

September 4, 2007

Dear St. Michael Families,

We are off to a wonderful start! We all managed to survive the heat; however, it appears that we may not yet be finished with the hot and humid weather. These high temperatures in the 80s and 90s are only expected this week through Tuesday. **Tomorrow our students may wear their own clothes; however, we will return to uniforms on Wednesday when it is expected to cool down.** While a bit warm today, our students look absolutely fantastic in their uniforms. **Please note that the gym shoes with wheels in the back may never be worn to school. They are treacherous on our floors as well as on the stairs. If we see any students wearing them, we will call you for a safe pair of shoes.** Your child's safety is our serious concern.

**Speaking of safety, no car may pull up on the sidewalk off of South Shore Drive and sit and wait until it is time to send your child into school. The front is used only for parents who drive up and drop off their students and continue on from there. Please take this request seriously before we have an accident out in the front.**

For purposes of consistent communication between home and school, Mrs. Lopez is asking that you return the folder you received this year when you registered. It has a school bus on the cover. This folder will come home with your oldest child each Tuesday and is to be returned the next day so that we have them for the next week's communication packet. Perhaps you can send those back to us tomorrow (Wednesday), but keep all of the forms and the handbook at home with you. We simply want the empty folder. **Please watch for the folder each week. It is our way of staying in touch with you above and beyond the ways in which each classroom teacher keeps you updated on your child's performance.**

Beginning tomorrow, we will have our **first school liturgy of the year.** This is an opportunity for our school family to worship together every Wednesday morning at 8:30AM. We certainly invite you to join us if you have the time. Tomorrow our 7<sup>th</sup> graders in Ms. Agnew's room will be our prayer leaders. Our Pre K and Kindergarten won't be at the liturgy yet tomorrow. Teachers will take turns each week preparing the liturgy with the help of Father Perez. We will be organizing a school choir for liturgy who will work with Mr. Glover, our music teacher, to lead the assembly in song.

If you are following our calendar, you already know that there is no **school on Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup>.** All of our faculty and staff will be downtown at the University of Illinois Chicago campus pavilion for a special day sponsored by the Archdiocese of Chicago to honor the work that our Catholic school teachers do. Our Archbishop will be addressing ALL of the teachers throughout the Archdiocese in elementary and secondary schools. A well-known speaker—Douglas Reeves—will be addressing the teachers. We will be back in school on Tuesday.

This week our teachers will be doing a lot of "Kid Watching" to see who has shown a great deal of leadership in their classrooms. Next week we will announce the "Leader of the Week" from every classroom in the building. Each week the students of the week will meet with me to enjoy a treat. We will also be celebrating birthdays once I have the list in my hands. Leadership can be demonstrated in a number of ways: by modeling appropriate behavior in the classroom (raising hands, staying focused on the teacher when s(he) is talking, being respectful both in the classroom as well as in the cafeteria, church, playground, encouraging others to do well by offering some support). **The leaders we grow today will be the leaders of the future.**

**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS! We will have our "Back to School Night for Parents" on Tuesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:45.** Teachers will have 25 minute presentations in their rooms

and parents will arrive in the classroom at 6:30, 6:55, and 7:20. We hope that you can arrive on time for the sessions so that you can learn all that the teachers want to share with you about curriculum and instruction, the religious education of your child and the focus for the year, some of the new things that teachers may be doing. There should be time to be able to ask questions; however, we want to remind you that this is not the night to have a conference with the teacher. Teachers need to be present to everyone on that evening. If you have any questions, set a time when you can meet with your child's teacher(s).

**ANOTHER CALENDAR DATE TO NOTE!** On Friday, September 5 21<sup>st</sup>, there will be what is known as **CAFETERIA SPECIAL**. This is an opportunity for students to enjoy a pizza lunch. Our cafeteria will NOT be operating that day. If your child prefers NOT to buy pizza for the day, they must bring their own bag lunch. This is a fundraiser to benefit the school. There will always be one Cafeteria Special each month—most often the third week of school. Orders can be placed next week well in advance of September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Please take time to fill out the Chicago Park District Form for each child in the family in Grades 1-8.** Because we use Russell Square Park facilities for our gym classes, we must have a form like this one on file with the Park District. Your child will not be able to participate in gym classes until this paper is returned. Please notice that you may complete this in English or Spanish. While our gym classes have not yet begun, we are in the process of hiring a new gym teacher who will be here on Tuesdays and Fridays. In the meantime, we are ordering equipment needed for the classes.

I am delighted to say that each of your children behaved wonderfully at Rainbow Beach last week. It is always a joy to hear that the skills you have taught your child(ren) and we have reinforced here at school are used in public. It was the perfect place to be with some mini-cool breezes to keep them cool. We'll do that again, I know.

**VERY SPECIAL THANKS to our volunteers from Holy Family in Inverness, Illinois! Several faithful volunteers –Joan, Carol and Dennis—have been working with Mrs. Quinones to automate the library.** This is an amazingly challenging and time-consuming job since they must assign bar codes to each book so that it can be scanned before books can be taken from the library. We have also had a number of new titles added to the library holdings. During the summer, Joan religiously arrived early in the morning and stayed until 6:00 in the evening despite the awful heat. Carol and Dennis are back with us after taking some time off for a vacation. Father Perez and I will be meeting with Carol, Dennis and Joan as well as with other administrators from Holy Family to see how we can “grow” this relationship further. Dennis surprises me by noticing projects that involve fixing things that are broken. We are truly blessed by this relationship.

If your student is eligible for Title I services through the Chicago Public Schools, we will be sending you a form to complete indicating your desire to have your child serviced by Ms. Maria Lowers who is our Title I teacher here in the school. Please complete those and return them to us as quickly as possible so that Ms. Lowers can begin to schedule students into her resource room.

My goodness! There is so much happening; however, I will stop here. I want you to know how joyous it has been to come to know your sons and daughters. I also have appreciated your support in so many ways including completing and returning forms. We hope we will see you on September 18<sup>th</sup> for our “Back to School Night.”

Blessings!

Ms. Lee