



A message from the Principal

St. Michael Families,

I hope that you all had a very restful weekend. I know the business of the holiday season is upon us, however even with the added stress of traveling, preparing the house for visitors or cooking meals for many, I hope you still find the time to enjoy family and loved ones.

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays. I love it almost more than Christmas, at least back when Christmas still held that magical element for me as a child. My mom is the last of six in her family. Her siblings lived all along the east and west coast. Thanksgiving was the one time out of the year when everyone would come together. My grandparents, my ten aunts and uncles and a dozen of us cousins would all come to my house to celebrate. We were the most central location and with us living on a farm, there was plenty of space for all the festivities.

We would rent a big white tent, put tables underneath and almost every meal was eaten outside. We had fishing contests in the pond, my uncles had cook-offs and my cousins and I would put on play productions reenacting the first Thanksgiving. There were football games being watched, board games being played and hours of childhood stories told by our parents and grandparents. It was always the best week of my life, surrounded by family and love.

As we grew older, my cousins started getting married. Summer weddings took the place of Thanksgiving as it became too much for everyone to travel such long distances twice in so short amount of time. A few aunts, uncles and cousins would come but it was no longer the special event that I had known and loved for so many years. Eventually no one came and my family started attending "misfit" Thanksgiving dinners at the houses of family friends since we had no family close by. It was a strange feeling not being surrounded by family.

In 2012, my mother's ninety year old parents came to live at our house. They could no longer live on their own and her and brothers and sisters weren't quite ready to put them in a home. Since I had moved out and my brother was away at college, my mom offered for them to come live in North Carolina with my dad and sister. We had the room and thought they would enjoy living on the farm.

Upcoming Dates

- Mass on Thursday, November 19th
- Thursday, November 19th
School pictures for PreK & K @ 9:00am
- Friday, November 20th
School pictures for 1st - 8th grade @ 9:00am
- Thanksgiving Break
Wednesday November 25th - 27th
- Mass on Thursday, December 3rd & Friday December 4th
- No School on Tuesday, December 8th in Celebration of the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
- Mass on Thursday, December 10th
- Dress Down day for students Friday, December 11th
- Mass on Thursday, December 17th
- Early Release @ 12:00 on Friday, December 18th
- Christmas Break
December 21st - January 1st
- Students return to school
Monday, January 4th



A message from the Principal

Since my mom's parents were living with us that year and my grandmother was starting to show signs of dementia, it was decided by her siblings that we would have Thanksgiving at the farm like we used to. For the first time in many years, we were all together. My grandparents got to experience one last thanksgiving with their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. It still lives in my memory as the greatest Thanksgiving of all. I didn't get to grow up around family, so the time that I get to spend with them is treasured and precious. We were all grown and very different, living in different places, having different opinions, living our lives in different ways but the bonds of family and love brought us together and reminded us that there are few things in this world more valuable than family.

Less than a year later, my grandparents would move back up to Pennsylvania and move into assisted living. In 2016 my grandmother passed away and in 2019 my grandfather did as well. That Thanksgiving was the last time that we were all together and it will probably remain that way. We had no way of knowing at the time, but I am so thankful that we had the opportunity to create those lasting memories and gather together in love and unity for my grandparents.

I know that Thanksgiving this year may look very different than the Thanksgivings in previous years. However, I hope that you are still able to celebrate with family and loved ones in some capacity. I know last year that none of us could have fathomed that our world would be the state that it's in today; one of uncertainty, fear and isolation. It is hard to imagine in any given moment that this could be the last time we do a certain thing or see a certain person or celebrate a certain way. Times may have changed, but what is important to us should never change.

I pray that you all still have the opportunity to spend time with and see those you love and those whom make the holidays special for you. I pray that everyone remains healthy and safe, no matter where you spend the holiday or with whom you spend it with. I pray that we continue to recognize the many blessings God has given us and spend time giving Him thanks and praise for those many blessings. God Bless,

Michelle Vollman

Reminders

- Turn in lunch orders by Friday at noon
- Morning Drop off ends at 8:00AM. If you arrive on campus after 8:00, please park and bring your students in through the office. We will no longer be outside past 8:00AM
- Please try to minimize visits to the front office during the day unless it is to pick up or drop-off your child. If your child forgets their lunch, one will be provided for them. Please no lunch drop-offs during the school day



Father Rossi's Column

Grace and peace to you and your families!

Monday November 16th, the Church celebrates Saint Gertrude the Great (d. 1302), who was a Benedictine nun. Believed to be an orphan, she was raised by Benedictine Sisters in their convent, a common practice in the 14th century. Gertrude was known to have a heart filled with the love of Jesus. She was privileged to have visions of Christ, who invited her into friendship with Him. At the age of 26, Jesus appeared to her and took her by the hand and placed her at His side. She would write about these visions in Revelations of Saint Gertrude. As a Benedictine nun, she devoted her life to prayer and study of Scripture. She is also a powerful intercessor for the souls in Purgatory. We join our prayers to hers, asking that we too can open our hearts to Jesus in real friendship.

In Christ,
Fr. Rossi



A Message from the Thankful Pies Sponsored by Jr. Beta Club

Diocese of Charlotte Catholic School Parents, Guardians and Caregivers:

This year has been unlike no other, but we, as a Catholic School community, continue to remain committed to being "Safer, Stronger, Together." To do so, we also need to be connected, informed, and in communion with our schools and school families. So far this year we have reached out to our Principals, and then to our teachers to provide opportunities to gather feedback to help us better serve our schools and our students. As we continue to build communion with our families, schools and parishes we would like to hear from you, our Catholic School parents, guardians and caregivers regarding your experiences and needs as critical members of our community. Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts in the survey below. Thank you so much for your support.

Diocese of Charlotte Catholic Schools Parent Survey 2020:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DoCParentSurvey2020>

Dear St. Michael School Families, Our Junior Beta Club Officers and Members are working on their first outreach service project, "Thankful Pies." We would like to show our SMCS appreciation for our area First Responders with a "Thankful Pie". On Monday, November 23rd, Beta Students will be taking pies donated by St. Michael's families to area precincts and fire stations. If you would like to donate a pie or two, please drop them off in the car line on Monday morning. We will also need a few drivers to help us with delivery on Monday afternoon.

Thank you in advance for your generosity - Junior Beta Club Members and Sponsors.

If you have any questions, please contact Maria Boylan at meboylan@stmichaelsgastonia.org

Virtue of the Week: Loyalty

This past week our virtue of the week was Loyalty. Loyalty is accepting the bonds implicit in relationships; defending virtues upheld by Church, family and country. We can demonstrate loyalty by speaking positively about family and friends. We can make sure our actions correspond to our words and promises. We need to seek to do our best to help others and fulfill our responsibilities. We can demonstrate loyalty by remaining faithful to our commitments. Some saints that were known for their loyalty to the church were St. John Fisher, St. Polycarp, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzan and St. Ignatius of Loyola.