

September, 2022

Dear Parents,

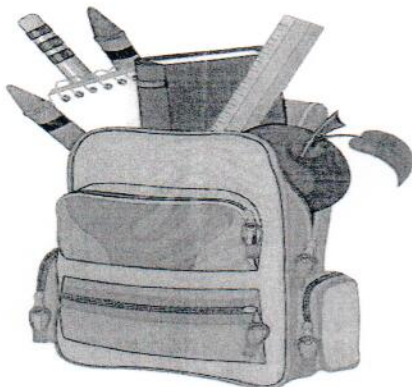
Happy new school year and welcome back from what I hope was a wonderful summer for your family!

Welcome back to a place where values matter, where academics are strong and faith encapsulates everything....a place where faculty and students together make a difference.

Welcome back to what was "lost" for a while but is back again...learning outside of the classroom with clubs and events and an active and faith filled school community that speaks to a strong Catholic school.

We are one school community and together this year, like before the challenges of the pandemic, we can celebrate what characterizes Catholic education and most especially St. Thomas the Apostle School! As we move forward, we look ahead to Back to School Night, PTO events, Spaghetti Suppers, Christmas Bazaar, Clubs, Golf Tournament and so much more!

On another note, someone once said that "a good teacher is like a candle...it consumes itself to light the way for their students". My gratitude goes out to our teachers for giving of themselves to brighten the lives of their students.



I am happy to tell you that we have hired two wonderful women to join our faculty. Stephanie Beilman will join the middle school team in grade 7, teaching science and social studies to grades 6, 7, & 8. Stephanie has an undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts and a master's degree from the University of Tennessee.

Lisa Sullivan will join Kathy Neffinger in grades 5, teaching math, science, and religion to grades 4 & 5. Lisa has an undergraduate degree from Bay Path University and a master's degree from American International College.

On behalf of all of us, I welcome Stephanie Beilman and Lisa Sullivan to our school community.

I am so proud to announce that St. Thomas the Apostle School had the highest scores in the diocese for the math and English language arts Renaissance Star Assessment tests taken during the 2021-2022 school year.

Students in grades kindergarten through grade eight take the Renaissance Star Assessments for math and English language arts in the fall, winter and spring. This is truly a testament to how committed our teachers are to the success of your children, and the strong academic curriculum we are able to offer at St. Thomas School.

*Peace,
Sr. Patty*

GETTING TO SCHOOL ON TIME!

It is very important for students in preschool through grade 8 to arrive on time for school every day.

Children in kindergarten through grade 8 should arrive no later than 7:30, as the bell to begin school rings at 7:35. If you live in West Springfield and are able to use the school bus, we strongly suggest you allow your child to take the bus to avoid being late. If you are traveling across the train tracks you should plan to leave your home at least 15 minutes earlier to avoid being late because of the train. You can also plan to use the Morgan/Sullivan Bridge thus avoiding the train all together.

Children in preschool should arrive by 8:00.

When students enter the classroom late, it can be disruptive to the teacher who has begun the school day, as well as to the children who have arrived to school on time. We understand that there may be times when being late is unavoidable, however coming to school late habitually is not acceptable.



OPENING MASS FOR ST. THOMAS SCHOOL

The school will gather for our opening mass on Wednesday, September 7 at 9:30. Preschool and kindergarten students will not be attending the opening mass. Parents are invited to attend.



PEANUT AND NUT FREE SCHOOL

Allergens in peanuts are similar in structure to allergens in tree nuts. Children who are allergic to peanuts are often allergic to tree nuts. **Please do not send in PEANUTS OR NUTS, in any form with your children for snack time, lunch time, After School Program or any other school activity.**



KEEPING STUDENT INFORMATION CURRENT

Please be sure to send any address, telephone or email changes to the office for your family during the school year. If we do not have the correct information, this will affect your family receiving important information regarding your child and will also prevent you from receiving our Parent Alert phone, text and email messages. Text messages from school will begin with 31706 and STTA-MA.

IMPORTANT FORMS TO BE RETURNED!

Please be sure to return your child's Emergency Contact Form and the Nurse's Emergency Data Card, preferably by Friday, September 2.

Children in preschool who do not come to school on Friday should return this information the first day that they will be attending the week of September 5.



ST. THOMAS SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

The St. Thomas Apostle School Parent/Student Handbook for the 2022-2023 school year can be found on our school website www.stthomasapostleschool.org under Parents and on the FACTS Parent Portal under Resources. You can view and print the handbook from either site. All parents and students are to read and understand the information in the handbook. **The handbook agreement form must be sent back to school no later than Friday, September 9 .**



GYM UNIFORMS AND SWEATSHIRTS

As in previous years, gym uniforms will continue to be purchased at the school. The cost of the gym uniform is \$30 a set (\$15 for each piece).

We have changed the color of our hoodie sweatshirts to navy blue with white lettering, (students can continue to wear the gray hoodies). Crewneck sweatshirts to be sold will be gray. Hoodie sweatshirts are \$28 and crewnecks are \$25.

The St. Thomas School sweatshirts are the only sweatshirts that can be worn in school.



ST. THOMAS SCHOOL WEBSITE and FACTS FAMILY PORTAL

For important school information throughout the school year be sure to visit our school website at www.stthomasapostleschool.org and the FACTS Family Portal. New families have received information regarding FACTS, returning families can use their log in information from last school year.

"Reading Beyond the Beaten Path"

Congratulations to the following St. Thomas School students who completed the 2022 Summer Reading Program, "Read Beyond the Beaten Path" at the West Springfield Library.

These students read at least 10 hours over the 6-week program.

Paul Cleavall

Catherine Corey

Ian Corey

Laurelin Corey

Vansh Desai

Jack Deslauriers

Lawren Dunbar

Tripp Dunbar

Lily Germano

Benjamin Gurt

Peyton Korbut

Makenna Lopes

Ella Niemiec

Madelynn Sweeney

Patrick Sweeney

Brianna Webb

