

## ***March Greetings,***

*As we begin our Lenten journey, may we reflect upon good intentions to do good deeds for others and to be our best selves. We are blessed and challenged to be Easter people...people who create peace, break barriers, speak truth, make right and join hands because we know the GREAT LOVE OF GOD.*

*March is also the month we honor St. Patrick and St. Joseph.*

*We remember the Sisters of St. Joseph who founded so many of our Catholic schools in our diocese. St. Thomas was one of those schools and I feel stronger than ever about the positive affect that Catholic Education has on our children.*

*On a personal note, as a Sister of St. Joseph, I am proud to stand on the shoulders of those principals, who came before me at St. Thomas...Sr. Joseph Michael and Sr. Lillian Reilly.*

*We build on values at St. Thomas the Apostle School, on solid firm values...values of respect and tolerance, faith and love, justice and peace, hope and family, values that renew the face of the earth and make a difference in our world.*

*In closing, I ask that you help us in building our enrollment and school community. Mention St. Thomas to a friend or a co-worker. After 92 years of Catholic education, we know the great gift we have at St. Thomas the Apostle School.*

*Joyous Easter Blessings.*

*Peace,  
Sr. Patty*

## **MARCH NEWS**

**Planning for the 2024-2025 School Year** As you know, we are planning for the 2024-2025 school year. Please be sure that the \$100.00 deposit per child is paid by March 14 through FACTS to guarantee that your child will be part of our school community for the new school year. Re-registration forms are also due on March 14. We are also grateful to the families that have let us know that their child will not be returning to St. Thomas. If you have children at home that are ready for our preschool or kindergarten, please be sure to call the school office for registration information, as we are currently registering many new families for the new school year.

## **ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL 26TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT - FRIDAY, MAY 17**

Golf tournament registrations and sponsorship opportunities were sent home before vacation. Classroom gift basket themes were also sent home. This is the school's major fundraiser of the year and we need your support! All proceeds benefit the students at St. Thomas. This year's tournament will honor Sr. Patty, so this event will be extra special!

**SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, June 9, 2024** Please plan to attend a special 12:15 mass, followed by a reception in the gymnasium to celebrate Sr. Patty's dedication and loving service to all the students and families of St. Thomas School, past and present.

**St Thomas School February Book Fair** Many thanks to all of our families who purchased books during our Book Fair in February. Mrs. Watroba is excited that she will be able to purchase many new books for our library, as well as the fact that the children are enjoying their new books at home.

**Caring for our Animal Friends** Thank you to all those that sent donations of cat and dog supplies during Catholic Schools Week Outreach project. Our donations were greatly appreciated by all the four-legged friends at the Westfield Animal Shelter and Ludlow Animal Control facilities.

**"Like" us on Facebook** If you have a Facebook account and would like to see events, pictures and other St. Thomas news, view our Facebook page and give us a "Like".

**Reminders-** Monday, March 4 – PTO Meeting in the Club Room 6:30-7:30 All Are Welcome!  
Friday, March 15 – No School - Teacher Professional Day  
Monday, March 25 – Grade 7 & 8 to present Living Stations of the Cross at 6:00 in the church and on  
Wednesday, March 27 at 12:15 in the church for school students. Parents are welcome.  
Friday, March 29 – No School – Good Friday

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**Read Across America Week** – The week of March 4<sup>th</sup> is National Read Across America Week! St. Thomas School is celebrating this week by inviting special guests from the community to read to all of our students in their classrooms, preschool through grade eight.

**Preschool Was Feeling the Love** The love was everywhere in preschool for the month of February! They all had so much fun exchanging valentines with friends and buddies. On Pajama Day, preschool loved being in their pajamas, teachers included, while enjoying delicious pancakes. Can you believe we have been in school 100 days? The teachers all looked a little older on the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school! The month ended learning how to keep our smiles bright!

**February Kindergarten News** Kindergarten celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school by decorating shirts with 100 objects. They had so much fun celebrating Valentine's Day and creating their Valentine's Day mail bags for the cards and treats they received.

**Grade 1 Fun** Grade 1 was full of love and kindness the week of Valentine's Day. They enjoyed purchasing sweet treats at the Student Council bake sale, exchanging Valentine cards and dancing their hearts out at the Valentine dance party. Love was in the air in grade 1!

**Grade 2 Learning Activities** In February, the second graders explored some legends and customs associated with Groundhog's Day and Valentine's Day. They also focused on Black history with stories about several famous African Americans. Grade 2 students learned some new facts about dental health. Also during the month of February, Mrs. Doyle's class continued to celebrate the holy season of Lent with various Lenten activities.

**Grade 3 February News** Mrs. Bonfitto's science class has nothing the *MATTER*, other than working on the 3 states of *MATTER*: solid-liquid-gas! The students made the room a wonderful winter wonderland with cheery, snowman globes, cardinals and outdoor winter scenes. To make Lenten acts of mercy, the class wrote letters of encouragement for people who are having health issues and job changes. Grade 3 has been reading *The Ranger in Time Series*, *The Escape from the Great Earthquake* and *I Survived*.

**Grade 6 English Language Arts** In January, after learning about persuasive writing and researching the topic of school lunches, students in Mrs. Svadeba's sixth grade English Language Arts class put their newly learned skills to effective use and authored an essay on whether students should receive a free school lunch. These essays were then used as evidence in a captivating debate viewed by Sr. Patty and Mrs. Bonfitto, along with her grade three students. Students on both sides of the issue were well-versed on their topics, and in the end, the debate was too close to call. In February, after reading biographies about famous people who had to overcome challenging life circumstances while bringing light into our world, students created dioramas that depicted a pivotal moment in their character's life. They then displayed these life-changing moments while giving a presentation about their character to their classmates. Well done grade 6!

**Fun STEM Field Trip** On February 8<sup>th</sup>, students in grades 6, 7 and 8 participated in a STEM lesson and activities at Interskate 91. Students learned about heart health and fitness by participating and working together to complete different tasks. After the lesson, students skated, played laser tag, and ate lunch. It was a wonderful day of learning and having fun with friends!

**St. Thomas School Artist** Louise Coly, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student, designed a beautiful bulletin board in her classroom. Louise drew a tree and instructed her classmates to write "what peace means to me" on doves that she drew for them. Thank you Louise for sharing your artistic talents with your classmates.

**Student Council News** The student council held a bake sale on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Mruk for helping student council with the event throughout the day, and to the parents of our Student Council members who baked or purchased food items for the sale.

