

SPECIAL EVENTS, ACTIVITIES & TRADITIONS

(revised August 2014)

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 in the park 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 in the park 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 - Student representatives are elected in grades 4-6. Parent volunteers act as Student Council Advisors and help to plan service projects and mini-courses.

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 lectoring, 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 Fridays. 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 2nd 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 – 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 on a week-day.

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

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.

Sixth Grade Recognition – 6th 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 basement 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. Parents may take students home following the awards presentation.

Fall Activities

Marathon — The Catholic Order of Foresters sponsors the Catholic School Marathon held the first Sunday of October following 10 AM Mass at St. Anne's. 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 where the COF prepares hot dogs and hamburgers. Participants also bring a dish to pass.

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.

Marathon Reward Day - If the students meet or exceed their pledge goal, a reward day is planned for the Wed. before MEA. A special activity is planned for all students and/or donated prizes are awarded to students bringing in the most pledge money and the highest amount of pledges school-wide and within their classrooms. Parents and families are encouraged to attend the special activity.

Pet Blessing - In late Sept. or early Oct., a pet blessing will be held during a prayer service in honor of the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Students are encouraged to bring a picture of their pet to school for this blessing.

Halloween - All students attend a Halloween party sponsored by the 6th grade. Only the 6th grade students wear costumes. They prepare games and activities for all students. Treats are donated and distributed in bags to students at the end of the party.

Service Projects - Service Projects are held throughout the year school wide and by individual classes. Parents are notified through H-O-G and teacher newsletters and encouraged to participate. Projects may include conducting a food-shelf drive and collecting donations for missions.

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

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. 6th grade students practice the main speaking parts and other grades practice singing parts. The play is presented to the public in two performances, one in the afternoon and one in the evening on a Wed. prior to Christmas break.

Posada – Before Christmas Break, the 5th 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 in Fall, Advent and Lent confessions scheduled during the school day.

Catholic Schools Week - This is a week-long celebration of our school beginning the last Sunday of January. The week begins with student-led Mass on Sunday. Daily activities take place, including Tuesday Grandparent's Day Dinner, Thursday 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 volunteer to 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. Student Council 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.

Go-Green Day – Student's celebrate St. Patrick's Day by dressing up in as much green as possible. Student council members and advisors organize the day's events.

Science Fair - All 6th grade students are required to create a science fair project at the local level the second half of the year. One champion is awarded. The other participants are awarded either a first or second place. Champion and