work in preparation for these two weeks. We anticipate that things will be smoother than last year when we could not plan ahead. If you experience any technology difficulties, please contact Jerry Cain using the tech form link below:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdhT8zAfAyhEz98uiP6QsFDzU9Q-1aNXPGYE08H52WWoStCPQ/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0&gxids=7628>

If you experience difficulties with MPS Canvas platform, please use the following address:  
help@midlandps.org

If you have instructional difficulties, please reach out first to the classroom teacher, and then to Laura Wilkowski at lwilkowski@stbrigid-midland.org

You may call the school office during this time. Tracey Shark will be there and Laura Wilkowski will be able to check voice mail and email remotely.

Families are reminded that students should do the following:

1. Be on time for ZOOM classes. As in last year, classrooms will be locked five minutes after class time has begun for security reasons. If you cannot be on time, parents should notify the teacher ASAP. Zoom sessions and completion of work will allow us to take attendance. It is imperative that students attend classes in order to be counted as present and to receive instruction from the teacher. Sessions may be recorded if a child is unable to attend at the prescribed time.
2. Just as in face to face instruction, parents must be responsible for reporting student absences or tardies. Student reports will not count as excused absences. Only parents have this ability.
3. Please be sitting at a desk, table or chair. Students should remain upright (no lying down) and should be clothed in daytime clothing, not pajamas unless the teacher calls for a spirit day.
4. Work is to be completed according to assigned timelines. If there is a reason why work cannot be completed in a timely manner, parents should communicate this to the teacher.
5. Teachers will update Skyward weekly to allow for students and parents to check for missing assignments.
6. Extra help or one-on-one help with a teacher must be scheduled directly with the teacher.
7. Stay physically active during this time.

## **Farewell from Tracey Shark**

I write to you all with heartfelt gratitude for the past five years at Saint Brigid. I have thoroughly enjoyed working here, and I thank you for the time I have been given. I want to thank each and every person at Saint Brigid for showing me a little glimpse of God in everyday life. I have always said that this place has been one of the biggest blessings in my life and I leave still feeling that to be true. The relationships I have built with the children, my co-workers, parents, and families have been extraordinary. I consider myself to be truly blessed to have encountered so many amazing people. I am fortunate to say that I am leaving with so many great friendships and memories.

I will miss the "Good morning Mrs. Shark!", the office stops for "magic mints", the little talks when I thought I was giving the life lesson but really I was the one learning, the "See you tomorrows"...I will miss it ALL, but I thank the students for making me smile EVERY SINGLE DAY. You are all absolutely amazing!

Families. Thank you for making me feel like a part of the St. B.'s family from the moment I walked in the doors. Most of all, I thank you for sharing your children with me.

I ask that you keep me in your prayers as I make this transition. I wish God's blessing to all of my Saint Brigid family in the future. God bless...and as always, BE A PINEAPPLE!



## **SCRIP NEWS**

The scrip table will be open on Monday and Tuesday at dismissal. All orders placed from home will need to be shipped to your home or will need to wait to be picked up when we return to school.

## **Open Enrollment**

January 11th begins our open enrollment period for 2021-2022 registration. We will send out further information closer to that time. Current Saint Brigid families have the opportunity to enroll first. Be sure to watch for details close to that time!

## **Kindergarten Open House**

Mark your calendars! February 11, 2021 at 6pm we will hold a kindergarten open house for those interested in learning more about our 2021-2022 kindergarten program! We are able to be in person since students will be out of the building for professional development on Friday, February 12, 2021. Tell a friend and watch for postcards to go out closer to that date!

## **NWEA Testing**

NWEA tests are scheduled to begin the week of January 11, 2021. We do not think it would be appropriate to give this test to students in grades K-5 while they are virtual. However, we are scheduled to have middle school students take these tests during this week. We will have teachers and our computer technician, Jerry Cain standing by to help during this time.

We do ask, however, that students not receive any assistance from parents during this testing time. These tests do not count toward their grades but are used as a measure of progress toward goals that have been set for them. Thank you for your assistance with this important test.

## **Don't forget!**

During our virtual instruction time, mass will be broadcast on Wednesday mornings at 8:30 AM.



## **SNOW DAYS**

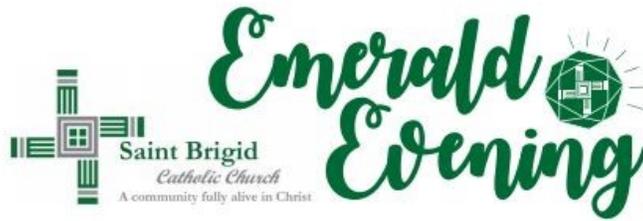
During our first two weeks of January, there will be no snow days regardless of weather and any calls made by MPS since we are already virtual.



## **March for Life**

On Friday, January 22, 2021, 7th and 8th grade will celebrate mass at Saint Brigid for Right to Life. Students will do a short march around Midland following the mass. Permission slips will go home before with 7th and 8th grade students on January 18th and must be returned signed by Thursday, January 17th in order for them to march.

There is no Diocesan bus going to Washington, D.C. this year due to COVID-19.



Please Support St. Brigid Catholic School by Purchasing a Raffle Ticket.  
 Tickets Are \$100 Each for Your Chance to Win Cash!

**1st Prize: \$15,000 Cash**  
**2nd Prize: \$5,000 Cash**  
**3rd Prizes: 10 chances to win \$1,000 Cash**

Early Bird Drawings weekly for your chance to win \$100 beginning January 14!  
*Tickets for the early bird drawing must be purchased by the Tuesday prior to each drawing, which makes you eligible to win each subsequent week.*

It couldn't be easier – purchasing one or more tickets can be a way for you to make a difference, contact free!

([www.auctria.com/auction/emeraldevening2021](http://www.auctria.com/auction/emeraldevening2021))



Prizes will be drawn during a Facebook Live drawing on Saturday, March 6, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Tune in to this fun event on the St. Brigid Catholic School Facebook page!

Thank you for supporting St. Brigid Catholic School in beautiful downtown Midland, Michigan.

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