

St. Mary School News

St. Mary School nurtures the development of the whole child: spiritually, academically, emotionally, and socially. St. Mary School provides a strong, accessible, and rigorous Catholic education to the students of greater Grays Harbor and their families.



A Publication for Alumni, Families, and Friends of St. Mary School

School Faculty Focus on Keeping “Christ in the Classroom”

Maintaining the Catholic identity of St. Mary School is a core philosophy that school leaders and faculty members discuss on a regular basis. One of the tools that the staff uses to periodically come together and focus on this philosophy is the “Christ in the Classroom” program (CIC).

Since 2017, the Office for Catholic Schools in the Seattle Archdiocese has overseen the CIC program that includes both a core catechist training program for religion teachers and twice yearly retreats for all faculty. SMS teachers gathered for their first yearly retreat in early October at the home of a staff member to focus on the topic of “Learning to Pray.” The group discussed, shared, and reflected on the different types of prayer, personal



Amy Lemus and Cara Fabini share insights during the fall “Christ in the Classroom” retreat.

prayer, prayer in the classroom, and the Mass and Eucharist as prayer. SMS Principal Carrie Marlow participated in the same retreat with other school principals in September and then facilitated the local retreat.

“Both as a retreat participant and as a retreat facilitator, I have appreciated and been grateful for the opportunities to slow down and learn in community with my fellow faith-filled colleagues and staff members,” Mrs. Marlow said.

During the five hour event, teachers had the opportunity to review the Church teaching on prayer, discuss its impact in their own lives, and then strategize about the best methods to incorporate prayer into the daily school routine.

“The retreat was energizing for me,” said 7th / 8th grade teacher Kristin Scroggs. “I was motivated to try some of the ideas we came up with on implementing prayer with my class.”



St. Mary School faculty members discuss prayer at their fall “Christ in the Classroom” retreat.

SMS Announces New Staff Assignments

This fall, St. Mary School welcomed three new staff members and had several teachers move to new assignments.

The 2nd/3rd grade multi-age class is taught by Cara Fabini who comes to SMS after ten years teaching at Lincoln Elementary in Hoquiam. In addition, Mrs. Fabini also teaches the 7th and 8th grade science class.

In the 1st/2nd grade multi-age classroom, mentor teacher Lisa Villar and student teacher Amy Lemus (see related story on page 4) are co-teaching the class. SMS also welcomes a new instructional aide, Abriana Ness, who is assisting Mrs. Fabini.

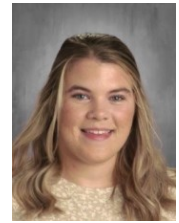
With the move to multi-age classes this year, several teachers took on new positions. Susan Batcheller is now co-teaching the 4th/5th multi-age class with Liz Brueher, and also teaching K-6 science and K-3 technology. Also, Kristin Scroggs is teaching the 7th/8th multi-age class, as well as 3rd grade math.



Cara Fabini



Amy Lemus



Abriana Ness

Choir Music Returns at Weekly St. Mary School Masses

By Ana Howe, Sixth Grade

St. Mary School brought back the student choir at the weekly school Masses this year after several years without one. Right now, we have four students and Mrs. Folden, who leads the choir and plays the guitar. We sing at the beginning and end of Mass as well as some of the liturgy, such as the Kyrie and the Alleluia. The choir practices once a week before school, and we also can practice at home. I joined the choir because I love to sing, and the music is calming. It also helps me listen more at Mass. Mrs. Folden helps us with our singing, in finding the notes and memorizing the words.

According to Mrs. Folden, “The SMS Mass choir are talented and dedicated. They are not only learning music but, also, how and why it is used in liturgy. We are working on being professional and reserved as we lead the congregation in song. Liturgical seasons, interspersed with Solemnities, move quickly. I hope, with the new year, we can have time to look ahead and be well prepared for the next season.”



St. Mary School Mass Choir singing at one of the weekly school Masses. (Left to right) Kaileah Hernandez, Aryana Riojas, Ana Howe, and Choir Director Judy Folden. (Not pictured: AnnaLeigh Peterson)

School Snapshots



▲ St. Mary School students enjoy lunch with a member of the JBLM Quartet prior to the Veterans' Day assembly.

David Quigg ► reads one of the winning raffle tickets at the Oktoberfest Rib Dinner along with Fr. Jim, Fr. Marcos, Fr. Navy and student helpers.

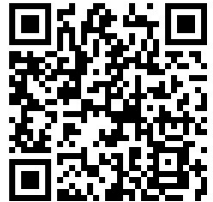


Planning Underway for St. Mary School 100 Year Anniversary

The party may be a couple of years away but planning has started for the 100 year anniversary of St. Mary School. The year 2026 will mark a full century since students moved from the St. Rose Academy building into the current SMS building at the corner of 5th and H Streets. The steering committee would like to hear from alumni, parishioners and community members to help plan a celebration befitting the school that has formed generations of Harborites.

Preliminary ideas include a two or three day celebration around a weekend in late summer or early fall of 2026 and could involve any or all of the following: a special Mass, tours of the school, memorabilia displays, coffee hour, and a dinner event. Our first step is to gather ideas and find out what people would like to see and do. We also are in need of volunteers from all age groups to help locate as many former students, faculty, staff, clergy, etc. as possible.

If you have ideas for the event, can help us locate people, or would like to be involved in some other way, we want to hear from you. You can fill out the form below and mail it to the school or complete an online form by either scanning the QR code at right or going to the school website: www.saintmaryschool.org and clicking on the "100 Year Celebration" button.



St. Mary School 100 Year Anniversary Input

Name(s) _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Relationship to SMS (check all that apply)

City, St, Zip _____ Alumnus (Grad yr.) _____ Parishioner

Email _____ Family/Friend/Other _____

Things I/we would like to see included as part of the 100 year anniversary celebration in 2026 (check all items you are interested in):

- Special Mass
- Coffee Hour
- School Tours
- Dinner
- Photos / Memorabilia

List any other ideas or questions you have for the celebration: _____

In what way(s) would you like to participate? Note that this is just to help us with planning and you are not committing to anything at this time. (check all that apply)

- Attend some/all of the events
- View photos/videos of the event afterwards (attend remotely)

- Help with planning (see below)
- Provide financial support

If you would like to help us make this event a success, in what ways would you like to be involved?

- Finding contact information for classmates, teachers, etc.

- Serve on a committee to help plan events

- Loan my photos / memorabilia for the celebration

- Other (describe) _____

Please mail completed form to St. Mary School, 518 North H ST, Aberdeen, WA 98520

Amy Lemus: Hope for the Future of Teaching

When Amy Lemus started her student teaching at St. Mary School this fall, there was excitement among the staff at having a young, Catholic, bilingual teacher in the school. But just as important was seeing a longtime member of the SMS “family” step into the classroom.

Born in Aberdeen, Amy spent her early years growing up in Mexico before returning to attend Aberdeen High School. She first got to know St. Mary School when her younger brother and sister attended in middle school. When Amy and her husband Rigoberto got married and had their son Rigo, they decided to enroll him at SMS for preschool. Their first move away came when Rigoberto’s job took the family out of the area when Rigo was in Kindergarten.

“He struggled a bit in reading while we were gone and then we came back when he was in first grade and after one month he was reading,” said Amy.

When their daughter Mia was born, Amy started to feel the pull toward teaching when she had the opportunity to work as an instructional aide in Kristin Scroggs’ third grade classroom.

“I worked one-on-one with a student who was really behind and helped him get caught up,” remembered Amy. “So that motivated me that I was able to make a difference.”



The Lemus Family: Rigoberto, Rigo, Mia, and Amy

She credits Mrs. Scroggs along with longtime teacher Jolie Carroll for motivating her to pursue teaching as a career. Still, Amy had doubts because English was not her first language and she thought it might be too hard to teach in English.

Her inclination toward teaching would be put on hold for several years as the family moved again, first to Idaho and then to California. When they returned to Grays Harbor and to SMS in 2022, Rigo was starting seventh grade and Mia was in Kindergarten. By this time, Amy had gotten her AA degree and was ready to pursue teaching as a career so she enrolled in the two-year teaching certificate program at Grays Harbor College. When the time came to do her student teaching, Amy heard from SMS Principal Carrie Marlow that there might be an opportunity to complete her training there. Mrs. Marlow and vice principal Lisa Villar put their heads together and arranged for Mrs. Villar to serve as the mentor teacher in the 1st / 2nd multi-age classroom with Amy as student teacher. Mrs. Villar said that working with Amy gives her hope for the future of teaching.

“Amy believes this is her God-given gift and she is on a mission to see it come to fruition,” said Mrs. Villar. “She is energetic, enthusiastic, self-motivated, faith-filled, creative and self-reflective; all qualities that a teacher needs to be successful. She is teaching part-time (which really isn't part-time), going to school full-time, and still being a mom and wife. She is amazing!”

For her part, Amy is quick to highlight the ways that Mrs. Villar has helped her.

“I am fortunate to be paired with a veteran teacher with a wealth of experience and knowledge to share,” Amy said. “Mrs. Villar's feedback is always delivered in a supportive and encouraging manner, which helps me stay motivated and focused on my goals.”

There was, however, one facet of working with Mrs. Villar that Amy found challenging at first.



Amy Lemus discusses Advent with her class.

Continued on page 5

Basketball Program Returns Building Skills, Confidence

St. Mary School students are back on the hardwood with the return of an organized basketball program after an absence of quite a few years. Elementary schools in Aberdeen, Hoquiam, and Cosmopolis came together to sponsor both boys and girls basketball leagues aimed at 5th graders. Because of their smaller class sizes, Cosmopolis and St. Mary were allowed to include 4th and 6th grade students on their teams. Starting the program from scratch required an investment in uniforms and basketballs and a couple of generous donations from Sarah Mizin and the SMS Alumni Facebook Group covered those expenses.

The girls league took place in October and November, and SMS had 10 students turn out, most of whom had never played organized basketball before. With the patience and encouragement of coaches Griffin Kincade (alumnus), Annica Mizin (parent), and Elizabeth Tschimperle (parent), the girls grew in skill and



Fifth grade student Silver Tupper prepares to pass during a game.

confidence as the season went on. They completed the season with a 5-1 record and finished second in the final tournament.

“It was my first time playing basketball and some other people’s too,” said



A tired but happy SMS girls basketball team after taking second place in the end-of-season tournament.

sixth grade student Betsy Bold. “It was really cool because we haven’t had basketball in a long time and we still got second place.”

Sixth grade student Thea Brown added, “I like that I got to make new friends while playing basketball.”

Coach Griffin Kincade said the most enjoyable part for him was seeing the girls grow out of their comfort zones. “Winning is nice but when you can see them gain confidence in themselves, that’s the real pleasure.”

The boys league will be starting up in January and promises to continue the excitement and opportunities for personal growth.

Amy Lemus: Hope for the Future (continued from page 4)

“When I started the year with Mrs. Villar as my mentor teacher, I thought maybe I couldn’t make it because I’m never going to be able to teach as well as she does,” Amy said.

However, she added that the school staff was quick to build up her confidence.

“Everyone at school was super supportive, sharing their time with me, offering strategies and materials,” Amy said. “They treat me like I’m one of them and not just a student teacher. They tell me ‘you’re a professional and you’re going to get there.’”

Amy said she is using her bilingual ability to give students some exposure to simple phrases in Spanish like ‘take out your pencil’ and ‘put your name on your paper’ and she also tries to reinforce the information the students get in their weekly Spanish class.

One added twist for Amy is that her daughter Mia is a student in the class she is teaching. Amy was very careful

to make sure that Mia didn’t receive special treatment.

“Mia is like any other student, I try not to call on her too much,” Amy said. “She knows that at school I’m Mrs. Lemus and at home I’m Mom.”

Amy said that going through the student teaching process has helped make her aware of the demands that come with the job.

“I thought teaching would be the perfect profession because I thought that whenever school is out, I could be with my kids,” Amy laughed. “But I found out that when school is out, I still need to be here and work.”

However, she was quick to add that there are benefits to teaching as well.

“It’s very rewarding when the students are learning what you are teaching,” Amy said. “I am blessed that I have good support from my mentor teacher and everyone else at school.”



A Message From Mrs. Marlow

Greetings St. Mary School Community, Friends, and Supporters,

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139: 23-24

Opportunities to grow in relationship with God and each other and opportunities to grow through self-reflection both as individuals and as a school community are true blessings. This school year, we are experiencing several of these opportunities.

In the face of lower student numbers and fewer faculty as well as the challenge of meeting the learning needs of all students, the SMS Leadership Team chose to research and then implement a new multi-age classroom model from preschool through 8th grade and in order to better fit our instructional needs and priorities, rearrange teaching assignments. We also updated and streamlined our online learning program usage across all grade levels. With these changes in place, we are doing a more thorough job of meeting the needs of the whole child for EVERY student at St. Mary School. I am so proud of our faculty and staff for embracing these changes and doing the work to prepare themselves and their classrooms for the adjustments.

In addition, the St. Mary School community has begun the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) Accreditation self-study process in preparation for our re-accreditation in the 24-25 school year. The self-study process is 18-months of evidence gathering and the examination of our school, its leadership, its operations, its finances, and most importantly, its Catholic identity and academics. Currently, we are in the evidence gathering phase and our school staff, parents, and students have completed the self-study surveys. This winter we will begin the process of reviewing the evidence and using the WCEA rubrics, which are based on the National Standards and Benchmarks for Excellent Catholic Schools, to identify areas of strength and areas of growth and an action plan of improvement goals. Next fall, we will be visited by an Accreditation team and then hopefully, receive renewed Accreditation for six more years. We are grateful for the opportunity to examine, self-reflect, and create a plan for moving forward.

In the pages of this bi-annual newsletter, you will see and read about the many activities our families, students, and staff have been involved in this fall. Our building and campus have been a hub of activity and to witness the students engaging in prayer, School Masses and mass music, as well as extra-curricular activities such as the revitalized elementary basketball program, Mass and Honors Choir, and Student Council has been wonderful. As we head into holiday time, we are looking forward to the many activities of the Advent season and preparing for the arrival of Jesus.

As we continually work to improve upon our school culture, increase community building opportunities, and build the kingdom of God, we thank you all for keeping us in YOUR prayers and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your generous support! Please know that YOU and the world are also in OUR prayers. Together we forge on through the challenges and opportunities for growth knowing in our hearts that the Lord is continually pushing us forward and blessing our path.

May the Lord keep us safe and bless us all!

Together in Christ,

Carrie Marlow

School Principal

Donations and memorial gifts, July 1 to November 30, 2023

In Memory/Honor

In Honor of Carrie Marlow,
SMS teachers and staff

John and Gail Quigg

In Honor of Gail Quigg

Joanne and David Burdick

In Honor of Kathy Quigg Ewen

Heikel Family

In Honor of Mike and Mary Ann Quigg

John and Gail Quigg

In Honor of Patrick and Kathleen Quigg

Heikel Family

Steven Isaacson

In Honor of Gordy and Claudette Scure

John and Gail Quigg

In Memory of Fern Backholm

Charles and Mary Isaacson

Tom LaForest

Bill and Carol Quigg

In Memory of Kaye Bickford

Steven Isaacson

John and Gail Quigg

In Memory of Barbara Pearsall Burr

Robert Erickson

In Memory of Don Glud

Steven Isaacson

In Memory of Eloise Harmia

Michael Braykovich

Daniel and Jean Dugas

In Memory of Mary Ellen Hughes

Charles and Mary Isaacson

John and Gail Quigg

Patrick and Kathy Quigg

Pete and Kristin Scroggs

In Memory of Carol Kegel

Timothy and Shandell Grekul

Joseph Novak

Richard and Mary Wong

In Memory of Patrick Lee

Oliver and J'Neil Mackey

In Memory of Brock Lindsay

Steven Isaacson

In Memory of Catherine Mackey

Oliver and J'Neil Mackey

In Memory of David Mayr

Oliver and J'Neil Mackey

In Memory of Jon Parker

Charles and Mary Isaacson

Tom LaForest

In Memory of John "Jack" Richardson

Robert Erickson

In Memory of Bill Schafer

Charles and Mary Isaacson

Pete and Kristin Scroggs

In Memory of Lois Schulte

George and Suzy Donovan

Charles and Mary Isaacson

Steven Isaacson

Bill and Carol Quigg

John and Gail Quigg

In Memory of Irene Stipic

Pete and Kristin Scroggs

Designated Donations

Basketball Program

Sarah Mizin

SMS Alumni Facebook Group

Oktoberfest

8th Street Ale house

Bennetts Fish Shack

Oktoberfest (continued)

Duffy's

Galway Pub

Happy at Home Pet Sitting

Henry Fisheries

Inspire Advisors

LG Isaacson Co.

Lighthouse Drive In

McHugh's Furniture

Quigg & Co Real Estate

St. Paul Altar Society

Scholarships

Fund of the Three Sisters

Elizabeth Isaacson

Steven Isaacson

John and Gail Quigg

Teacher Fund

Fund of the Three Sisters

John and Gail Quigg

Unrestricted Donations

Tanya Bowers Anderson

Anita Basich

Patrick and Shirley Byrne

Tom and Linda Isaacson

Mary Maclean

Greg McHugh

James Novak

Kitty O'Connor

St. Aurilla's Guild

Considering a gift? St. Mary School has gift opportunities to support student scholarships, technology, teacher compensation, our endowment, and more. For more info. contact Pete Scroggs: 360-580-7714 or advancement@saintmaryschool.org

School Snapshots



▲ Aryana Riojas, Troy Valentine, and Connor Valentine clean up after helping host the St. Mary Church Coffe Hour.

7th grade ► students lead the school in praying the Rosary during the month of October.



St. Mary School
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Students in the St. Mary School Preschool / Pre-K class show off their Thanksgiving art projects.



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