



DeTOURS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF ST. MARTIN OF TOURS SCHOOL

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FALL 2019

First Annual Fall FUN DAY



Students, teachers, parents, and alumni were excited for the morning ahead. A warm and sunny day in October greeted them as they embarked on a day of school spirit, friendly athletic competition, and good fun. Our first Fall Fun Day, held at Bohrer Park on Columbus Day, was a huge success and is sure to become an annual event. We are grateful to Principal Lamont for piloting this amazing day, and to parent Nick Yeates, who, along with many other volunteers, planned, set up for, and executed a morning full of fun field day activities.

Early on Monday morning, many parent volunteers met on the field at Bohrer Park to set up their stations, preparing to welcome and coach, through the morning, every child from St. Martin's School. Meanwhile, the students arrived at school at the usual time, dressed for the day in their physical education uniforms, toting water bottles and cinch sacks. Each teacher passed out red t-shirts to half the class and blue t-shirts to the other half. In an effort to create spirited competition, the blue team would be playing against the red team at different stations throughout the morning.

Similar to our parade of students crossing S. Frederick Avenue in June for Pool Day, the students lined up in their classrooms alongside many parent escorts as they began their walk from school to the fields at Bohrer Park. With schedules in hand, teachers assembled the students on a shady knoll to hear Principal Lamont's aspirations for the day and receive last-minute schedule details. With the blast of the air horn, each grade ran off in various directions to an assigned station. The parents, teachers, and alumni who staffed each station were as excited as the students were to get the day rolling.

The stations included the Egg Race, Ring Toss/

Corn-hole, Three-Legged Race, Warm-Up/Cool Down, and the Lake Race/Relay. To add to the fun and competition, two grades paired up for each activity. Some of the results were predictable, but many activities brought out special talents in students, which no one expected. A few of the antsy Pre-Kindergarteners were surprisingly smooth on their feet while balancing an egg on a spoon. The winners of the three-legged race were not always the speediest students but the ones who worked best together. The Lake Race/Relay was especially exciting as students cheered each other on as they crossed the finish line. Nick Yeates, an experienced Race Director, guided the runners through warm-ups and instructions, but even more importantly, emphasized how to show good sportsmanship by cheering on their classmates. At the end of the morning, a parade of tired but happy students made their way back up S. Frederick Avenue to be met by Gaithersburg Police, who helped them safely cross the road back to school.

This special day was not over yet and more excitement and competition were to come. The new Crusader Shield was at stake. Principal Lamont had asked each grade to present a school cheer at an afternoon assembly. He and others judged each cheer on spirit, originality, and content. The winning homeroom class would win the Crusader Shield, a replica of a shield St. Martin of Tours might have used in battle. The competition was fierce as each class did their best. From seventh grade's, "Go St. Martin's, Crusader's Gonna Rule," with a military cadence to fourth grade's team chant, "We are the fourth grade, the mighty, mighty fourth grade," to first grade's popular children's song, "I said a Boom Chicka Boom." The winner was...a tie between Kindergarten and first grade. However, the true winner was our school community, which benefitted from a day of school spirit, physical fitness, and joy.





Dear St. Martin's Community,

I am deeply grateful for my parents' sacrifice to send all eight of their children to Catholic schools. Six of us received a Catholic education all the way through high school. It's wonderful to see the same dynamic now at work with my nieces and nephews; 23 of the 28 have attended Catholic schools, and the only ones who haven't aren't old enough yet! I am a huge believer in the value of Catholic education.

As administrator of St. Martin of Tours, it is my joy to guide this vibrant and faith-filled community. To participate in the spiritual, intellectual and human maturation of the boys and girls entrusted to our care is a gift and responsibility. The faculty and staff are completely dedicated to the full flourishing of each child who is entrusted to our care.

St. Martin's School is one of the largest and most important ministries of our parish. Our parish support of the school is fundamental to the overall vitality of our parish family. As priests, we teach in the school on a weekly basis, we celebrate Mass with our school kids throughout the week, and celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation with them. Our parish gives annual financial support to the school, and parishioners generously support our Endowment Fund.

Your support is so greatly needed. The backing of parents, alumni, friends and Catholic business people allows us to continue providing the quality Catholic education that students have received here for close to 100 years. As I learned from the example of my own parents, the sacrifices required to make that happen are well worth it!

I thank you for your generous support of St. Martin's School. It is truly an offering pleasing in the Lord's sight, and one which blesses the lives of so many families from our parish and local community.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Rev. David Wells". The script is cursive and fluid.

Fr. David Wells
Administrator

Welcome to Our Team!

Our new teachers this year come from various backgrounds and bring a wealth of experience to St. Martin's School, but they have one important thing in common, which is their wish to teach at a Catholic school. Whether it is their first year teaching or their twenty-first year, these new teachers see the benefits of a Catholic education much the same way as our parents do. They choose to teach at a Catholic school for the academic excellence, spiritual development, and the strong sense of community. Faculty and staff can be role models who share their faith, their talents, and their time. They have a common commitment to bring out the best in their students as they grow in knowledge, skills, and values. St. Martin's creates an environment which allows teachers to help students find their special place in their family, the Church, and society. We are blessed that these teachers have chosen to share their gifts with our school community. Together we are creating a faith community where lasting relationships are built.



Our new middle school Language Arts teacher is **Mrs. Rose Frelk**. She is from Chicago, Illinois. Mrs. Frelk has a degree in English Literature from Loras College with a certificate in Secondary Education. She recently taught at Kingswood Academy, a Catholic school in Darian, Illinois. Her goal is to help her students become strong writers and develop their interest

in reading. She is happy to find such enthusiastic students and engaged parents at SMS. Additionally, Mrs. Frelk will be sharing her love of theatre by moderating our Drama Club this fall. "This is such a nice community. I am most impressed by my students' respect for others and that the parents are so actively involved," she said. Not surprisingly, one of her favorite hobbies is reading.



Mrs. Debra Dillow brings thirty years of experience teaching Math and Library Media to high school and middle school students at Montgomery County Public Schools. She is our new middle school Math teacher. She is a product of several Maryland schools, having graduated from Seneca Valley high school, the University of Maryland, and McDaniel College.

Her goal for her students is to help them attain good study habits and enjoy learning for learning's sake. She is excited to be teaching in such a positive environment. "The teachers, the students, and the administration create a productive atmosphere. I love coming to work," she said. "I want my students to feel comfortable in class and to ask for help if needed," she added. When not at school, Mrs. Dillow enjoys spending time with her family and her two dogs.



Mrs. Sherry Meadows had big shoes to fill stepping in as the new fourth grade teacher, following Mrs. Joseph, who had been here for twenty-eight years. She is enjoying teaching the fourth grade curriculum and is looking forward to planning the annual Seneca Schoolhouse field trip. "This is a wonderful family-oriented and welcoming community," explained Mrs.

Meadows. "I have a friendly fourth grade class and my hope is for them to continue to grow as a community and support each other." Mrs. Meadows most recently taught at Fellowship Christian School in Germantown. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in Elementary Education. Mrs. Meadow's favorite leisure activities are cooking and reading mystery books.



Our new second grade teacher, **Ms. Caroline Green**, is familiar with the Catholic elementary school environment, having attended St. Jane de Chantal in Bethesda. "I am excited to be at St. Martin's where I can incorporate religion and God into our school day," explains Ms. Green.

"Since the students receive two sacraments this year, my goal is to increase their general knowledge of the Church," she adds. Having recently graduated from the University of Dayton in Ohio with a degree in Early Childhood Education, this is Ms. Green's first year teaching. She has found the community very welcoming and she appreciates how supportive the other teachers have been. When not at school, Ms. Green enjoys playing tennis and spending time with her friends and family.



Our new first grade aide is a familiar face at St. Martin's. **Mrs. Vanessa Wright** was our Lunchroom Supervisor before making the transition to the classroom. Mrs. Wright is a graduate of Watkins Mill High School. Although she was born in Washington, D.C., Mrs. Wright lived in El Salvador until she was six, before

returning to the area. She and her husband have three school-aged children. From being a volunteer at her children's school, Mrs. Wright realized how much she enjoyed working in a school setting. "I am looking forward to learning more about teaching at a Catholic school," she states.



Although born and raised in San Salvador, our new Kindergarten aide, **Mrs. Maritza Romero** has been part of our community for many years. She is a longtime St. Martin's parishioner and raised her three children in the Gaithersburg area. Mrs. Romero has

a degree in Early Childhood Education and taught at Franklin Montessori School in Rockville for the last eighteen years. She enjoys her role in encouraging an early enthusiasm for learning. "I am impressed by the structure and focus on teaching and learning," she explains. As part of her responsibilities, Mrs. Romero guides small groups in Math and language learning skills. She adds, "I am proud of the education that is offered here and I am very happy to be part of this school family."



You cannot underestimate the importance of making families feel welcome when they walk in the door at school. **Christina Pérez** accomplishes that among a myriad of other responsibilities as our new receptionist. She is originally from New Jersey and came to the Washington area to attend Catholic University.

She majored in Vocal Performance and Opera Studies and minored in Communications. After graduation, Ms. Pérez put her skills to work at CBS Radio and Sirius FM. She went back to school and received a certificate in Early Childhood Education. She then worked as a pre-school assistant at St. Anthony's Day School in Alexandria. She is excited to be at St. Martin's because it enables her to combine her communication skills with her desire to work in a school environment. She will moderate the Drama Club this fall along with Mrs. Frelk. Ms. Pérez notes, "I have been made to feel so welcome, not just by the teachers but by the students. Everyone has made me feel very comfortable."



Helping Victims of Hurricane Dorian

When our school community became aware of the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian to the Bahamas, we wanted to do what we could to help those victimized by the storm. We asked those who were able, to give to those in need. We created an engaging visual which allowed our students to see how close we were to reaching our goal. For each dollar donated, a student could add a black, yellow, or aquamarine blue sticker to an outline of their flag. With each donation, the outline soon took on the look of the Bahamian flag. We exceeded our goal and raised \$750 for the Archdiocese of Nassau. Our teachers discussed with our students the pain and loss felt by so many in the Bahamas. We have prayed for those who lost loved ones and whom the effects of the hurricane displaced. We hope this donation along with others will help rebuild the lives after such unprecedented destruction. The people of the Bahamas continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

Tanya Milton – The Quintessential Volunteer

Our 2019 Volunteer of the Year at St. Martin's School is Tanya Milton. She was honored at the Catholic Business Network of Montgomery County Annual Gala in November at the North Bethesda Marriott Hotel. Tanya has made a remarkable impact on St. Martin's School during her years as a parent volunteer. While inspiring others, she provided passionate yet sensible leadership as Home and School Association ("HSA") President and School Advisory Board ("SAB") member.



Tanya and her husband Mark enrolled their son Aaron at St. Martin's in Kindergarten. He is now a junior at Georgetown Preparatory School. Their son Ethan and daughter Leah are currently in the fourth grade. While it was important to them for their son to have a faith-based education, they specifically chose St. Martin's at the time because of the location, the affordability, and the international community. Aaron had only been at St. Martin's a year when Tanya joined the SAB. She completed the remaining two years of another board member's term, served a three-year term, and represented the HSA on the board for an additional two years, for a total of seven years. On the school board, Tanya proposed and championed exit interviews for students and their families leaving St. Martin's School, and strongly supported the creation of a homework helpline for the Spanish speaking community and efforts for St. Martin's to become a Blue Ribbon school. Her focus at the time was to help maintain our academic excellence and family satisfaction with the school. Tanya stressed, "The importance of community and building relationships with teachers and staff."

As a member of the Home and School Association, Tanya served as Secretary, Vice-President, and then President. During her tenure as President, HSA Bylaws were drafted and adopted; an online central repository for organizing annual school events was created; and the New Family Mentor Program was revitalized.

Among her other contributions were an increase in volunteerism, improved communications, and greater family participation in activities. Tanya organized HSA Meet & Greets, a Christmas Cookie Exchange, and an ice cream social. When asked why she devoted such considerable time and effort to St. Martin's, she said, "I want to do for those parents who cannot. I want to make things happen so their children can be happy too." St. Martin's extends heartfelt gratitude to Tanya Milton. We are pleased to honor her as our Volunteer of the Year.

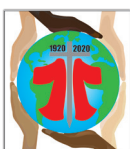
St. Martin's Church Kicks Off 100 Year Celebration *Highlights of First 100 Years*



After being a mission church to St. Mary's in Barnesville, St. Martin of Tours is canonically established in the Archdiocese of Baltimore on December 12, 1920. Fr. John Cuddy of St. Mary's celebrates the first Mass on our current property. The Mass is held in a contrived structure made up of three Army mess halls that had been used in Virginia during World War 1, and were moved to the property by Fr. Cuddy.



For over a decade, the parish had used the school auditorium for Mass, as pictured in 1942.



Our parish continues to grow. Mass in Spanish began in 1978, and a French Mass started in 2004. We again worship in the school gymnasium along with the church to allow for eleven Masses each weekend.



December 16, 1956: Ground is broken to construct the current church after several years of fundraising led by the longtime pastor, Fr. Paul Meyer.



November 11, 1957: The new church is dedicated.

To learn more about the people, priests, and places of St. Martin's, watch for poster displays in the church and columns in the bulletin to celebrate our first 100 years!

Strategic Vision: A Plan for Success

This year, in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office (ADW CSO), St. Martin of Tours School has embarked on a process to create a five-year Strategic Plan. Strategic planning is the process of setting goals, deciding on actions to achieve those goals, and mobilizing the resources needed to take those actions. The ADW CSO is guiding this process by helping to align it with four pillars of Catholic education: Catholic identity, academic excellence, affordability (enrollment), and governance. Members of our School Advisory Board, Home and School Association, administration and staff have begun working in subcommittees to create and analyze data, as well as to identify priorities, problems, and areas of growth. Surveys will be an important tool for including community voices in the planning process. The Strategic Plan will serve as our roadmap, informing planning decisions as the school moves forward into our next century. We are privileged to have a 94-year history of excellence in Catholic education as the foundation for our future endeavors. Anything that we do moving forward will be respectful of this extraordinary legacy and rooted in the Catholic traditions that the school is built on.

SPOTLIGHT

Back to Back Superior Rating

For the second year in a row, our Advanced Band received a superior rating at the Archdiocese of Washington Band Festival held at St. John's College High School. Out of the sixteen bands performing, St. Martin's was one of only five to earn this highest rating. Additionally, five Advanced Band members were nominated to the prestigious Honors Band sponsored by the ADW Music Program. "I am extremely proud of the dedication and hard work shown by our students," said Principal Stephen Lamont. Twenty-five fifth through eighth graders make up the Advanced Band, which practices together twice a week. St. Martin's School, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Washington Music Program, offers a weekly musical instruction elective for students in grades 4th through 8th from September to May. Students enjoy classes organized by instrument and degree of advancement. Instruction is offered during the school day on a variety of instruments, including flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone horn, snare drum, and bells. After a year of instruction, older students can switch to bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, or tuba. Our band program is just one of the many educational opportunities that set our school apart.



SMS Happenings



First responders and military joined us for a prayer service in honor of September 11, a day of national remembrance and service.



Literacy Night featured a swashbuckling tale of a villainous buccaneer and included pirate-themed activities and snacks.



Our families' fang-tastic creativity and spooktacular efforts make for a boo-tiful night at Trunk or Treat.

Ways to Support St. Martin's

United Way #8362



CFC #85449



If your workplace participates in the United Way or the Combined Federal Campaign and you would like your tax-deductible contribution to be directed to SMS, **please designate us by entering our number on your donor form. United Way (Member #8362) and Combined Federal Campaign (Member 85449)**

Other ways to support St. Martin's are through Amazon Smile, Good Search, Harris Teeter, Office Depot, or Donate a Car. For more information, go to www.smsmd.org and click on "Support SMS."

CASINO ROYALE

St. Martin's School

Annual Gala

March 7, 2020

Synchronize your watch for 6PM

Rendezvous at the Holiday Inn Gaithersburg



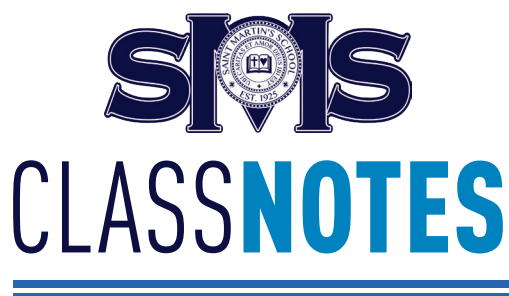
Honor Roll of Donors

Every Gift Matters. Every Giver Makes an Impact

We thank our alumni, parents, parishioners, and friends for their generous support of our School Operating and Financial Aid Endowment Funds this past year. It is the collective impact of our entire community – including you – that enables us to continue to deliver on our mission. The principal of each Fund is invested responsibly in line with our Catholic values. The interest generated from the Operating Fund helps defray the cost of a Catholic education that tuition revenue alone does not cover. This Fund supports all areas of St. Martin's Catholic School, including religious activities, curricular enhancements, technology upgrades, and facility improvements. The interest generated from the Financial Aid Fund provides financial assistance to students who could not otherwise afford a St. Martin's education. Forty-two percent of our students receive need-based financial assistance. These investments allow your generosity to make a difference year after year.

Please consider making a tax-deductible gift to our School Operating Fund or to our Financial Aid Endowment Fund. On the envelope enclosed, please check the box to designate which Fund should receive your generous donation.

The **Honor Roll of Donors** will be published in the Summer issue and will include gifts donated from June 16, 2019 – June 15, 2020. For questions regarding donor giving, please contact Anne Gemunder, Director of Development, at agemunder@smsmd.org.



In Memoriam

The St. Martin's School community mourns the loss of Regina Moses-Carelli, Class of 1961, who passed away in August, 2019. Regina attended yearly reunions and kept in contact with many in her class for over 58 years. Her son said, "She was always proud of having attended St. Martin's."

Alumni Giving: Building a Better Tomorrow

This fall we are highlighting alumni from four different decades who have benefitted from a St. Martin's education and who have continually given back to support our mission. These graduates are a very small but representative sampling of our alumni network who continue to make a positive impact across the metropolitan area within their families, careers, and communities.

AnnMarie Emmet, Class of 1944, has volunteered and given back to society throughout her life. "It was important to me to do what I could to help create the Endowment Fund; to enable more students to receive a St. Martin's education." Ms. Emmet currently volunteers with the National Parks Service with their Honor Flight Network. This organization flies military veterans from 140 cities to Washington, D.C. to visit the Memorials of the wars they served. Ms. Emmet went to college in the D.C. area and has been an active parishioner at St. Stephen's in Northwest for the past fifty years.

Lawrence French, Class of 1956, fondly remembers his days at St. Martin's. "It was good for me; it was an important part of the social fabric of my life at the time." He recalls back then that it was a country school run by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. His mother was a Diamond, from the family after whom Diamond Avenue was named. They owned a large dairy farm where the National Institute of Standards and Technology now resides. Mr. French went on to a teaching career at Virginia Tech. "St. Martin's was an important part of my life growing up and I want to continue to support the school and the opportunities it offers its students."

Karen Gillis, Class of 1966, was always struck by how much Msgr. Paul Meyer cared for the students at St. Martin's. "Each year at graduation, he gave the same sermon and it has stayed with me all these years. He urged us 'not to be the jellyfish that floats with the current, but to be the salmon, who swims upstream.' I have always tried to make a difference and help others wherever I can." Ms. Gillis earned both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Science prior to working in the biotechnology industry. She continues to be active in St. Martin's parish, while fondly remembering the wonderful years growing up in this community.

Dr. Natalie Branagan, Class of 1993, chooses to donate to St. Martin's because she is very grateful for the nurturing and supportive teachers that she had while here. "Mrs. Moss, my physical education teacher, was one of those teachers. She helped me to develop my confidence in athletics during her PE classes." Dr. Branagan went on to play field hockey and lacrosse at Good Counsel High School. In college, she was on Princeton's crew team and won gold medals in national championship races. "The successes I experienced in athletics gave me the confidence to undertake challenging work in other directions such as a Bachelor's Degree in Molecular Biology and graduating from medical school. I feel very grateful to Mrs. Moss and the support she provided as well as to the other teachers of St. Martin's." She hopes that other children can have the opportunity to experience the same supportive environment that she had while attending school.





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PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 8TH GRADE