

# JANUARY 2012 - NEWSLETTER

Dear SSS Families,

After the holiday vacation extended by a snow day, we return to the routine of the school year. The New Year brings new opportunities and renewed focus on our mission of education.

Along with the entire staff of SSS, I extend our most sincere appreciation for the many kindnesses and good wishes extended to us during the holidays. We wish you a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2012.

## Happy New Year!

### **FREE/REDUCED LUNCH**

Please be aware that application for this program may be made at any time throughout the year. If your employment or financial situation has changed since the beginning of the year, you are encouraged to apply. Applications are available online or through the school office.

### **CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK**

Mark your calendars for the special events during Catholic Schools Week beginning Jan. 29 thru Feb. 4, 2012. A special Catholic Schools Week Packet will be sent home soon. Of special interest for our families is Tuesday, Jan 31<sup>st</sup> (Guest for Lunch Day).

### **HOME/SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

Thank you to the H/S for their donation of \$11,000 transferred to the school as the first installment of the \$50,000 commitment to the budget. This is a direct result of all fundraising efforts and we are grateful to all who support these efforts. In order to reach our goal it is critical that we have 100% participation by all families in the remaining fundraising efforts. The monthly SSS Lottery sales, the Reverse Raffle, Easter Candy Sale, and Spaghetti Dinner are some to the remaining efforts. Please do "your share" in helping us reach this goal. Those who made the activities of this past December possible – the Book Fair, Santa Breakfast, Santa Shop, Big Raffle, Lottery Sale – deserve a big hand and our thanks for jobs done well. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

I want to personally thank all the chairpersons of the H/S fundraisers for the great job done on behalf of the school.

### **VENANGO CATHOLIC PREPARATORY SCHOOLS**

VCPS (St. Patrick, St. Stephen, Venango Catholic High School) have joined forces in an effort to promote a fundraiser that could help each school's budget and eliminate the need for so many smaller fundraising efforts. We have purchased the seat licenses for four Steeler season tickets (2 preseason and 8 regular season home games plus an on-field pass to one game). Seats are in section 509, Row 4, seats 10-11-12-13. Tickets are \$20 each and the winner will be drawn at an event in June at VCHS. The proceeds will be split equally among the three schools. We hope to pay off the initial investment this year and increase our profit in each succeeding year as we continue to sell these tickets every year.

Tickets are available at each school and online at [www.winsteelerstickets.com](http://www.winsteelerstickets.com) and thru each schools website. Online sales do decrease our profit as we pay a commission to PayPal. We want to get this out to all Steeler fans so please pass the word to friends and family. Tickets may be sent home to our families next month. In the meantime, they are available in the school office. Checks should be made payable to Venango Catholic High School.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS**

We would like to be able to offer our after school clubs for students in grades 4-8 during Feb., March, and April. These groups meet twice each month for 1 ½ hours after school on a day convenient for the moderators.

We need adults with an interest in sharing a hobby/talent to sign up as moderators and contact the school office immediately so that we can compile a list of interested students. In the past we have offered some type of physical activity, computer class, crafts, cooking, chess (or other game), sign language, foreign language, science, to name a few. Please contact the office or Theresa Stack if you can help by January 20, 2012. If we do not have enough interest from parents we will not be able to offer these clubs.

### **STAR GRANTS/BISHOP'S TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Included in this packet all families will find a sheet outlining the grants/scholarships available through the diocese.

Applications for the STAR Grants for 2012-13 are due in Erie by March 31, 2012 with a \$15 application fee made payable to Tuition Assistance Program. We have included an application in this packet for families who received a STAR Grant this year. Any other family who wishes to obtain an application should contact the office.

Application for the Children's Scholarship Fund will be available in the spring and we will let you know when we receive them.

All families in need of tuition assistance are asked to apply to these two sources. We use the ranking from these sources to determine the distribution of tuition assistance/scholarships from the school. Our policy states that families applying to the school for assistance must first apply to the STAR Grant. **Families applying for assistance must be using the Scrip Program. This indicates they are willing to help themselves to reduce the cost of Catholic Education. If you have not used Scrip, there is still time to do so before the end of April. Remember that all money earned by April 31, 2012 is applied to next year's tuition. After April 31, money is applied to the following year's tuition. If you have any questions regarding the Scrip Program, contact the school office or Mrs. Cathy Sowden.**

### **SCRIPS**

Scrips orders resumed on Wednesday, Jan. 4th and will be delivered for pick up on Friday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. If you are not yet participating, get on board. Several families have a huge chunk of next year's tuition already saved. If you still have questions, please contact Cathy Sowden or the school office.

### **BOOK FAIR NEWS**

Thanks to Mrs. Teresa Stack and parent volunteers, we had another successful Book Fair. Please refer to the separate Book Fair notice in this packet for details.

### **SCHOOL DELAYS/CANCELLATIONS**

Again we remind our families about school delays and cancellations. When inclement weather causes delays/cancellations, St. Stephen School follows the schedule for the Oil City Area School District. When the OCASD calls a delay or cancellation, St. Stephen School will do the same. These announcements are made via the internet, TV and radio stations, and sometimes in the local newspapers. Area districts try to coordinate these as much as possible. Some outlying areas may differ due to conditions. In the event that your child is transported by another district, you will follow the decision of your district. It is possible that your district of residence may have school on time and that SSS could be delayed or cancelled. Remember we follow the schedule for the OCASD. (Oil City Area School District).

On these days, Preschool morning students do not report for classes. Preschool all day students report for classes by 10:30 AM. Many times the first decision announced is for a delay only later to be changed to a cancellation. This happened on Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>. For this reason, when a delay is announced, it is critical for families to continue listening for any changes until they leave home for school.

**Please remember to check your TeacherEase account for a current update on your student's progress and emails from your teachers.**



# St. Stephen School Catholic Schools Week Schedule January 29 – February 4, 2012

Catholic Schools: Faith, Academics, and Service

St. Stephen School Families:

SSS will join schools in the Erie Diocese and across the nation in celebrating CSW from January 29-February 4, 2012. Catholic Schools Week is a joint project sponsored by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

“This year’s theme focuses on the three priorities that make Catholic Schools stand out from other educational institutions. Children are taught FAITH – not just the basis of Christianity, but how to have a relationship with God. ACADEMICS, which in Catholic schools are held to very high standards, help each child reach his or her potential. SERVICE, the giving of one’s time and effort to help others, is taught both as an expression of faith and good citizenship.”

Attached to this letter is the calendar of activities. Please note the special forms and permission slips included.

**Please read the entire packet carefully as there are special dress requirements for some days. Then return all forms by the deadline of January 25, 2012. This helps us plan for food on Guest for Lunch Day, VCHS Day, and for all special activities. The special dress designations are outlined on the schedule. On Friday, Feb. 3, 2012 students from all Venango County Prep Schools will gather at VCHS for special activities and liturgy. This is a dress-down day (jeans, appropriate tops in school colors (red/black) or the black VCPS shirt from last year, and tennis shoes). Because students will be dancing on VC’s hardwood floor, students will need to carry their tennis shoes with them so as not to track in dirt or weather-related debris.**

**Please note: All three schools are collecting food items for local Catholic food pantries. Students are asked to bring one of the following: peanut butter, soup, box meals, toilet paper, or spaghetti sauce.**

We look forward to a great week celebrating our Catholic school. Join us for any activity throughout the week.

CSW Committee

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK 2012

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## FAITH, ACADEMICS AND SERVICE

### **Sunday, January 29, 2012 (FAITH Community)**

Catholic Schools Week begins with opening masses celebrated at parishes in our community. Students of our Catholic schools will be the greeters, readers and gift bearers at the 9:00 a.m. liturgy at St. Stephen Church and at the 10:15 a.m. liturgy at St. Joseph Church. We hope you will attend one of these masses with your family.

### **Monday, January 30, 2012 (SERVICE)**

Students will work with their guardian angels to make Valentine cards for the shut-ins and nursing home residents in our community.

### **Tuesday, January 31, 2012 (FAMILY)**

Our students will enjoy inviting a guest to eat with them at lunch today. Then after lunch, the students will view a movie and enjoy a snack.

### **Wednesday, February 1, 2012(ACADEMICS)**

Students in **Pre-K to Grade 2** will wear their favorite pajamas and bring their stuffed animal to school with them. Guardian angels may read a story aloud to their little friends sometime today. Students in **Grades 3-5** should dress as their favorite book or movie character. Students in **Grades 6-8** will dress as twins with a classmate, or they may wear clothing backwards.

### **Thursday, February 2, 2012 (ACADEMICS)**

Our theme for today is team spirit and students will wear their favorite team's shirt or colors. They will also play board games during the day. There will be a staff luncheon provided by parents from 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Students will enjoy a special activity in afternoon.

### **Friday, February 3, 2012 (FAITH)**

We will travel to VC and join VC and St. Patrick students for a day of fun-filled activities and to celebrate liturgy together as one faith community. Students will enjoy square-dancing, bingo, lunch and then culminate the day with the celebration of mass. Mass is at 1:00p.m. in the VC gym. Students will wear either the VCPS t-shirt given to them last year or a shirt representing their school colors.

*All are welcome and encouraged to attend any of these activities throughout the week.*