

# SPECIAL EVENTS, ACTIVITIES & TRADITIONS

*(revised August 2016)*

*The following pages highlight special events, activities and traditions that are held throughout the year. These activities are in addition to the regular daily schedule and are activities that students look forward to celebrating with their classmates as well as their families. Most events include optional parental involvement while some require mandatory parental involvement. Specific grade and classroom activities are not listed here but will be highlighted by the classroom teacher at the beginning of each school year.*

## **Beginning of the Year**

### **Open House: Fall**

An Open House and barbeque is held in August prior to the start of school. Students and parents can visit their classrooms and teachers and receive registration materials. Parent volunteers serve hot dogs and hamburgers which is open to the public. Currently the Drive For Kids is held at this time as an additional fundraiser. Proceeds from this event are used to cover field trip expenses.

### **Student Council/Service Projects**

Student representatives are elected in grades 4-6 are responsible to generate interest and participation in designated service projects and help to organize Spirit Week activities. Parent volunteers are asked to help to carry-out service projects. Service includes spring and fall ditch clean-up, one service/charity-related project during each of Advent and Lent.

## **Weekly/Monthly**

### **Mass**

A weekly Children's Mass is held on Thurs. at 8:30 AM. Students from each grade are in rotation to prepare and take part in Mass by lecturing, song leading, accompanying, ushering, and serving. Parents and families are encouraged to attend.

*Appropriate dress is strongly encouraged.*

### **Prayer Service**

Weekly Prayer Services are held on Mondays. Students plan and lead the student body in prayer, with meditation, rosary, and/or storytelling/role playing. Parents and families are encouraged to attend.

### **Baptismal Recognition Mass**

The Mass offered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs. of each month is devoted to Baptismal Recognition. Students who are celebrating the anniversary of their baptism during that month are recognized during Mass with a special prayer. Following Mass, parents and family of those students, are invited to join their children in the Church basement for rolls, coffee, and juice.

### **Band**

Students in grades 5-6 have the option to participate in band in conjunction with Wabasso Public School. Students walk to the public school twice per week for band assembly as well as one additional time per week for individual band lessons. Three concerts are held throughout the year at WPS.

**Adoration/Benediction**

Students attend Adoration and Benediction when celebrated at St. Anne's Church. Parents are encouraged to attend.

**Altar Servers**

Catholic students in grades 4-6 are required to be Mass servers for school Masses. Those students who are members of the Area Faith Community have the option to be put in the rotation to serve at weekend Masses.

**Funeral Attendance**

An obligation as Catholics is to honor the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy, including Burying the Dead. This requires showing empathy to the bereaved by attending funerals. Students in grades 3-6 will attend parish funerals on a rotational basis when funerals are scheduled at St. Anne's Church during the school day.

## Fall Activities

**Marathon**

Our school participates in the annual Marathon for Nonpublic Schools held the first Sunday in October. Students are asked to solicit pledge money prior to the marathon which is then used to purchase educational materials and fund building improvements. Students, families, and parishioners are invited to walk the 2 mile route. Students in grades 4-6 have the option to bike the 4 mile route with a parent or guardian. Following the marathon, participants gather in the church basement for dinner and fellowship. An additional celebration event is planned for students if they meet or exceed their fundraising goal.

**Spirit Week**

To generate excitement for the marathon, Spirit Week is held the week prior to the marathon. Student council members and advisors organize various "dress-up" days and activities.

**All Saint's Day**

The 6th grade class plans and prepares an All Saint's Day celebration/activity in which the entire student body will participate.

**Thanksgiving Dinner**

The cook plans a Thanksgiving meal with all the fixings. Special places are set for Jesus, students and staff. Members of the Catholic United Financial assist with serving the dinner.

## Winter Activities

**Basketball**

Extra-curricular basketball program is offered to students in grades 3-6 beginning in late November and ending in late February. Volunteer coaches hold Wed. evening practices and schedule games with neighboring schools. Transportation is generally not provided. A concession stand is organized by parent volunteers. Proceeds from the stand are used to cover field trip transportation costs.

**Christmas Play**

The entire student body takes part in preparing a Christmas Musical. 6<sup>th</sup> grade students practice the main speaking parts and other grades practice singing parts. The play is presented to the public in two performances on a date designated prior to Christmas break.

**Posada**

Before Christmas Break, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students lead the school in the Mexican tradition of the reenactment of the journey Joseph and Mary took to find shelter before the birth of Jesus.

Following the reenactment, students gather in the gym for a piñata celebration.

### **Penance**

Students in grades 2-6 participate at minimum in Fall, Advent and Lent confessions scheduled during the school day.

### **Catholic Schools Week**

This is a week-long celebration of Catholic education beginning the last Sunday of January. The week begins with student-led Mass on Sunday. Daily activities take place, including Grandparent's Day Dinner, Parent's Day celebrated with Mass and followed with BINGO and cookies & juice in the church basement, and Friday mini-courses. The week ends with Sunday Mass, barbeque dinner and Carnival with games and raffle prizes, all open to the public. Parents organize the carnival and all parents are assigned to the work list. Proceeds from the carnival are used to cover general school expenditures.

### **Mini Courses**

Mini courses are offered on the Friday of Catholic Schools Week. Parent advisors plan and staff these courses. Volunteers are needed to lead and assist with each course.

### **Spelling Bee**

All students in grades 2-6 participate in the District Spelling bee beginning with a qualifying round in their classrooms. The top three qualifiers in each classroom participate in the District Bee held at WPS in the second half of the year. At the District Level, the top three competitors in grades 2-6 in the first round are specially recognized. The top two District competitors in grade 5-6 advance to the second round of District competition where they compete against students in grades 5-8. The overall champion has the option to advance to the Regional Spelling Bee.

### **Science Fair**

All 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to create a science fair project at the local level which occurs in the second half of the year. One champion is awarded. The other participants are awarded either a first or second place. Champion and first place participants have the option to participate at the regional level held in Mankato.

### **Stations of the Cross**

During Lent, students attend weekly Stations of the Cross on Fridays in lieu of the weekly prayer service. Each class is in rotation to present the Stations. Parents are encouraged to attend.

## **Spring Activities**

### **Open House: Spring**

Kindergarten & Preschool Round-up/Open Houses are held in the Spring. Prospective kindergarteners, preschoolers, and new families are invited to visit the school and teachers and receive registration materials. Current students are asked to give school tours.

### **Standardized Testing**

As required for MN Accreditation, students in grades 1-6 are tested in Reading, Math, Science, & Social Studies using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. (ITBS) Testing takes place for 2 weeks in April. Results are shared with parents and stakeholders and used to help assess academic programs and individual student needs.

### **Capital Campaign Dinner**

This adults-only event includes a themed dinner, entertainment and silent auction. Proceeds from this event are used to cover building and capital improvements.

**Sixth Grade Recognition**

6<sup>th</sup> grade students are recognized at a special Sunday Mass held in May. These students take part in the Mass ministries. Special awards are announced. Families are invited to the Church Social Hall for a reception following Mass.

**Spring Concert**

Students in grades 1-6 perform vocal and instrumental pieces. This concert is held in May with an afternoon and evening performance open to the public.

**Last Day of School**

Parents and family are invited to celebrate Mass on the last day of school. Following Mass, special recognitions are announced. Students may be dismissed with parents following this celebration.