



CARDINAL CONNECTION

St. Catherine School Alumni Newsletter † Fall 2021

Inspiring excellence through faith, learning and service.

540 3rd Ave. NE
Valley City, ND 58072

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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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Elementary School
Valley City

Welcome from Lead Teacher, Mrs. Dawn Ihry

Hello and Welcome to the very first edition of the "Cardinal Connection"!

On behalf of the students, families, teachers, and staff—THANK YOU for taking time to read this labor of love. It has taken many hands and many talents to get it off the ground and we are super excited!

My hope is that as you read, your mind goes back to memories that make you smile...Catholic Schools Week, sledding at Charlie Brown Hill, hauling baskets to the Eagles for the Fall Auction, 6th grade graduation, or maybe you even have high school memories from St. Catherine!

Whichever era reflects your attendance at St. Catherine we want to let you know we are still holding true to our traditions, as a school and in our faith. This year we have 48 students enrolled in Kindergarten through 6th grade. 31 families that have chosen to let us partner with them in educating their children academically and spiritually. It is a privilege and responsibility that we do not take lightly. Please pray for the school,

our families and our staff that together we will continue to provide excellence through faith, learning and service.



Back l to r: Monsignor Skonseng, Carol Gulka (Library Media Specialist), Amber VanBruggen (1st & 2nd) Middle l to r: Jenny Faure (Administrative Assistant), Rebekah Hilgemann (3rd & 4th), Sara Sorby (Music). Front l to r: Dawn Ihry (5th & 6th), Cayla Rose (Kindergarten), Austen Meyer (1st & 3rd Language Arts, Title 1) Not pictured: Sammy Johnston (Physical Education and Health)

Grace and Wisdom from Jesus, Mary, and Joseph Monsignor Skonseng, Pastor

In the Gospel of Luke, we hear: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man" (Luke 2:52). Jesus was both God and man; therefore in His humanity he matured in years, wisdom, and the grace of God. He grew in mind, body, and soul. I am thankful to God for St. Catherine School because in this environment of a church family, a family of faith and love, a family like the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the students grow like Jesus in age, wisdom, and grace.

St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, and the

Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, were faithful to God, our heavenly Father, and His plan of salvation by raising and caring for Jesus, our Teacher, Savior, and Lord. Jesus is the Center of the Holy Family and St. Catherine School. St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary were totally filled with the grace and love of God in and through Jesus. We are blessed at St. Catherine School to have an environment of grace and love in which Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are with us so that our students can grow in age, wisdom, and grace.



Q&A

with **St. Catherine Teachers**

We asked all of our teachers the same five questions. Each issue we will feature two of them, starting with Kindergarten and 1st and 2nd grades.



Mrs. Cayla Rose **Kindergarten**

What is your most fond school memory?

Catholic Schools Week—Every year! It is so much fun and you see so much joy from the kids.

What was your favorite subject in school?

Science, Home Economics, and Woodworking (shop) class are tied!

What is your favorite activity outside of school?

I really like traveling when I can.

What helped you decide to become a teacher?

My 2nd grade teacher Mrs. Berg. She was amazing and so kind. I wanted to be just like her!

What do you like best about St. Catherine School?

The family atmosphere, the kids, the coworkers, parents. The connection you have to everyone when you work here.



Miss. Amber VanBruggen **1st & 2nd Grade**

What is your most fond school memory?

My most fond school memories are the pep rallies! I was in band and multiple sports so it was so much fun to be cheered on and filled with school spirit! With each class size having over 400 students it was the one time where we all felt like ONE big TEAM!

What was your favorite subject in school?

Science or Math

What is your favorite activity outside of school?

Learning mechanics and being part of a drag racing team! I also enjoy lifting weights and spending time with my family.

What helped you decide to become a teacher?

I decided to become a teacher because I love to help others. Our job of helping to grow young minds is so important and special. I love setting goals, so I enjoy learning how each student learns best and helping them succeed each step of the way!

What do you like best about St. Catherine School?

I love the “family feel” that St. Catherine School has! I was welcomed with open arms. All the staff and families have been so kind and helpful!



ALUMNI UPDATES: Do you have updated contact information?

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

GOD IS GOOD—ALL THE TIME!

Retirement Congratulations



Mrs. Carol Gulka retired in May 2020 after 40 years of teaching. Most of those right here at St. Catherine School. She is now living the dream as St. Catherine's Library Media Specialist!

Covid didn't allow for a proper celebration of her retirement. If you would like to send her retirement wishes, please email her at carol.gulka@k12.nd.us or mail them to:

St. Catherine School • Attn: Mrs. Carol Gulka
540 3rd Ave. NE • Valley City, ND 58072



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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
Phone		Email	

Alumni Spotlight: Amy (Dyrness) Steele, 1988–94



"I am now almost 40 years old with five children. My husband and I live in a small rural community; where we farm, ranch and operate a small business. We also homeschool our children (believe me, when I say, I never thought I would ever do that)! Yet here we are 5 years into that calling. I attended St. Catherine School as a kindergartner until 6th grade. I wasn't always the best student to handle, as

I remember being sent to the principal's office (did I mention, he was my dad)! I also failed religion for refusing to memorize my bible verses! Whoops! However, despite those issues, my experi-

ence with St. Catherine's has provided me with lifelong strength, courage, and holy priority. Supernatural things happen in our children, when prayer, faith and the person of Jesus Christ is woven into their daily lives. To have teachers, religious and fellow parents who value the Catholic faith in the daily lives of our children is invaluable. It is the undercurrent of the river. The parents of my friends, and friends of my parents, from those years at St. Catherine's have impacted me positively in a lifelong way. Many of my decisions as I transitioned into junior high/high school (VCHS) and eventually college was a reflection of the character they desired for me. As I grew older my faith was challenged and I questioned whether my home was in the Catholic Church. One of the reasons I found myself back in love with Catholicism and the person of Jesus Christ was because of those that surrounded me during those elementary years. Let us not underestimate the workings of Jesus in our young children. Let the walls our children see and minutes that fill their days be a reflection of truth and the love of Jesus Christ. Praise God for schools that dare to form the hearts and minds of the whole person. St. Catherine of Alexandria – Pray for us

49th Annual Auction News

St. Catherine School invites you to "Be Part of an All Star Team" at the 49th annual Fall Auction. It will be held at the Valley City Eagles Club on Friday, November 5. The Silent Auction will start at 5:00 p.m. with the Live Auction beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The school is excited to bring back this fundraiser that not only raises funds to support the school, but brings the community together. This event has been going on for 49 years. Many community members have told staff and parents of the school how they look forward to this night. The school relies heavily on funds raised through this annual auction to continue to serve our students and the community.

The students and staff of St. Catherine School will continue to pray for all donors, community members and businesses, and are grateful for prayers and support of this annual event.

So, lace up your shoes, grab a ball, and be a Cardinal for a night. Join St. Catherine School's All Star team at the Eagles Club on Friday, November 5!

ST. CATHERINE SCHOOL

All Star

Team ★ ★ ★

49th Annual Auction

NOVEMBER 5, 2021



CARDINAL CONNECTION • ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

God is Good—All the Time!

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

BE PART OF AN **All Star Team** AT ST. CATHERINE SCHOOL

49TH ANNUAL AUCTION

- FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2021
- VALLEY CITY EAGLES CLUB 345 12TH AVE. NE, VALLEY CITY, N.D.
- SILENT AUCTION • 5:00 P.M.
- LIVE AUCTION • 6:30 P.M.

All proceeds go to St. Catherine School

Home of the Cardinals

CHAMPS SINCE 1917



St. Catherine Students on VCHS Homecoming Day, Sept. 24, 2021. Wearing their All Star Team auction shirts donated by the PTO.

