



CARDINAL CONNECTION

St. Catherine School Alumni Newsletter † Spring 2022

Inspiring excellence through faith, learning and service.

540 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072

701-845-1453

stcatherine.k12.nd.us

Pastor
Monsignor Dennis
Skonseng

Lead Teacher
Mrs. Dawn Ihry

The Cardinal Connection is published by the St. Catherine School Education Board

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St. Catherine
Elementary School
Valley City

Year recap from Lead Teacher, Mrs. Dawn Ihry

Happy Spring! Just as it's been an eventful, ever full of surprises school year, so has the weather. It's hard to believe that we are rounding the curve on the last few weeks of the 2021-2022 school year. Many new memories have been made with traditions that we hold dear. Catholic Schools Week was celebrated the last week of January and we hollered B-I-N-G-O with gusto! Movie and popcorn in the gym while lounging in our pj's. It's definitely the little things that leave the biggest impressions. Lent began in March with chapel focusing on Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. The 6th graders chose to support The Ronald McDonald House of Fargo and the Salvation Army in Valley City with donations in the chapel from our Almsgiving. A life lesson of putting others first, counting money, going to the bank, learning about cashier checks, formal letter writing, and addressing an envelope. All donations in the chapel were from students emptying their piggy banks. The spring program, "O Chicken of Little Faith", was a hit with a full house! The Regional Science Olympiad has the 4th-6th

graders busy learning what sinks vs what floats, estimating, graphing, bridge building, password and several other events. We hope to continue our tradition of doing well at this fun event!

Thanks for taking the time to learn what's up at St. Catherine School! Take care and have a great summer!



Our favorite leprechaun, Mr. Dyrness, calling BINGO numbers during Catholic Schools Week!

O You, School of Much Faith, Monsignor Skonseng, Pastor

I attended the St. Catherine Spring Musical recently, and I enjoyed the performance of "O Chicken of Little Faith" by the students of St. Catherine School. The students did a great job in their characters for the narrative part and in their singing of the songs of the musical. The theme was about the gift of faith. The chicken characters put their faith in the Lord, and the Lord was with them as they went through the Pit of Fear and the Forest of the Unknown and climbed up the Mountain of Expectations.

The gift of faith makes St. Catherine School special and a great blessing for our students, teachers, staff, and parents, the members of St. Catherine's Parish, and the community of Valley

City. When the disciples were frightened by a violent storm on the sea, Jesus said to them: "Why are you terrified, O you of little faith" (Matthew 9:26)? When the centurion showed faith in the authority of Jesus to heal his servant, Jesus said: "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith" (Luke 7:9). It is hard to understand why some people have no faith, others have little faith, others have some faith, and others have much faith. The students, teachers, and staff of St. Catherine School are people of much faith! I am very thankful to God for this.

Love in Christ,
Msgr. Dennis Skonseng



Lee Named New Principal/Director of Religious Education



Mr. Nick Lee has been hired by the St. Catherine's Board of Education to be their new Principal/Director of Religious Education starting July 1, 2022. He graduated from Valley City High School and received his Bachelor's degree from VCSU in Health Science with a minor in Biology in 2016. He received his Master of Arts In Teaching from VCSU in December of 2021. Mr. Lee was

employed previously in both higher education and the nonprofit sector. Through most of his adult life he coached speech and student congress at Valley City High School as a part-time job with mostly full-time hours. It was that experience that showed him that education is a calling and that he belonged working

full-time in a school. Over his many years as a coach he coached over 20 State Champions and nearly 150 state finalists. Beyond the accolades, the greatest joy came from watching kids gain confidence and "find their voice". Mr. Lee currently works as the 7-12 science teacher at North Sargent Public Schools in Gwinner, ND. He is happy to have found a job that will bring him closer to home, but will miss his students and coworkers greatly. Mr. Lee wants to continue to build on the tradition of St. Catherine's school while helping advance the mission of the school to foster the development of the whole child through exceptional academics, Christian service, and faith-building opportunities. He is excited to continue to be in a small school atmosphere where each student is truly important. Mr. Lee and his wife, Kaitlen, currently make their home in Valley City along with their three sons, Micaiah (age 6), Eliam (age 4), and Ezrah (7 months). His wife, Kaitlen, is currently employed as a Registered Nurse at Sanford in Fargo on the Inpatient Oncology floor. They both were born and raised in the local area and are proud to call Valley City their home. The guiding principles of faith and family serve as a center point in Mr. Lee's life. He is beyond excited to join the St. Kate's family!

Q&A with St. Catherine Teachers

We asked all of our teachers the same five questions. Each issue we will feature two of them.



Miss. Rebekah Hilgemann 3rd & 4th Grade

What is your most fond school memory?

Experiencing my 1st Catholic School's Week – such a fun time of celebration, prayer, and fun!

What was your favorite subject in school?

I really enjoyed math while I was going through my schooling.

What is your favorite activity outside of school?

I really enjoy being by the lake, being out on the farm, and being with friends and family outside of school.

What helped you decide to become a teacher?

I had a gut feeling since I was in 3rd grade that I wanted to become a teacher when I grew up.

What do you like best about St. Catherine School?

I love all the support from the families, staff, colleagues and from God. They all help me become the best teacher I can be.



Mrs. Dawn Ihry 5th & 6th Grade, Lead Teacher

What is your most fond school memory?

Saints Parade and Seder Meal

What was your favorite subject in school?

Science, ag, English...anything but math

What is your favorite activity outside of school?

Attending Bison football games

What helped you decide to become a teacher?

My little brother, Curt, bossing him around.

What do you like best about St. Catherine School?

Spending my days with kids who put up with my craziness and parents who support the mission of the school.

Retirement Congratulations



Mrs. Jenny Faure has been our Administrative Assistant for the past 7 years. She keeps the school running like a well oiled machine. Jenny is retiring at the end of May and we will greatly miss her!





I have enclosed a CHECK or CASH in the amount of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other _____

- Please make checks payable to St. Catherine School
- Mail to: St. Catherine School, 540 3rd Ave. NE, Valley City, ND 58072

PLEASE HELP KEEP OUR ALUMNI LIST CURRENT, FILL OUT THE INFORMATION BELOW:

First Last Maiden Graduation Year

Address City State Zip

Phone Email

GOD IS GOOD—ALL THE TIME!

Online Giving at St. Catherine's SAFE, EASY, AND CONVENIENT!

You now have the opportunity to set up a one time gift or a recurring donation for your weekend offering; or make a donation towards the remaining balance of the Elevator Loan; or donate to St. Catherine's School - either to their general fund or the Tuition Assistance Program.

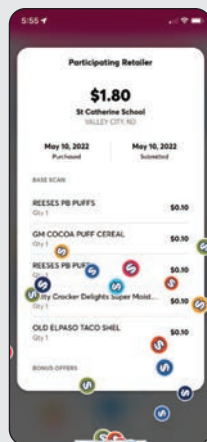
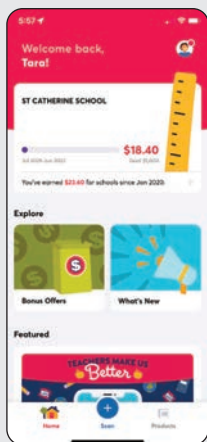
Online Giving is a safe and easy way to help provide for the needs of the parish and school. We will also have more convenient ways to register and pay for faith formation and other programs in the future.

catherineofalexandria.org/online-giving

Easy ways to earn money for St. Catherine school without costing you extra!

Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support our school every time you shop, at no cost to you. It's available at smile.amazon.com on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop with AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to our school! Search the charity list for "St. Catherine Elementary School"



Box Tops 4 Education App

- Convenient!
- Easy to Use!
- Real Time! (our earnings update with every scan!)
- Extra Cash with bonus offers!
- App download and signup is free!
- Search by zip code 58072 and select St. Catherine School



Casey's Rewards

We're excited to share that our school is participating in Cash for Classrooms, part of Casey's Rewards. This opens up St. Catherine School to new funding opportunities to help improve learning environments for students.

The best part? Donations don't come out of your own pocket. When you buy from Casey's and use their rewards program you can simply turn your points into a donation to our school.

Help St. Catherine School make the most of this program and learn more at <http://caseys.com/schools>.

Alumni Spotlight: Mary Faure



I am currently living in Billings, MT where I work as a pharmacist. I attended St. Catherine's as a student from kindergarten to 6th grade but found myself an unofficial student since age 4. I have such

fond memories of my elementary school years and couldn't imagine attending school anywhere else. Having smaller classroom sizes and teachers who genuinely cared about their students and were so encouraging created an environment that helped shape me into the person I am today. Some of my favorite memories from St. Kate's include Catholic Schools Week, all-school mass, and kindergarten/6th grade buddies. Being surrounded with like-minded children and families from such a young age was so instrumental in developing my faith and showing me what I want for myself and my future. The family friendships we created through St. Kate's have been long-lasting and I still feel the love and support from these people as I have grown into adulthood.



2022 Sixth Grade Graduates



L to R: Bethani Schuldheisz, Rayne Nelson, Emily Hoff



ALUMNI UPDATES: Do you have updated contact information?

Please send name/address/phone/email changes to Jenny.Faure@k12.nd.us



Flagpole Dedication

Thursday, February 10, St. Catherine School dedicated our new flagpole. The Am Vets Color Guard led by Commander Sherman were present for the inaugural flying of Old Glory and the North Dakota flag.

Students and others sang the National Anthem and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Students sang a blessing over the Color Guard for their service to our country and our community.

St. Catherine School would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all the generous donors who contributed over \$6,000 to the flagpole project. Because of you, ALL costs have been covered and we have a beautiful new flagpole complete with a US flag, a North Dakota state flag, and new lighting.

The project began three years ago with a grant from the Daughters of the American Revolution. Thank you to all who supported the project and came for the dedication. The school is grateful for the support. God bless America.

We are grateful to the following donors:

- Chris Kvilvang
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Dawn Ihry
- Eagles Club
- St. Catherine School Fall Auction
- St. Catherine School Class of 1985 alumni
- Others who wish to remain anonymous

GOD IS GOOD!



2021–2022 School Year Happenings



Students, staff and parents participated in the VCHS Homecoming Parade!



Operation End Hunger Food Drive



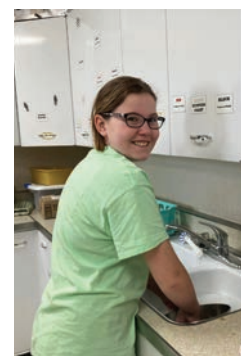
The annual fall auction was held on November 5, 2021. It was a record breaking year, bringing in around \$120,000 for the school.



Reading is out of this world! is this year's reading program theme. Mrs. Gulka, our Library Media Specialist, has put together a multitude of reading challenges to pick from. There's something to pique student's interest and encourage reading in all AR levels.

The program has been extremely successful resulting in over \$1,000 of cash and prizes awarded to the students this year.

Mrs. Gulka has also purchased over \$3,000 on new books for our library this year, thanks to donations from the Eagles Club and other donations!



Seder Meal 2022 a tradition continued with the 5th and 6th grade classes. The students learn life skills, teamwork and the significance of the Seder meal.



All Saints Parade: The students and staff dressed up as Saints on October 20th to celebrate All Saints Day (November 1.) They proceeded on a path around the church where they were treated to candy and baked goods by parents and parishioners.



A full house at the spring program: O Chicken of Little Faith



May Crowning/Anointing Mass 2022



Chalk art on a beautiful sunny day

◀ 5th and 6th grade classes visited the Sheyenne Valley Vo-tech center and got to try hands on activities such as flight simulation in Information Technology and Photoshop in Graphic Communications

Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 31–Feb. 5, 2022

Probably one of the most fond memories for St. Catherine graduates is Catholic Schools week. 2022 marked the 48th year of Catholic Schools Week! The students enjoyed inflatable games in the gym, Winter Olympics games, pajama day with muffins, a movie in the gym, and everyone's favorite: BINGO! Recent alumni even take time off from their classes to come back and play Bingo!



St. Catherine Elementary School
540 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072

Parents: If this issue is addressed to your son or daughter who no longer lives at this address, please contact the school office with an updated address at 701-845-1453. Thank you for helping us keep our records current.



SAVE THE DATE!!
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

St. Catherine School will be publishing and selling a cookbook as a fundraiser with the 50th Annual Auction. As alumni, we would like your most loved recipes to be part of the school cookbook!

- All categories are welcome!
- Include the contributor name that you want listed with the recipe.
- Make sure all recipes are complete and include all steps.

Please submit by mail or email to Tara Praska:
3251 115th Ave. SE,
Valley City, ND 58072

or
Praska58072@outlook.com

Deadline to submit recipes:
June 30, 2022