

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

From the Principal's Desk

Last week was my birthday. It occurred to me as I was fixing my face in the morning that my eyebrows are getting lighter as I get older. My mother-in-law's visit reinforced that as we get older, we are changing. Our facial features lighten-the lips become lighter, the brows, even the hair color becomes lighter. It is as though those distinctive features that what make us unique start to fade.

At the same time, our ears never stop growing and become larger than previous proportions. The hands don't work as well and we don't move as quickly.

But it occurred to me that these changes are not necessarily bad. The fading facial features are a reminder that the older I get, the less I think about what I need to do for me and the more I think about what I need to do for others.

Our growing ears may help us as our hearing is not as effective, but may also serve as a reminder that as we age, we learn that it is more important to listen than to speak.. If we focus more on hearing others needs than on making our own point, we are more likely to *really get to know those around us*.

The fact that we cannot move as quickly as we once could may be a reminder that it is important to slow down and become less busy so that we can be more present in the things we are doing. Let's face it, the rest of the world is telling us to go, go, go. A little slow, slow, slow is a good message.



Important Dates

- 10/6: St. Brigid Spirit Wear Day
- 10/9: Virtual PTO Meeting-6:00pm
- 10/11: Kindergarten Mass
- 10/13: Student Council/Leadership Spirit Day
 - K-5: Superhero's vs. Villains
 - MS: Costume Day
- 10/16: Living Rosary-8:30am
 - VIRTUS Training-6:00pm
- 10/18: Middle School Mass
- 10/20: St. Brigid Spirit Wear Day
- 10/24: Picture Retake Day-Free Dress for All
- 10/26: 1/2 Day-Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 10/27: No School-Parent/Teacher Conferences

The fact that our hands do not work as well may just be a reminder that we are not alone. God put us on the earth together so that we could enjoy each other's company but also so that we can help one other. It is okay for us, too, to ask for help when we need it.

Finally, aging reminds us that our time here is temporary and we should make the most of the time that we have. Love more deeply, laugh more freely, and live today as if there is no tomorrow here on Earth. "Teach us to number our days, [Lord] that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalms 90:12

Laura E. Wilkowski

Student Council Officers & Representatives

Congratulations to all students who ran for student council this year.

Our 5th grade officers are: Pierce Prior-President, Eleanor Lange-Vice President, Farrah Merk-secretary, and Elijah Syrylo-treasurer.

Classroom Representatives are: Boden Newland (5th), Gemma Granzo (4th), Ellie Yopp (3rd), Hendrik Conway (2nd), Declan McCann (2nd), Kazi Wenzloff (1st), and Harlow Yopp (1st)

Alternates are: Patrick Max (4th), Owen Mitus (3rd), Blake Borowiak (2nd), Dominic Gipson (1st).

School Pictures & Retakes

School pictures were sent home last week. Please review them and ensure the picture is to your liking and that you received everything you ordered. For those who notice a blue/gray coloring on your child's teeth, Hicks Studio has said that your student can do retakes for no additional charge. You will need to bring in your picture package on that day and turn them in. If you are choosing retakes for any other reason, you will be responsible for the cost of another picture package. If you need your child's picture taken or retaken, picture retake day has been scheduled for October 24th. There are picture envelopes available in the office.

October Spirit Day and Service Project

The K-5 Student Council has decided to have a Can War as the service project for October. Families are encouraged to return all their cans & bottles to the store anytime during the month of October and send the bottle return slip into school with their student. Teachers will collect all the bottle slips and the class with the most money in returns will win a free dress pass and bragging rights. All slips must be turned in by October 31st. Monies raised will be used to purchase new filters for the water bottle refilling stations.

Their spirit day will take place on **Friday, October 13th** and will be a Superhero vs. Villain Day. Students are allowed to wear a superhero or villain shirt or a red shirt for superhero's or blue shirt for villains. **NO COSTUMES!** There will be a friendly "battle" in the gym at the end of the day to see which side prevails.

The Middle School Student Leadership has chosen to host a book drive to benefit Shelterhouse. Middle School students may bring in gently-used books and place them in the boxes set up outside Mrs. Osborn's classroom through October.

For spirit day on **Friday, October 13th**, middle school students will be allowed to wear a costume since they do not dress up on actual Halloween. No props will be allowed.

Veteran's Day Speaker Needed

We are looking for a speaker for our Veteran's Day assembly scheduled for Friday, November 10th at 8:30 am. The speaker should be someone who has served in some capacity in the armed forces and is able to talk to students from K-8 grade for about 10 minutes about their experience and how their faith helped them in that experience and in their life. Interested individuals should email Laura Wilkowski at lwilkowski@stbrigid-midland.org.

Athletic Sign-Up's

It is now time to sign up for our next round of athletics! Sign-up's are open for: 5th-8th grade boys basketball, 4th-8th grade pom team, and 4th-8th grade cheerleading. You may pick up a sign-up form in the school office or from Ms Corie. All students must have a sports physical on file before the start of practice. The season will begin the last week of October and run through the end of January. Pom team members will perform at halftime of the 5 home basketball games and cheerleaders will cheer the duration of the 5 home basketball games. You may only choose pom or cheerleading, not both.

Living Rosary

Please join us on Monday, October 16th at 8:30am in the balcony in the Church for the Living Rosary. If your son or daughter was selected for a part, they will be bringing home a note early next week with instructions to practice. Students may bring their own rosary, if they'd like. If you plan on joining us, please sit in the balcony of the Church, as the students will be spread out throughout the pews. The Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Rosary on October 7, and the entire month of October is dedicated to this ancient and beautiful prayer: "With the Rosary, the Christian people sit at the school of Mary and are led to contemplate the beauty of the face of Christ and to experience the depths of his love. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace..."—Pope Saint John Paul II

Staff Appreciation Lunches

We still have a few spots open for our Staff Appreciation Lunch sign-ups. This would be a joint effort between 2 volunteers each month and can be whatever you'd like to bring in. Some examples in the past have been soups & salads, taco bar, sandwiches—anything is welcomed & enjoyed! Typically drinks & a dessert are also included. You are welcome to prepare this in your home or cater it from outside, whatever you wish. Please remember it must be nut-free. If you are interested in helping here is the signup genius with the scheduled dates: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4FAFA828A6F5C16-staff2>.

PTO Meetings

Our October PTO Meeting will be held on Monday, October 9th at 6:00pm. To join the video meeting, click this link: <https://meet.google.com/wcv-zkxy-dgi>. Otherwise, to join by phone, dial +1 321-465-5002 and enter this PIN: 648 873 782# .

We highly encourage all parents to attend and provide ideas and suggestions and ask any questions they may have. Everyone is a member of PTO! Students whose parents attend the meeting will receive a free dress pass.

Upcoming VIRTUS Training

We will be holding a VIRTUS training at St. Brigid on Monday, October 16th from 6:00-8:30pm. If you are still in need of this volunteer requirement, please register at virtus.org or by calling the Parish Office at 989-835-7121.

Halloween Parties

Our Halloween parties will be on Tuesday, October 31, 2023. Students will start to get into their costumes at 12:45pm. We will begin the downtown parade at 1:00pm. Parties in the classroom will follow and run until the end of the day. **Just a reminder that all parent volunteers and attendees must have done all volunteer requirements—fingerprinting, VIRTUS and paperwork.** Parties will be in individual classrooms. Children are encouraged to bring a bag or plastic pumpkin clearly labeled with the student's name.

Atrium Updates

Our students have been practicing silence in the Atrium and in Adoration so as to hear the voice of God in prayer. Their words:

"I heard God. Not a word -- His Presence." 3rd grade

"The flame grew, we grew, and Jesus grew!" 3rd grade

"My heart grew brighter when I was in silence. My heart grew warmer." 4th grade

"All I could hear is love." 4th grade

"I could hear God. Not words, just God." 4th grade



ICLE Update

As you know, we are partnering this year with ICLE, the Institute for Catholic Liberal (Arts) Education. We had some training before the school year began on a number of practices that we could implement right away. I have been observing teachers and I am delighted to not only see the practices in the classroom, but to observe the reaction and responses of students.

In a recent fifth grade observation, students were using Socratic Circles. In this lesson, students were given the Robert Frost poem, *The Road Not Taken*. Students were given ten minutes to read it, highlight or underline parts, write notes on the margins, etc. Then students formed to circles. The inner circle began to discuss the poem. The outer circle was observing the inner circle. Five minutes into the discussion, students had accurately interpreted the poem, had identified the poem as a metaphor, and were discussing what they knew (or didn't know) about Robert Frost. Then the outer group gave observations on the discussion itself, how many students participated, what the group did well, what they could do to improve the discussion. Then the two groups switched roles. Finally, the teacher provided feedback as to how she interpreted the poem, how the groups did, and so on. This is a very different approach to how I had been taught as a student- the teacher had us read the poem, and the teacher interpreted the poem for us. Later, in high school, I was often expected to interpret the poem but had no confidence in doing so as this was not an expectation for me before that point. It was a beautiful lesson to witness. Fifth grade does Socratic circles every Friday.

In a recent second grade lesson, students were shown a bar graph and simply asked, what do you notice and what do you wonder? Students responded by saying that some bars were longer than others. Each bar represented a different type of juice. They were able to determine that some juices were more popular than others. They could tell how many more people liked one than another. They then figured out that they could determine how many students were asked what their favorite juice was by adding all of the bars together. The teacher then reinforced the concept that students already had developed. The beauty of students arriving at the concept is that a.) they usually have a better understanding of the topic., b.) they are more likely to remember it and c.) the teacher has a better understanding of where the students need clarification and directed teaching.

Both methods described above allow the students to be actively engaged in the learning process. As a result, students cannot sit idly by and let the teacher do all the work. In addition, students like the subject more because of the active participation. These are but two methods designed to engage students and challenge them to think about a concept deeply. Both were successful and both were a wonder to watch.

Tips from the Reading Specialist

The Culture of Reading continued

How to read?

Create the "appropriate climate" for reading

- Reduce screens and screen time
- Listen to more Classical or Folk music
- Spend time outdoors
- Reading together
- Reading poetry
- Increase family or friendly gatherings, and have good conversations
- Cooking together

Conclusion: to cultivate a good way of reading is beneficial:

- To gain serenity
- To gain self-dominion
- To become a better listener
- To fall in love
- To gain silence
- To contemplate (better)
- To gain wisdom
- To listen to God