

spirit

NEWSLETTER

LIGHT OF CHRIST CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

2022-2023

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**LIVING
LEARNING
SERVING**

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OUR MISSION:

Encountering Christ in our Catholic faith through living, learning and serving.

OUR VISION:

Inspire and prepare the heart, soul and mind of future generations to radiate the Light of Christ.

OUR CORE BELIEFS:

- Encountering Christ
- Cultivating Virtues
- Inspiring Christ-like Relationships
- Academic Excellence
- Safe Environment

Update your mailing address or register your email at keepthepromise.net/contact-us to receive regular e-newsletter updates, view our videos and learn more about how to support the SAINTS!

1025 North 2nd Street
Bismarck, North Dakota
58501

Business Office

701-751-4883

Enrollment Office

701-354-7067

Mission Advancement Office

701-354-1226

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Catholic Schools



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President's Message

For no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ. - 1 Corinthians 3:11



The 2022-2023 school year marked the 145th year of Catholic education in this region. We wish our 78 graduates well, and we are excited to welcome 197 new students and 1,475 total students to our schools at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Elementary, Saint Anne School, St. Mary's Grade School, St. Mary's Academy and St. Mary's Central High School.

This is the 12th school year since Light of Christ Catholic Schools was formed. We remain authentically centered on a firm foundation of Christ. Catholic education plays a vital role in fostering and deepening the faith of our students and parents, and we are focused on upholding the stability to secure excellent Catholic identity, academic instruction, sacramental preparation and spiritual guidance within our five Catholic schools.

I am continually inspired by the dedication, commitment and partnership between our parishes, schools and families. Over the past 10 years, our enrollment has grown by 43% and our board of directors, administrators, faculty and staff have done a phenomenal job in caring for and educating our students. It is within the walls of our schools that values and respect are instilled, nurturing the spiritual, intellectual and moral development of our students. I would like to personally deliver a heartfelt thank you to the entire community of Light of Christ Catholic Schools for continuing our mission: ***Encountering Christ in our Catholic Faith through living, learning and serving.***

Last year, we announced that we successfully reached our Keep the Promise Campaign fundraising goals of \$46.5 million. Thank you to all who pledged to the campaign and have given so generously. Additionally, we introduced the Stability Initiative to stabilize our schools for today, tomorrow and generations to come. The need for Catholic education has never been more critical. Built on our firm Benedictine foundation, our schools are uniquely equipped to form students in the Catholic tradition so they are ready for the future.

The new evangelization efforts of our faith invite each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas wrote, "To convert somebody, you go and take them by the hand, and guide them." Our Catholic schools serve an important role in the evangelization that reaches far beyond just our local community. Our administrators, faculty and staff are committed. They support the teachings of the Catholic faith, and they inspire their students to embrace those experiences and share them with their families and beyond. Our faith is a true gift and seamlessly aligns with the vision of Light of Christ Catholic Schools to: ***inspire and prepare the heart, soul, and mind of future generations.***

On behalf of everyone at Light of Christ Catholic Schools, I want to thank you for your prayers and generous support. I ask you for your continued prayers as we begin the new school year, while sustaining the great legacy of our Catholic schools.

Peace,

Gerald T. Vetter, President
Light of Christ Catholic Schools



Light of Christ Catholic Schools

Living

Our Mission:

Encountering Christ in our Catholic faith through **living**, learning & serving.



“A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person. And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become Saints.” – Pope Benedict XVI

Congratulations

SMCHS Class of 2023

This is the 101st SMCHS graduating class and the first class to attend all four years of high school at our beautiful new campus!

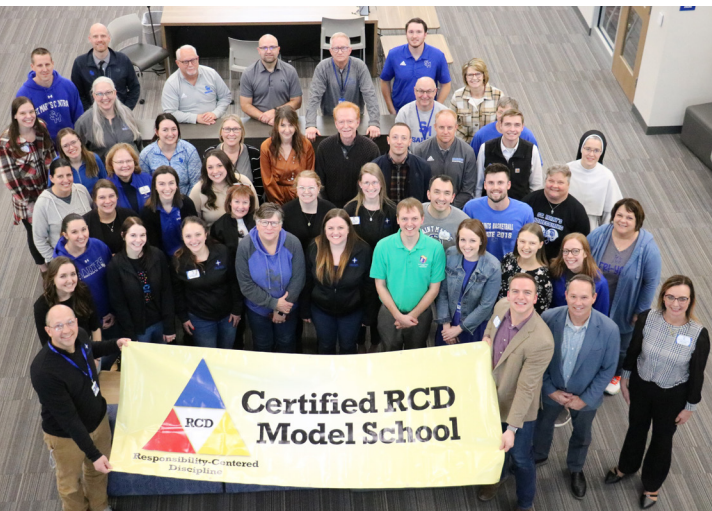


May the Lord bless you and keep you...

Learning

Our Mission:

Encountering Christ in our Catholic faith through living, **learning** & serving.



SMCHS and the Academy were recently named as Responsibility-Centered Discipline (RCD) schools. RCD was created by Larry Thompson to help educators learn the necessary skills and develop a plan to systematically create a culture of student self-responsibility within their schools.

In an RCD school, educators collaborate to identify values and skills – like respect, honesty, effort and academic competencies – that they want students to take with them. Once these values and skills are identified, they are used to establish a common language to address challenging discipline moments with students.

Becoming an RCD Model school is a three-year commitment that includes the formation of an RCD Leadership Team, and a commitment to teacher practice two times a month. On February 17, St. Mary's Academy and St. Mary's Central High School completed the three-year training with Larry Thompson and became an RCD Model School.

Thank you to all of our administrators and teachers who have worked to attain this goal over the past three years. We are grateful for all of our teachers and employees who follow these guidelines and standards in our schools, every day!



Serving

Our Mission:

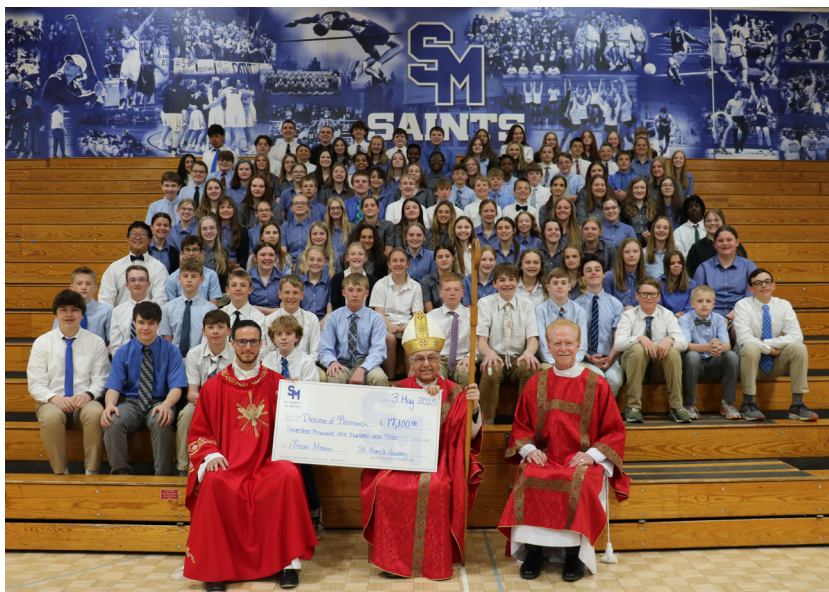
Encountering Christ in our Catholic faith through living, learning & **serving**.

SM CARNIVAL



Special thanks to all who volunteered throughout the Carnival weekend, bought or sold the raffle tickets or attended the Carnival events for old-fashioned family fun! The Carnival began 72 years ago as a way for the parishes to support Catholic education - and that tradition is still going strong today because of the incredible support from all of you!

Mark your calendars for the 2024 Carnival - February 2-3-4!



St. Mary's Academy students participated in the annual "Parable of the Talents" project, based on the Gospel of Matthew. Each student is given \$10 and asked to use their time and talents to multiply their money, which is all donated to the African Mission of the Diocese of Bismarck. **With a love of God and love of neighbor, our students transformed \$1,170 (\$10 each) into a total donation of \$17,100!**



The Cathedral School penny war project helped to raise more than \$4,000 for the United Way Backpacks for Kids program - in just two days!

This fundraiser was a special part of Catholic Schools Week and at the event to announce the success of their efforts, each class was dressed in a specific color, to reflect the rainbow when they all work together. On the morning of the announcement, we were told that the backpacks program was \$4,000 short of what they needed for the month - and our check provided just what they needed!



During the season of Advent, Saint Anne School students and families donated hats, gloves, socks, food and hygiene products to Ministry on the Margins.

Light of Christ Catholic Schools Test Scores

CONSISTENTLY STRONG

In North Dakota, students in 3rd through 8th grade take the North Dakota State Assessment (NDSA) in English language arts and math. Students in 4th and 8th grade also take NDSA in science. High school students in 10th grade take NDSA in English, math and science.

Light of Christ Catholic Schools administers the NDSA tests each spring during the designated state testing window. The results are reviewed with students, shared with families, and the data is analyzed and reviewed by instructors and administrators. This information is tracked yearly and guides instructional practices to promote student success.

With a carefully-designed curriculum and staff dedication, Light of Christ Catholic Schools students have averted the decline in test scores that much of the country has experienced.

Graduating Class of 2022*
ACT Score Averages:
SMCHS: 22.1
ND: 19.2
USA: 19.8

2022-23 School Year:
- 194 students enrolled in Advanced Placement classes
- 233 students enrolled in Dual Credit college classes

\$1,223,393 in Scholarships Awarded to Class of 2023

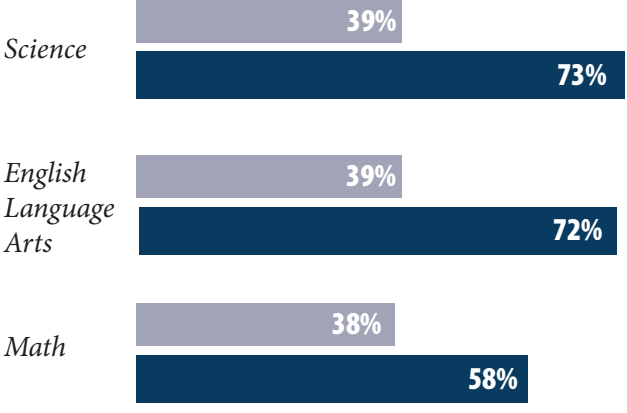
71% of Class of 2023 Graduates Qualified for the ND Scholarship

*Results for Graduating Class of 2023 not yet released

ND Percent Proficient Light of Christ Catholic Schools

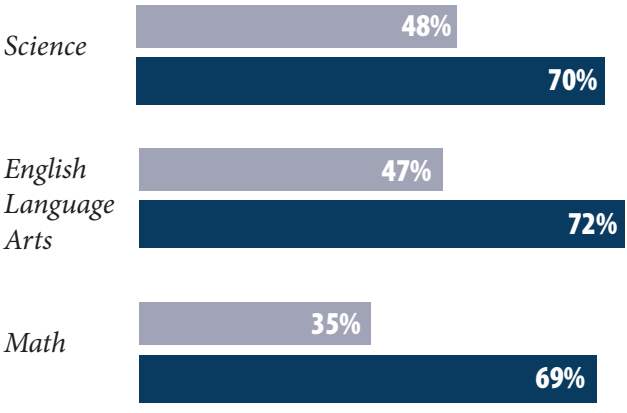
4TH GRADE ASSESSMENTS

Cathedral School, Saint Anne School & St. Mary's Grade School



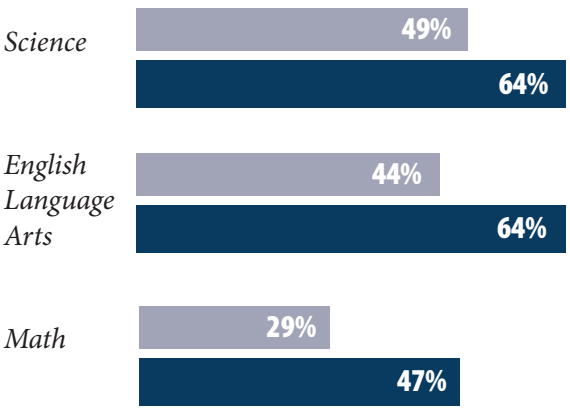
8TH GRADE ASSESSMENTS

St. Mary's Academy

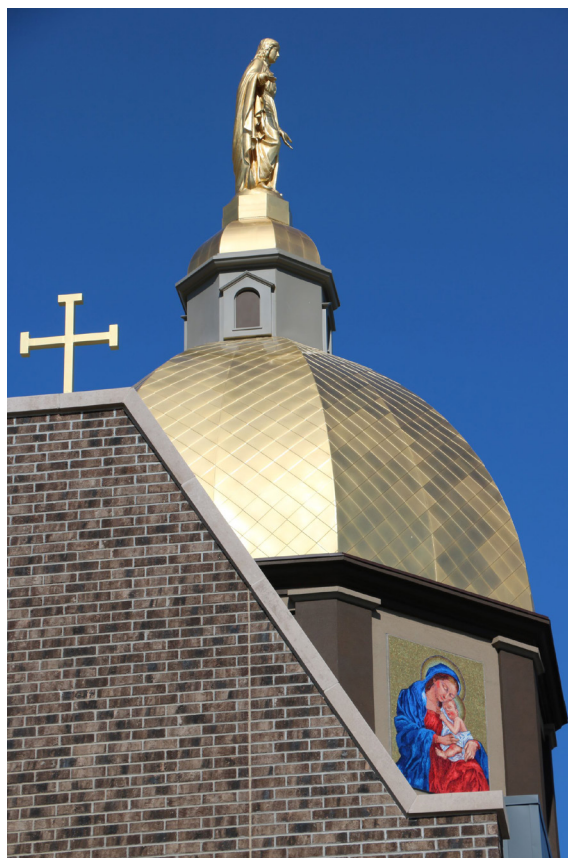


10TH GRADE ASSESSMENTS

St. Mary's Central High School



Our Lady of Victory Chapel



We started a new tradition this year with the Eucharistic procession around the SMCHS campus on the feast day of Our Lady of Victory. Students and staff prayed the rosary as they walked all around the school campus. Students also had the opportunity to place their prayers inside the Ark of the Covenant - another new tradition!

We recently added four new exterior mosaics on the dome of Our Lady of Victory Chapel: Holy Mother with Christ Child, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Good Shepherd.

Inside the chapel, we also added six new murals depicting the life of Mary: Presentation of Mary in the temple, Betrothal of Mary and Joseph, Visitation, Nativity, Mary receiving Jesus at the foot of the cross & Assumption.

There are sponsorship opportunities within the chapel. Sponsorship donors will be recognized on the donor wall at the chapel entrance. Proceeds from these sponsorships will help cover the daily operations of our schools.

Learn more at: keepthepromise.net/chapel-sponsorships

As we continue to prepare for the official consecration of Our Lady of Victory Chapel, look for future announcements and details on how to celebrate with us at:

keepthepromise.net/our-lady-of-victory-chapel

Use this link to register your email on this website to receive all of our chapel updates or request a chapel tour.



Light of Christ Catholic Schools

ANNUAL REPORT

Operating Income Statement

	2021-22	2022-23	% of Total
Tuition	\$6,866,754	\$7,417,886	62.6%
Parish Contributions**	\$2,345,328	\$1,918,587	16.2%
Fundraising/Donations	\$1,933,847	\$1,825,565	15.4%
Grants/Other Miscellaneous	\$236,810	\$681,078	5.8%
	\$11,382,739	\$11,843,116	100%
Salaries and Benefits	\$8,997,687	\$9,301,746	77.7%
Maintenance/Insurance/Facilities Expenses	\$1,081,594	\$1,151,976	9.6%
Educational Materials	\$1,201,562	\$1,514,042	12.7%
	\$11,280,843	\$11,967,764	100%
Operating Income/(Loss)	\$101,896	(\$124,648)*	

*The Operating Income Statement does not include funds raised for the Capital Campaign or the Stability Initiative as these are specially intended fundraising campaigns. However, Phase 1 of the Stability Initiative and the \$5M Match did impact Annual Fundraising/Donations as donors chose to direct their gifts toward reaching the Phase 1 goal and match. This was the primary reason for an operating loss in 2022-23.

**St. Mary's Carnival proceeds and Bismarck Area Catholic Education Foundation (BACEF) distribution were reported as Parish Contributions in the 2021-22 annual report, and are now classified under Fundraising/Donations.



Enrollment Growth

The chart below shows the incredible enrollment growth we have experienced since Light of Christ was formed in 2012.

	2012-13	2022-23	% Increase
Number of Students (Pre-K - Grade 12)	1,042	1,437	+37.9%
Number of Families (Pre-K - Grade 12)	552	859	+55.6%
Number of Elementary School Classrooms (Pre-K-Grade 5)	24	44	+83.3%
Size of Kindergarten Class (3 schools)	76	116	+52.6%

Average Cost to Educate a Student

(Per K-12 Student)

There are three sources of funding to cover the actual costs of educating a student: tuition, parish/diocesan contributions and the funds that are raised through our partnerships and annual appeals. Due to the generosity and commitment of our Bismarck Catholic parishes and donors, all students receive a subsidy to attend Light of Christ Catholic Schools.

Average Cost to Educate	2015-16	2022-23
Average Minimum Tuition Paid by Each Student	\$3,442	\$4,997
Average Parish/Diocesan Contributions Per Student	\$1,983	\$1,520
Average Need Per Student From Annual Fundraising	\$431	\$2,085
Average Cost to Educate a Light of Christ Student	\$5,855	\$8,602

Tuition Assistance

We believe all families who desire a Catholic education for their child should have that opportunity. Our need-based tuition assistance is available for those who **qualify based upon income table parameters** and then complete an application process. In the 2022-23 school year, we awarded \$530,000 in tuition assistance to 104 families who have 228 students.

Fundraising

In 2012-13, we fundraised \$370,000 and today, we raise more than \$1.8 million for our annual budget.



It is very important to note that these annual fundraising dollars were in addition to Capital Campaign contributions and funds raised for Phase 1 of the Stability Initiative. All fundraising efforts are necessary to keep our educational programming vibrant and our tuition rates affordable.

Stability Initiative

Thanks to a generous \$5 million match and over 450 donors, we have successfully reached our Phase 1 goal of \$12 million!

We are so grateful for the generosity of all who made this accomplishment possible.

God has blessed our schools in many ways since the establishment of Light of Christ Catholic Schools in the 2012-13 school year. The generosity of many good and faithful benefactors has allowed Catholic education to thrive in Bismarck.



DONOR APPRECIATION MASS AND SOCIAL

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 at 6:30pm

Our Lady of Victory Chapel at St. Mary's Central High School

Please join us to celebrate all that has been accomplished with your support.

RSVP at: keepthepromise.net/appreciation

Now that we have successfully completed Phase 1 of the Stability Initiative by raising the first \$12 million, we turn our efforts to Phase 2 – the creation of a \$40 million endowment over the next 4 years.

An endowment of \$40 million will generate an estimated annual distribution of \$2 million, which will be used for the daily operations of our five schools and to achieve the three goals of the Stability Initiative.

STABILITY INITIATIVE - PHASE 1
\$12 million raised to cover debt payments over the next 4 years

2022

NOW-2026

STABILITY INITIATIVE - PHASE 2
Currently building a \$40M general endowment to generate \$2M in annual distributions for operational needs

STABILITY INITIATIVE - PHASE 3
Build general and specialized endowments to \$80M to generate a projected \$4M in annual distributions

2026-2033

The Light of Christ Catholic Schools Stability Initiative is our 11-year strategic fundraising plan implemented to help us achieve the following goals:



1) OFFER THE BEST CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Well-formed, well-educated students need to be in our workplaces and colleges, spreading Christ to those they encounter, while living out their vocations.



2) COMPETITIVELY COMPENSATE EMPLOYEES

Leaders drive success and inspire students to achieve at high levels. By offering compensation that is comparable with local standards, we can attract and retain the best individuals to lead our students.



3) KEEP COSTS AFFORDABLE FOR FAMILIES

As has been the case for several generations of Saints, we intend to ensure anyone desiring Catholic education is able to attend regardless of their financial situation. In addition, this initiative will allow tuition rates paid by families to remain as affordable as possible, setting a national standard for equality in Catholic education.

Light of Christ Catholic Schools has worked hard to be a strong and successful educational system. We want to continue the legacy of a solid Catholic education in Bismarck.

We need the help of all of our alumni and friends to meet the next goal.

Please consider a gift to the Light of Christ Catholic Schools Endowment Fund.

Gifts of all sizes are truly appreciated. Options for giving include: cash, check, EFT from a bank account, credit card, stock/property, estate gifts. To give online, please visit: keepthepromise.net/stability-initiative.

Another way to give is to include Light of Christ Catholic Schools in your will. For more information, please contact us at (701) 354-1226.



Legacy Reserve Fund

Thank you to our Legacy Reserve Fund donors who have set up accounts to benefit our Tuition Assistance Program.

Clairmont Family Fund
Marianna Dosch Family Fund
Schubert Family Fund
Schneider Family Fund
Schweitzer Family Fund
Mike and Janel Schmitz Fund
Laurie Heggen Memorial Fund
James M. Braus Fund
Slag Family Fund
DeKok Memorial Fund
Jeremy M. Goetz Memorial Fund
Bridget O'Keefe Dunn Memorial Fund
Mark & Laurie Kadrmas Fund
Marc Baumgartner Memorial Fund
George & Margaret Fortune Seaworth Fund
William J. Schmidt Fund
Roger Haug Fund
Dominic and Rose St. Peter Family Fund

If you are interested in donating to one of these funds or starting a fund, please contact the Mission Advancement Office.

Memorials

Thank you to those who honored the following individuals with a memorial gift this year.

May they rest in peace.

Michael Adamitis
Marc Baumgartner
Bonnie Benz
Joseph & Audrey Cleary
Brent DeKok
Peter Fischer
Jean Fortune
Eileen Fracassi
Alex & Leona Friedt
Bernice M. Geiger
Diane Glatt
Laurie Heggen
Lisa Hixson
Catherine Huber
Monona Jackson
Tim Maher
Philip and Anne Marie Miller
Paul Schmidt
Thomas Schmitz
MaDonna Short
Morris Tschider
Tony Vetter

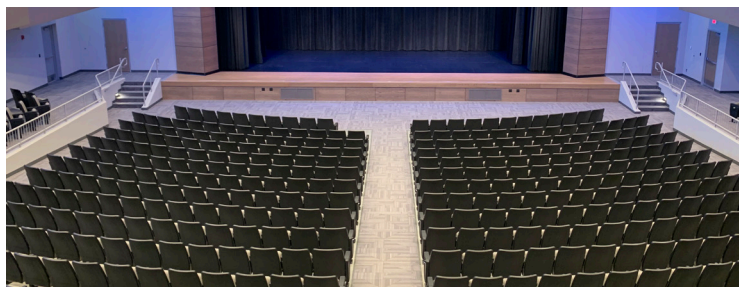
LOCKER & SEAT SPONSORS

This is an opportunity to name an auditorium seat, sports or academic locker for yourself, your family or in memory of someone dear to you.

Athletic Locker - \$1,500

Auditorium Seat - \$500

Academic Locker - \$250



Learn more at: keepthepromise.net/locker-sponsorships



JOIN THE SAINTS MUG CLUB

When you join the SAINTS Mug Club, you become part of a group dedicated to the mission of our schools.

Benefits of SAINTS Mug Club Membership:

- Each Saints Mug Club member receives the gift of a SM mug (or a pair of SM mugs)
- Special member perks at social events
- SAINTS PRIDE - Knowing you are an essential part of the success of all our schools!

Learn more at: keepthepromise.net/saints-mug-club



To our Alumni: Follow the new SMCHS Saints Alumni Facebook & Instagram pages for photos, updates, reunion information and many fun memories!
facebook.com/SMCHSSaintsAlumni instagram.com/smchsalumni

If you are planning a reunion,
please connect with us!
Call: 701-354-1226
Email: kbleth@lightofchristschools.org
Learn more: smchs.org/reunions

We will be hosting a **Golden Years Reunion** in September 2024 during Homecoming Week for any of our SAINTS alumni who graduated 50 years (or more) ago. Arrangements are pending.

FALL RAFFLE TICKETS

Our annual Fall Raffle will kick off on August 31 with a \$10,000 grand prize and \$25,000 in total prizes!



The annual Light of Christ Catholic Schools PreK-Grade 8 Fall Raffle plays a significant role in funding our Tuition Assistance program, allowing families who may not be able to afford the full cost of tuition to attend our schools. This year, the proceeds will also help support our students and teachers in the areas of classroom subscriptions to enhance learning and will help to fund our PTOs, who offer activities for students and staff throughout the year that make each of our schools unique.

Students will be selling the \$20 raffle tickets through September 29. Drawing will be held Wednesday, October 4. Learn more at:

lightofchristschools.org/raffle

Save the Dates

Mark your calendars and join the SAINTS during the 2023-2024 school year! Watch for more details as these dates approach.



Back to School Picnic
For LOC School Families

Friday, August 25

Thursday, September 7

Donor Appreciation Mass & Social
SMCHS



SMCHS Homecoming
Dan Smrekar Hall of Fame induction, SAINTS football & post-game social

Friday, September 8

Thursday, October 26

Oktoberfest
Mug Club Event



DeKok Memorial Basketball Tournament
Tony Wald Court

Wednesday, December 27

February 2-4

St. Mary's Carnival
St. Mary's Academy



Giving Hearts Day
Online day of giving

Thursday, February 8

Thursday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day
Mug Club Event



Saints Ball

Tickets on sale in February 2024

Saturday, April 27



SMCHS HEAD FOOTBALL COACH **DAN SMREKAR**



SAINTS Football Coach Dan Smrekar to be Inducted into the 2023 SMCHS Hall of Fame

St. Mary's Central High School is pleased to announce that Dan Smrekar will be inducted into the 2023 Hall of Fame during the Homecoming football game on Friday, Sept. 8, 2023. Dan Smrekar coached the SAINTS for 45 years with a career record of 295-168, including 8 state titles and 14 region titles.

Mark your calendars for Friday, Sept. 8 and plan to join us on Smrekar Field to celebrate Coach Smrekar!

- 6:20pm – Hall of Fame recognition on Smrekar Field, including game coin toss and announcement immediately preceding the Homecoming football game
- 7:00pm – Homecoming football game - SMCHS vs. Williston High School
- Social celebrating Dan Smrekar at SMCHS Cafeteria (Ages 21+ only) following the football game

Thank you, Coach Smrekar, for all you have done and continue to do for our schools!



In honor of Coach Dan Smrekar and his many years of dedicated service to our students, a scholarship fund has been set up in his name. Gifts given to this fund will help our tuition assistance program, providing financial aid to students who would not otherwise be able to attend our schools. Learn more online at:

keepthepromise.net/smrekarscholarshipfund

Thank You

to our corporate partners!

Our Corporate Partnership program provides tuition assistance for Light of Christ Catholic Schools students.

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If you or your company are interested in this unique sponsorship opportunity, please contact:
 Toby Schweitzer at 701-220-1507 or ttschweitzer@lightofchristschools.org



Light of Christ Catholic Schools

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the easy enrollment
process online or learn
how to schedule a personal
tour at our schools.

**Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Elementary
Saint Anne School**

St. Mary's Grade School

Pre-Kindergarten, Age 3 - half day, M-W-F, or T-H

Pre-Kindergarten, Ages 4-5 - half day or full day, M-F

Kindergarten - Grade 5

St. Mary's Academy

Grades 6-8

St. Mary's Central High School

Grades 9-12

For more information:

701-354-7067

sindovina@lightofchristschools.org

Begin the easy enrollment process online:

lightofchristschools.org/enrollment