

## HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES HANDBOOK

### St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School

#### Home & School Association

Throughout the year, many opportunities exist for the students, families, and supporters of St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School to come together for fellowship, educational opportunities, fundraising, entertainment, and fun! Volunteers are at the heart of the success of these programs and activities. The HASA offers this brief guide to the many opportunities to participate in our school community, and we ask that you prayerfully consider participating in and leading HASA sponsored events. New people bring new excitement and new ideas!

## AUGUST

### Kindergarten Here We Come!

Help your kindergartner get a head start on adjusting to school—send them to Kindergarten Here We Come! Kindergartners spend some time together with the kindergarten teachers, getting to know each other and getting a little more comfortable in the school setting. Information is sent home for you to sign up.

### New Family Ice Cream Social

New families are invited to attend a gathering at the school to welcome them into the school community. Come and meet other students and their host families, tour the facility, and start your journey with St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School! Three to five volunteers needed.

### Open House (Before School)

At the August open house, students and their families are invited to gather for a picnic as well as to meet their teacher(s), drop off school supplies, and pay for school lunches, after school care, etc. Host Families (see p. 9) typically attend this event with their assigned new-to-St.-Francis-School family.

### St. Francis of the Lakes Golf Classic

The St. Francis of the Lakes Golf Classic is typically held at Cragun's The Legacy golf course. This fundraiser combines hole sponsorship, prize donations, tournament sponsorship, and entry fees to raise money for the school. Event has grown each year! Fifteen volunteers are needed.

### Uniform Sale

Wondering what to do with those out grown but still in good shape uniform clothes? Looking for a great deal on some gently used uniform items? Bring in your out grown, good condition pieces for the back to school Uniform Sale, and stop back during the sale to stock up on what your student(s) need(s). All pieces are \$1.00 each, and all money collected will be used by the school to purchase socks, undergarments, band-aids, and ice packs as needed throughout the year.

### Safe Environment Training

In an effort to assure we provide a safe environment, we are required by the Diocese of Duluth to have all volunteers complete a background check, online training and a pledge of confidentiality agreement. This program is found online at the Diocese of Duluth website.

**St. FRANCIS**  
of the Lakes Catholic School  
OUR CHILDREN. OUR FAITH. OUR FUTURE.

HOME AND  
SCHOOL  
ASSOCIATION

The Home & School Association is comprised of all school families and staff. The HASA supports the mission of the school by providing an association that is alive and active and encourages participation. The HASA will facilitate open communication among parents, caregivers, school and community.

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### SEPTEMBER

#### Dads and Donuts

Students are invited to bring their dad, grandpa, or any special adult male friend for donuts, coffee, and juice. Held three times per year in the school cafeteria from 7:30-8:00 am, it is typically scheduled within a few weeks of Morning with Mom. Approximately 4 volunteers are needed to help each time.

#### Foundation Dinner

Held in the fall, this annual fundraiser is held at a local resort or restaurant as a fundraiser for the St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Foundation. The goal is to have one million dollars in endowments with interest earned used for tuition assistance and for teachers' salaries. This event brings together alumni, clergy, parents, and school staff to celebrate their commitment to the school.

#### Mornings with Mom

Students are invited to bring their mom, grandma, or any adult special female friend for donuts, coffee, and juice. This event is held three times per year in the school cafeteria from 7:30-8:00 am. Come and go as it fits your schedule. Approximately four volunteers are needed each time.

#### NWEA Testing

NWEA is our standardized testing taken by all students K-8 three times throughout the year.

### OCTOBER

#### All-School Marathon

One of the major fund raisers for the school, students collect pledges and donations in the weeks leading up to the marathon event. Students walk or ride their bikes on a predetermined route, which is typically adjacent to the school. Donations are tallied each week, and students are awarded "Marathon Bucks," which they trade for prizes at the "Marathon Store" each Friday. Students are also eligible for prizes based upon the total amount of donations they receive. Families are invited to participate by walking or riding together. The marathon takes place the Wednesday before MEA weekend in October, rain or shine! The Marathon has an overall goal of raising more than \$45,000. Four to eight volunteers are needed to help set up and monitor the marathon route.

#### Carnival

Held immediately following the All-School Marathon in the school gymnasium, the Carnival is a fun time for students, their families, and the community with games, prizes, and inflatables (e.g., giant slide, bounce house, etc.). Bracelets are available for purchase at the gym doors and allow bearers access to unlimited participation. This event is open to the public. Volunteer opportunities exist in setting up, running kids' games, passing out prizes during the carnival, and tearing down. Twenty five to thirty volunteers are needed.

#### Grandparents' Day

The second Friday in October is Grandparents' Day. Grandparents are invited to attend Mass and share lunch with the children. There is also a short program that takes place in the school gymnasium.

#### Book Fair, Fall

Books are set up throughout the hallways for students and families to purchase. A portion of the proceeds from each item sold goes to the school. Shoppers may also wish to consider purchasing books as a donation to a classroom from a wish list each teacher compiles. Ten to fifteen volunteers are needed for set up, to assist with purchases, and take down.

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### **NOVEMBER**

#### **Food Drive, Fall**

A food drive is typically held in November and again in March. Students are asked to donate non-perishable items that are collected on the gymnasium stage. Food is then boxed and delivered to the local food shelf. Three volunteers are needed to assist boxing up and delivering to the food shelf.

#### **Give to the Max Day**

This is a state wide event which raises funds for nonprofit groups throughout the state of Minnesota. The St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Foundation has utilized this online giving day to raise funds for specific items for the needs of the school.

#### **Parent/Teacher Conferences, Fall**

Conferences are between the parents and their student's teacher, discussing the student's progress in the classroom. Teachers do their best to coordinate successive meeting times for families with more than one child in the school. Conferences often last into the early evening hours. Families are asked to sign-up to provide snacks and refreshments in the teachers' lounge. A Signup Genius form will be set up to coordinate volunteers.

During fall conferences, each family is asked to donate a bottle of wine for a drawing at the Christmas program. Proceeds go toward purchasing a current need the school has.

### **DECEMBER**

#### **Christmas Program**

The annual Christmas program takes place at Tornstrom Auditorium. Each class performs songs that are centered on the true meaning of Christmas, and the school's choir and band perform, as well. All are welcome to attend! Volunteers are needed to decorate the morning of the program and to help take down after the program.

Drawing tickets are sold for \$5 throughout the concert. Each ticket purchased represents a chance to win a selection of the wine that was collected during the fall Parent/Teacher Conferences (p. 3). Six to seven volunteers are needed to sell tickets.

#### **Danny Hauer Tournament**

Danny Hauer was a student at St. Francis School who loved basketball. He was in the 3rd grade when he died suddenly on May 23, 1971, of a cerebral hemorrhage. He touched so many lives on earth. St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic school fondly remembers Danny by dedicating a basketball tournament in his memory for students in grades four through eight. Teams are formed and begin playing in the fall, culminating in the tournament in late April or early May.

#### **Registration, Current Families**

Registration opens for current St. Francis School families mid school year. Only currently enrolled families may register from this point through the the next time period, at which point registration is also open to parish families.

#### **School Choir Caroling**

Students in grades four and up are eligible to participate in the school choir. One of their activities is to go caroling at various locations, often including the hospital and nursing homes.

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### JANUARY

#### **Brainerd Jaycees \$150,000 Ice Fishing Extravaganza**

The school receives a donation from the Jaycees based on the number of volunteers it recruits to help at the Extravaganza. This is an opportunity for families to raise funds for their 8th Grade Washington D.C. trip. It is typically held the third Saturday in January at Gull Lake's Hole in the Day Bay. At least thirty adult volunteers are needed for this event.

#### **Catholic Schools Raffle (aka Catholic United Financial Raffle)**

Sponsored by Catholic United Financial, the Catholic Schools Raffle is one of the major fundraisers for St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School. Marketing materials, sales incentives, and thousands of dollars in prizes are provided by Catholic United Financial. All proceeds from ticket sales go to the school. Ticket sales begin in January. One volunteer coordinator for the event and eight to nine ticket and money counters are needed.

#### **Catholic Schools Week**

This is a national week-long celebration of Catholic schools and their dedication to helping children grow academically, spiritually, and as individuals. Catholic Schools Week is typically held the last week of January. Events at St. Francis have included an open house, participation in Sunday Masses at area churches, a Scholastic Book Fair, and activities for students during the school day. The week culminates with the Family Fun Night. There are many volunteer opportunities available as part of Catholic Schools Week, including the following:

##### **Catholic Schools Week Open House**

Current families, families considering St. Francis School, and the community are welcome to attend the Catholic Schools Week Open House. If someone you know is considering St. Francis for their child or children for the following year, please invite them to come and see all we have to offer! Eight to ten volunteers are needed to help with school tours.

##### **Catholic Schools Week Family Fun Night**

A great night of fun for the entire family! This night starts with an optional dinner in the school cafeteria followed by family activities such as karaoke, games, and dancing in the gymnasium, and concessions are available for additional cost. The evening is a festive conclusion to Catholic Schools Week! Approximately thirty Volunteers are needed to help with this event.

#### **Registration, Community**

Registration for enrollment in the following school year will be open to everyone.

#### **Registration, Parish Families**

Registration opens to families who are members of the supporting parishes, early in the year. Registration remains limited to parish and currently enrolled families until announced.

### FEBRUARY

#### **School Play, by the Drama Club**

Students are invited to participate in the annual School Play. Try-outs and preparations begin in February (approximately) for performance in April (approximately). Students may participate in many ways, including performing roles and helping in the background. Performances are open to the public. The Drama Club needs twenty to twenty five volunteers, consisting of a leader, co-leader, and four team leaders for cast, props and scenes, costumes, and production. Practices are held twice weekly; one after school and one in the evening.

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### **Lenten Fish Fries**

This very successful fundraising event takes place every Friday (except Good Friday) during Lent in the St. Francis Church basement. Open to the public, tickets may be purchased at the door. Every week, one or two grades are responsible for bringing desserts and volunteering for the evening. Duties include breading and frying fish, serving, selling tickets, and cleaning up. All families and students are expected to help. If it's not your week to volunteer, come and enjoy some great food and fellowship! At least 40 volunteers are needed each week.

### **Lenten Penny Competition**

This school tradition takes place each Lent. The friendly competition pits students versus staff in a contest to determine which team can accumulate the most points while raising money for charity. Each team has a container for collecting coins or bills. Each penny collected earns one point for that team. The value of anything other than a penny is deducted from the team's points. Therefore, in a competition between Team A and Team B, a contributor who wants Team A to win will place pennies in Team A's container (adding points to Team A's tally) and nickels, dimes, quarters, or bills into Team B's container (subtracting points from Team B's total). Collections are counted each week and rankings are announced. One or two volunteers are needed for counting the money.

## **MARCH**

### **Food Drive, Spring**

A food drive is typically held in November and again in March. Students are asked to donate non-perishable items that are collected on the gymnasium stage. Food is then boxed and delivered to the local food shelf. Three volunteers are needed to assist boxing up and delivering to the food shelf.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences, Spring**

Conferences are between the parents and their student's teacher, discussing the student's progress. Teachers do their best to coordinate successive meeting times for families with more than one child in the school. Conferences often last into the early evening hours. Families are asked to sign-up to provide snacks and refreshments in the teachers' lounge. Four to six volunteers are needed.

### **Education Fair**

In the spring, students in grades three through eight research a science topic, country, or historical figure, write a report, and develop a project to present at the School Fair, which is set up in the school's gymnasium. The Fair is open to students in grades kindergarten through two during the school day and to the public in the afternoon. The Education Fair occurs annually, rotating through the themes.

## **APRIL**

### **Archery Tournament**

Each spring, the Phy. Ed. teacher will coordinate an in school archery tournament for the students.

### **School Play, by the Drama Club**

Students are invited to participate in the annual School Play. Try-outs and preparations begin in February (approximately) for performance in April (approximately). Students may participate in many ways, including performing roles and helping in the background. Performances are open to the public. The Drama Club needs 10 to 25 volunteers, consisting of a leader, co-leader, and four team leaders for cast, props and scenes, costumes, and production. Practices are held twice weekly; one after school and one in the evening.

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### **Danny Hauer Tournament**

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## **MAY**

### **Birthright Drive**

In honor of Jesus' birth, St. Francis school families are asked to bring unwrapped new baby items to be donated to Birthright, an international organization that helps women who are distressed by an unplanned pregnancy. Items such as newborn clothing, maternity wear, crib sheets, cloth and disposable diapers, and cash donations are just some of the things needed. Four to five volunteers are needed to collect and deliver items to Birthright.

### **Spring Gala**

This is one of the school's major fundraisers. Held on a weekend in May, it is an adult-only evening, open to the public, filled with food, games, and festivities. Volunteers are needed before the event to sort silent auction and live auction donations, solicit advertising for the program book, and other activities; on the day of the event to help decorate and set up; and at the event to run games, assist with the auctions, and help bidders check out. At least thirty volunteers are needed.

### **8th Grade Graduation Trip to Washington, DC**

8th grade student who are graduating from St. Francis school have the opportunity to go to Washington, DC, in the spring with staff and parent chaperones to visit points of interest that are a part of our national culture and history.

### **Kinderfriend Day**

This is a special day for all kindergarten students throughout the Brainerd School District. All kindergartners, whether they attend private or public school, gather at the Brainerd High School football field on the day before the last day of school to participate in fun field events throughout the day. Eight volunteers are needed to chaperone and spend the day on the field with the children.

### **School Picnic**

Near the end of the school year, St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School families get together at a local park to celebrate. Each family brings their own plates, silverware, drinks, and a dish to share. Approximately five volunteers are needed to help with this event.

## **YEAR LONG PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Classroom Volunteers**

The school encourages parent and family involvement in the classrooms. Many opportunities arise throughout the school year to help in the classroom, on field trips, take-home projects, and at school sponsored events. Contact your teacher(s) or Room Parent(s) to find out what is needed. All volunteers must complete Safe Environment training requirements prior to volunteering (see p. 2).

### **From Trash to Treasure, or, Don't Throw Away that Box, Can, or Labels**

#### **Box Tops for Education**

General Mills donates 10 cents for every box top collected from various products. Simply cut them out and send them to school with your child. Classrooms wage a friendly competition for a pizza party twice a year! Rankings are displayed in the hallway. Two volunteers are needed to sort and count the box tops throughout the year.

#### **Campbell's Soup Labels**

Save your Campbell's soup labels! These are redeemable for merchandise the school can use (such as computers). Labels can be collected throughout the year and sent to school at any time with your child. Two volunteers are needed to sort.

#### **Kans for Kids Recycling Bin/Trailer**

Aluminum can recycling bins are located at St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School, and St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Brainerd. A great way to recycle while also supporting the school!

### **Home & School Association**

The Home & School Association is comprised of all school families and staff. The HASA supports the mission of the school by providing an association that is alive and active and encourages participation. The HASA will facilitate open communication among parents, caregivers, school and community. Unless otherwise posted, the HASA Board meets the second Monday of each month, 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at the school. The Board is comprised of up to six volunteers, and several volunteers are needed for committees, programs, and activities sponsored by the HASA.

### **Host Family Program**

The purpose of this program is to provide a personal resource to new families at St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School. The Home & School Association pairs host families with new families to provide answers to common questions as well as to help welcome them into the school community. Host families are encouraged to meet with their assigned family in person before the fall open house, review events, programs, etc., early in the school year, attend school events together if possible, and to keep in touch throughout the year. Contact any HASA member with questions or if you would be interested in becoming a host family in upcoming years. Needs vary each year, but on average fifteen families are needed.

### **Kaleidoscope Club**

After-school care is available on-site starting at 3:00 p.m. Kaleidoscope Club (KC) is open to all children over age three. Children are not required to be students of St. Francis Catholic School. Activities include supervised play, games, crafts, computer time, special parties, park visits, ice skating, homework time and help, time outdoors, and gym activities. After school hours are 3:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. on a typical school day. The cost is \$4/day per child until 4:00 p.m. or \$8/day per child from 3:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. Early out days hours are 1:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. The cost is \$8/day per child from 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. and \$12/day per child from 1:00 p.m.–5:30 p.m. To help staff prepare for staffing and activities, parents are asked to complete a commitment form each month with the dates and times that their children will attend KC, with payment in advance. A printable snack and activity schedule is available each month on the school's website ([stfranciscatholicsschool.org](http://stfranciscatholicsschool.org)). Before school supervision is provided at no extra cost starting at 7:45 a.m. on the playground or in the school gym in poor weather.

### **Room Parents**

A room parent is a liaison between a teacher and the parents of the same grade. Room parents create a social network that enhances communication between the teachers and families. Being a room parent also allows you to be more involved in your child's education. Responsibilities include the following: communicate regularly with the classroom teacher and identify what his/her needs are, coordinate the efforts of other room parents and parent volunteers for your grade, attend Home & School Association meetings to share ideas, convey parent comments and receive information, provide support for large classroom projects, arrange chaperones for field trips as needed, plan class/holiday parties, coordinate silent auction baskets, and organize expressions of the families' appreciation for the teacher (e.g., birthday or Christmas gifts).

### **School Band**

Students in fourth through eighth grades are invited to join the school band. Individual or small group lessons and full band practice are held once per week during the school day. Typical performances include the Christmas concert in December and a spring band concert. There is a monthly fee to participate, and some instruments are available to rent from the school for a nominal fee. Students with no prior experience are welcome and encouraged to participate!

### **School Choir**

Students in fourth through eighth grades are invited to join the school choir. Practices are held once per week during the school day. Typical performances include Grandparent's Day in the fall, the Christmas concert and caroling at the hospital and area nursing homes in December, a spring concert, and during weekly school Mass.

### **School Communications: Friday Folders / Emails / Newsletters / School Messenger Calls / Website / Facebook**

Teachers and staff use several means of communication to keep students and their families informed. Each Friday, teachers send home with students a Friday Folder, which may contain the student's completed work from that week or prior, important notices from the teacher or school, the teacher's Friday Newsletter, informational flyers, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, etc. Folders should be returned to school the following Monday.

Teachers use email to forward Friday Newsletters and other information, and families are invited to frequently check the school's website ([stfranciscatholicschool.org](http://stfranciscatholicschool.org)) for the current Friday Newsletters and other information. When important announcements or reminders must reach all of the families, the school uses School Reach, an automated parent notification system that reaches families via telephone.

All families are also invited to follow school happenings and events on the St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Facebook page.

### **School Patrol**

Four to five students who have completed fourth grade have the opportunity to attend Legionville School Safety Patrol Camp where they learn to be school patrollers. These students help to ensure safe crossing of street by students on their way to Mass or after school.

### **Sports Shuttle**

St. Francis students who are participating in ISD 181 or Community Ed activities may ride the Reichert Bus Sports Shuttle from St. Francis to Forestview or the high school at the end of the school day. Students/parents must pick up a bus pass from the Community Ed office at Forestview for each season or session. Students must be enrolled in a current sport or activity to obtain a bus pass. It's a good idea to confirm departure times for the Sports Shuttle. NOTE: If your student is enrolled in an ISD 181 sport or activity that has out of town tournaments where the bus leaves before the end of the school day, it is the parents' responsibility to bring the student to Forestview or the high school, as the Sports Shuttle only runs once per day at the end of the school day.

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### **STAR Students**

Each month, students who exhibit the following traits are identified by classroom teachers:

Star Students

Try Harder,

Act Christ-like, and are

Responsible and Respectful.

STAR Students are announced the last Wednesday of each month at Mass.

## **STUDENT SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND PARENT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Many opportunities exist throughout the year for you and your child to grow spiritually. Following are a few of these occasions:

### **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

Students participate in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in our school's adoration chapel throughout the school year. Each class spends time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The Blessed Sacrament is exposed each Tuesday from 8:30-2:30 for parents, grandparents and others to pray with the Lord. The chapel is also open on school days to students and staff throughout the year.

### **All Saints Day**

November 1, the Feast of All Saints, is a holy day of obligation. Students attend Mass on this day, if it falls on a weekday. Older students write reports on saints, some of which may be read during the Mass.

### **Altar Servers**

Catholic students in grades four through eight who have made their First Communion may receive training to serve as altar servers.

### **Feast of St. Francis**

October 4 is the Feast Day of our school's patron, St. Francis of Assisi. A blessing of animals is sometimes held in the school parking lot on the first Saturday after the Feast of Saint Francis.

### **Feast of St. Nicholas**

The Feast of St. Nicholas is December 6<sup>th</sup>. St. Francis Catholic School celebrates on this saint's feast day or as close to the date as possible. St. Nicholas leaves a surprise for every student on his or her desk that morning. Two or three volunteers are needed.

### **Lenten Fair**

Before Easter, students participate with their Prayer Buddies in a Lenten Fair in the school. Students learn about Lent and Easter while doing various activities such as acting out the Stations of the Cross, learning about how the tradition of Easter eggs was started, and making pretzels to accompany the Pretzel Prayer.

### **Living Rosary**

In October and May to celebrate Mary, students sit in the formation of a rosary representing the beads. Older students lead the rosary prayers.

### **Prayer Buddy**

Older students are paired with younger students as Prayer Buddies. This allows the older students to act as a mentor when they assist their Prayer Buddy during special events such as Catholic Schools Week activities.

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### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Students in grades two and up who have received their first Sacrament of Reconciliation receive the sacrament during Advent and Lent. The first Monday of every month, Fr. Paul is in the chapel to hear confessions.

### **School Mass**

Our parish priests offer the school Mass once per week, Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. Classes take turns leading parts of Mass, such as readings, prayers, presentation of gifts, and music. The first Mass of each month is dedicated to everyone with a birthday that month, and a special blessing is offered to those students.

### **Stations of the Cross**

Students attend Stations of the Cross during Lent. A priest, deacon, or school staff member leads them through this special devotion.

## **ST. FRANCIS OF THE LAKES CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOUNDATION EVENTS**

The St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Foundation was established in the 1990's to provide an ongoing, sustainable financial base to support teacher salaries, school needs, and tuition scholarships. Since its inception, support for the Foundation has grown steadily. Thanks to the generosity of many supporters, the Foundation is well on its way to achieving its goal of establishing a one million dollar trust fund.

### **Foundation Dinner**

Held in the fall, this annual fundraiser is held at a local resort or restaurant as a fundraiser for the St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Foundation. This event brings together alumni, clergy, parents, and school staff to celebrate their commitment to the school.

### **Give to the Max Day**

This is a statewide event which raises funds for nonprofit groups throughout the state of Minnesota. The St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School Foundation has utilized this online giving day to raise funds for specific items needed for the school such as Smart Boards.

## **ON-LINE RESOURCES**

[StFrancisCatholicSchool.org](http://StFrancisCatholicSchool.org)

[BLCCnorth.org](http://BLCCnorth.org)

[BLCCsouth.org](http://BLCCsouth.org)

[DioceseDuluth.org](http://DioceseDuluth.org)

[LakeCountryParishes.weconnect.com](http://LakeCountryParishes.weconnect.com)

[LakesCatholic.org](http://LakesCatholic.org)

[Vatican.va](http://Vatican.va)

## **THANK YOU!**

Thank you for choosing St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School! Teachers, staff, and other family members represent a wealth of additional information, as does the school's website: [stfranciscatholicschool.org](http://stfranciscatholicschool.org). God bless you and your student(s)!

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