



St. Bartholomew School
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Reverend Thomas J. Walsh, M.Div.
Pastor

Mrs. Theresa Craig, M.Ed.
Principal

August 29, 2023

Dear Parents or Guardians,

This is my last summer update letter. After this, I will be moving to bi-weekly communications. Please continue to check the website for updates and read carefully to stay informed. If you have not already done so, please read the letter dated last week regarding arrival and dismissal procedures. There are very important details that families must be aware of so that confusion is kept to a minimum.

This summer has been a very busy one in the office for me. Special thanks to Mrs. Tkacenko, Mrs. Ebert, Mrs. Tee, and Mr. Novak for their help in getting things ready for teachers and students to return. I'd like to take the next several paragraphs to introduce our instructional staff to you. Collectively we have over 500 years of experience in the field of education. Yes! You read that right, 500 years! We have degrees in education, sociology, special education, music, psychology, mathematics, and many others. Many of our staff hold advanced degrees.

In preschool you'll find Mrs. Perdoni, Mrs. O'Connell, Ms. Rodriguez, and Ms. Rudzewicz in PreK4 and Miss Giuliani and Mrs. Shun in PreK3. The PreK4 students will be split into 2 classes this year. These kind and caring teachers and teaching assistants have worked hard to prepare a program that will help our youngest learners blossom and grow in their earliest experiences at school.

In kindergarten, familiar faces return to St. Bartholomew School. Students will recognize Mrs. Maneri and teaching assistants Mrs. Bechay and Mrs. Bonk. We welcome Ms. Souverain to our kindergarten teaching team. These experienced educators will help to ensure that our kindergarten students have an amazing year full of learning and fun.

In first grade, veteran St. Bartholomew teachers Miss Bianchino and Mrs. Burns-Wilmott are joined by teaching assistants Mrs. Strandberg and Ms. Conti. They are looking forward to moving back to getting to know our first graders and continuing to support our young learners and they master reading and other skills.

In second grade, Mrs. Balestrieri and Mrs. Romano welcome Mrs. Csizmar and Mrs. Fornarelli as teaching assistants. Our team of four educators in grade two will be helping students hone their reading and writing skills, and prepare for sacraments among other things. They are excited to work with their new students in the year that students receive First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

In third grade, Miss Januse and Mrs. Keefe are back and ready to go. Both have experience in Catholic education and in grade three. They are excited to continue to work together as a team to help students work more independently and learn new skills like multiplication.

***The mission of St. Bartholomew School is to love, educate and inspire
our children to live the teachings of Jesus Christ.***

In fourth grade we welcome two new teachers, Mrs. McQueen and Mr. Pedersen. They have varied teaching experiences both coming to St. Bartholomew with many years of experience in education and are excited to join our St. Bart's family. They are looking forward to challenging students in all academic areas.

In fifth grade, veteran St. Bartholomew teachers Mrs. DePalma and Mrs. Egan will be a new duo. These educators are looking forward to working together to help students perfect their grammar and writing skills and improve reading comprehension along with enhancing their math skills and deepening their faith. Students in grades three through five will be supported by Mrs. Crovo.

In sixth grade Mrs. Foley-LaRocca and Miss Carreon will again be a team. Mrs. Foley-LaRocca will be teaching language arts and social studies. Miss Carreon will be teaching math and science. Additionally, Miss Carreon will be teaching technology to many grade levels. Both teachers are excited to transition sixth graders into middle school and will focus on academic excellence and rigor in all subject areas.

Students in seventh and eighth grade will have a team of excellent teachers. Mrs. McNerney will be teaching seventh grade language arts and eighth grade religion while Mr. Gidaro will be teaching seventh and eighth grade social studies and sixth grade religion. Mrs. Martoccia will be teaching language arts to eighth graders and religion to seventh graders. Mr. Gidaro and Mrs. Martoccia come to us with many years in Catholic education and in the Diocese of Metuchen. Mrs. Solinski will be teaching seventh grade science and Mrs. Laudicina will be teaching eighth grade science. Mr. Novak will be teaching math to students in grades seven and eight and technology to some grade levels. Fr. Tim Eck will conduct periodic religion seminars in grades seven and eight. Students in sixth through eighth grades will be supported by Mrs. Tee.

Special area classes will have many familiar faces. Mrs. Dudra will be teaching physical education. Mrs. Peterson will be teaching Spanish to all students in grades PreK4 through eighth. Mrs. Jaorawala will be joining our teaching staff as the art teacher, although some students will recognize her from grades 3 and 4. Mrs. Kinnucane will be working with students in PreK4 through eighth grade in music. She is also the director of the band, chorus, and drama programs. Mrs. Solinski continues in the counselor's office and will be teaching bi-weekly SEL (social-emotional learning) classes that students will call Life Skills. Finally, Mrs. Phillips will be returning to the library and will be seeing all students in grades PreK3 through eighth grade.

All students who need additional support will be supported by staff provided to the school by ESCNJ. At this time we expect Ms. Rachel Castor as the IDEA teacher, Ms. Lisa Wolkoff and Ms. Jessica LaMarca as the 192/193 teachers, and Ms. Sufia Masood as the speech teacher. At this time, their schedules have not been finalized.

Families will find Mrs. Tkacenko, Mrs. Ebert, Nurse Joella, and me in the offices, and Fr. Tom and Fr. Tim will be working to ensure that we maintain our Catholic identity and will provide additional leadership. A special recognition goes to Mrs. Soga, our facilities manager, for her diligent work in ensuring that our new window project was successfully completed and in the continuation of our door project. Many thanks to Mr. Alberto Cardona, Ms. Francesca Lopez, Ms. Judy Johnson, and Mrs. Nicolas Perez who have worked tirelessly this summer to ensure that our school is clean and ready for students. I am looking forward to working with the wonderful St. Bartholomew School community this year. See you soon!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Theresa Craig, M.Ed.
Principal