



SCHOOL OF ST. MARY

To Learn, To Serve, To Lead

February 13, 2010

Dear School of St. Mary Parents,

We write to you, after celebrating the priceless values of a Catholic education during Catholic Schools Week as well as our generous and supportive community at the Gala. Each of our children exemplifies the sound moral and educational framework they receive at the School of St. Mary, which provides a strong foundation as they become intelligent, responsible citizens and future Catholic leaders. Toward this purpose, we ask for your continued commitment and support of our mission.

Given our current, financial climate, please know that we are sympathetic to personal situations of our parent community and the impact of tuition increases. In order to minimize this increase in 2010-2011, we have carefully reviewed our financial position over the next few years and made budgetary changes to decrease expenses. These adjustments will not affect our programs and the high educational standards that continue to distinguish the School of St. Mary. Our goal is to continue excellence in Catholic education. We are committed to maintaining small class sizes, providing learning support as well as enrichment through student services, integrating fine arts programs, offering two languages, and enhancing our technology programs.

As you may be aware, it costs approximately \$7,500 to educate a child at the School of St. Mary. Therefore, in examining our budget after reducing expenses, it will be necessary to institute a minimal tuition increase. After the Archdiocese implemented a salary freeze last year, they recommend a 2% raise for the upcoming school year. In order to support this salary increase, along with rising operating costs, our tuition rates will increase by 3% for the 2010-2011 school year. In order to meet the actual cost of educating each student, we also decreased the percentage discount for families with multiple children in the school. To improve instructional materials and technology, we slightly increased our comprehensive fees. Please know, over the next three to five years, our school plans to develop additional revenue sources and build enrollment to minimize future tuition increases.

As we move forward, it is also essential that we put practices into place that will ensure all families understand our tuition collection policies. Beginning this spring, the School of St. Mary will utilize Tuition Management Systems (TMS) to create clear payment guidelines and options, produce accurate statements, and provide more efficient tuition collection. To ensure that school programs remain funded, Tuition Management Systems will assess standard late fees.

Also, in order to fairly distinguish between parishioner and non-parishioner rates, we shall provide Tuition Management Systems with a current list of contributing and participating parishioners from the Church of St. Mary and St. Patrick Church. Those families, for whom we have no record as being "active, contributing" members of the churches, will be billed at the non-parishioner rate.

We are acutely aware of the financial strain the recent economic crisis has placed upon many of our families. As in the past, we encourage families who may need financial assistance to obtain a scholarship application from our Web site or either school office. You may also contact Fr. McGovern directly to arrange a confidential meeting. Decisions on scholarships for the upcoming school year will be

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900 West Everett Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045
phone (847) 283-9800, fax (847) 283-0742



Upper Grade Center
185 East Illinois Road, Lake Forest, IL 60045
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made by April 6, 2010. It is essential to communicate financial need on a timely basis to avoid attendance interruption. In order to enroll children for a new academic year, families must be current in tuition payments.

Attached you will find the tuition and fee schedule for the 2010-2011 school year. Application materials are available on our Web site. The oldest and only child in your family will also bring home a hard copy of these documents next week.

Thank you for your continued support and for serving as an integral partner in the formation of our children.

For our children,

Dr. Venette Biancalana
Principal

Fr. Michael McGovern
Pastor

Cecile Schoenheider
School Advisory Council
Chair