



Grace and peace, dear parents,

How great to see so many of you Monday evening at Back to School Night. We are off and running for a most faith-filled productive school year. I am confident that the students will stretch and grow in new directions.

The students and staff of the St. Matthias School family celebrated the Back to School Liturgy today. The gospel reading proclaimed by Father Abraham called upon us to be the difference and make a difference. Members of the Student Council and the Middle School participated as lectors, cantors, interpreters of the word and gift bearers. The prints that bear the words *Be the Difference, Make a Difference* will be on display for the remainder of the year alongside the *Mustang Makes a Difference* bulletin board in the cafeteria.



I know some of you were able to be at school on Friday to witness our spirited eighth grade students burst into a Flash Mob Dance to the tune of *We're All In This Together* from High School Musical. Under the direction of music teacher, Margie Nelson, they started their Congo Line to the parents and distributed reminders of upcoming meetings. Coming together for meetings and events is so important to us that we will dance up to you with an invite. And, the fact is, let us take comfort that we are all in this together. Nurturing children with the values

we hold dear is no easy task in today's society, so let's keep supporting one another and lifting each other in prayer each day.

There was an assembly for our students in Kindergarten and Grades One and Two on Friday. We had a chance to pray together, chat about this year's expectations and enjoy an ice cream treat from Mr. Gidaro and me. At the assembly I read the book *The Pigeon HAS to Go to School* written by Mo Willems. Mo is one of the most decorated author/illustrators of children's books in this era. I encourage you to talk to your child about Mo Willems books and spend some time interacting with the text. Other books, Mo has authored would be the *Knuffle Bunny* books as well as the *Piggie and Elephant* series. He has a great website you might want to visit with your early learning child. And, I am sure your child shared that we also had a chance to dance a bit to our visiting DJ after our assembly. It was great fun and the room was filled with an electric spirit.

Following the early learning grades assembly, we hosted an assembly with our Transition Grade students, those students in grades three, four and five. After opening remarks I did share a chapter from Jerry Spinelli's, *Maniac Magee*. This text will be the book used for our first Grades 3-4-5 After School Book Club. The students in the Transition Department should be able to enjoy many of the texts written by Jerry Spinelli. He weaves a story that is just magic for this grade level. Some of his other works are *Loser*, *Knots in my Yo-yo*, *Milkweed*, *Who Ran My Underwear Up the Flagpole*, *Stargirl* and *The Warden's Daughter*. To build the stamina and rigor we are setting as our goal, students in these grade levels should be able to complete one of these novels in a week. This may serve as a good gauge for reading at this level. These students also enjoyed an ice cream treat followed by some dancing.



The school day closed with a Social for our Middle School students. The DJ led the students in an afternoon that proved to be great fun and a terrific start to their Middle School year. This coming Thursday I will host our first Middle School Book Club using the text, *Stepsister* by Donnelly. It is an intriguing text, I couldn't put it down. I hope to visit each literacy class in middle school next week to give a book talk on the text.

Important Information for Parents of Eighth Grade Students

Within this Wednesday envelope, there is a letter from our Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Robert A. Lockwood, addressed to parents of eighth grade students. The letter explains the new process for registration for high school as well as the HSPT (High School Placement Test). The primary testing date for both high schools is Saturday, November 2nd.

You will also want to take note of the new application process, which is online. Your attention to these details is appreciated.

On Thursday, October 10 from 7-8:30PM students in grades K-3 can join the 4-H Prep Club and students in grades 4-8 can join any standard 4-H club. Go and find out what today's 4-H Program has to offer you! In 4-H you can learn about science, go-carts, animals, robotics, rocketry, archery, clothing, creative arts, food & nutrition, all while developing leadership and public speaking skill and much more. Best yet, you can have FUN and meet new friends. For more information call 908-526-6644 or visit www.4HisTOPS.org.

Just a reminder that there is no school for students on Friday, September 20. The St. Matthias School staff will be participating in their Annual Spirituality Day. We will be remembering you and your special intentions in our prayers.

As always, thanks so much for partnering with us for best practices for our students. It truly makes a difference.

Eileen Brett
Principal
Saint Matthias School