

September 29, 2009

Today is the feast day of St. Michael the Archangel. We recite the prayer to St. Michael at the end of Mass each week. If you asked your child, most of them know the prayer by heart and recite it with full voice from about 3rd grade through 8th grade.

Dear Families,

Yes, today is the feast of St. Michael the Archangel—the name of our school—and the angel who watches over us. The prayer to St. Michael begins with..."St. Michael the Archangel...defend us in battle. Right now we all have our own battles. Perhaps they may be the loss of a job, a child who is struggling in school, the death of a loved one, a move, an addiction to something, poor health. St. Michael hears the simplest of prayers for help.

Progress reports went out on Monday. If your child did not deliver it to you, it may be somewhere in a crowded book bag. Please feel free to contact teachers if you have questions about your child's progress at this time. This is the half way between the quarter that will end on October 30th. There is time to address some of the study habits of your child—late assignments or no completed assignments, not sharing their planner with you each night so you can see what assignments will be due, behavior that is not respectful or growing leadership skills. Please return the copy of the report so that we know you have seen it.

STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS: Thanks to Mrs. Grankowski and Ms. Schmieder, we will have speeches Thursday afternoon for those students running for Student Council. Results will be announced on Friday morning. There will be representatives chosen from some of the lower grades. Our hope is that members of student council will see their role as leaders in responding to what is happening in our world around us through service...not just planning for the fun times. Student council members will be expected to maintain good grades to remain on the council.

TUITION BILLING: We have finally found the way to create your account on Quick Books—and will hopefully bill you in November. In the meantime, Thursday is the start of October and tuition is due in our office on that day. Because so many families have outstanding bills already, we had to ask the Archdiocese to pay our payroll so that we could begin to pay the bills we owe our vendors. If you are not paying and you are not talking to me, please consider it your obligation to let me know why your account is outstanding. Otherwise, we will be obliged to exclude your child from school. Even if you cannot pay the entire amount, we are more likely to be understanding if you pay a bit at a time. It is when we hear nothing from you and receive nothing from you that we are concerned.

BIG SHOULDERS TUITION GRANTS APPLICATIONS: Next Tuesday, we will send home the papers needed to apply for a scholarship through Big Shoulders. Your application will be considered if you return all parts of the application—the application itself in English or Spanish, a copy of your tax returns, a 1040, or SSI, a letter identifying the hardships you are under right now that encourage you to apply, a copy of the release to use your child's photo for purposes of marketing Big Shoulders to the businesses and individual who give large sums of money to make our schools stay alive and well. **IF YOU RECEIVED THE SUMMER ENROLLMENT GRANT, YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR ANY OTHER GRANT FROM BIG SHOULDERS.** They have less money to work with this year than last because of the economy.

PICTURE TAKING: Next Wednesday, October 7th, our students will have their pictures taken. We sent home the form that must be filled out for pictures. We don't have many extra copies so check your child's book bag since we sent them home on Tuesday. We have a new company that will be handling our pictures this year—Van Gogh. They offer some very interesting opportunities in their packaging of pictures. Many of my colleagues are using them in their schools and they are well received.

HALLOWEEN PARTY: Friday, October 30th, from 4:00-6:00PM, we will have our Halloween party. We need volunteers to set up and clean up, to help Mrs. Solis in the kitchen as needed. She has generously agreed to take that responsibility on with some early volunteers. We also really need bags of candy so that our children will receive a bag of candy as part of their goodies. Last year we had such generous donations, we did not have to buy candy. If you could manage to send us one bag per family, that would be so helpful. The 8th grade will run the annual Haunted House in the third floor corridor, and the 7th graders will be responsible for games the little ones can play for prizes. Tickets will be sold soon. Stay tuned for that.

VOLUNTEERS: If you want to volunteer, please see your handbook for the five required paperwork and coursework that needs to be done. Some of you may have taken the criminal background check, but I cannot find you in the system. I will let you know if that is the case, because I recently had to fill out a complete report for the Office for the Protection of Children that did an audit of our teachers and volunteers. Some of you have been working hard at doing that so you can be available when we need you.

While there is always more to say, I will draw this to a close and wish you God's blessings in all ways that you may need them.

Peace to us all!

Ms. Barbara Lee