

Mission Statement

All Saints Academy is a Catholic School inspired by the Holy Spirit and dedicated to teaching and living as Jesus did. Our mission is to serve and partner with our families, parishes, and communities as we focus on the spiritual, intellectual, moral, social, and physical development of our children.

Lower Campus at Diamond

2233 Diamond Avenue NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
616.447.2997

Upper Campus at Four Mile

1110 Four Mile Road NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
616.363.7725

Academic Calendar

January

January 15
No School
Martin Luther King Jr Day

January 26 & 27
ASA’s Musical: Willy Wonka Jr
Kenowa Hills Performing
Center

January 28
Pack the Pews
10:30am, St. Alphonsus

January 28 - February 3
Catholic Schools Week

February

February 1
100th Day of School

February 5 & 7
Conferences

February 19 & 20
No School
Midwinter Break

February 25
Pack the Pews
10:30am, St. Isidore

February 29
End of 2nd Trimester

March

March 1
No School
Professional Development

March 17
Pack the Pews
11am, Blessed Sacrament

March 28
Via Dolorosa

March 29 - April 5
No School
Spring Break & Easter Break

April

April 24
Alleluia Day

April 28
Pack the Pews
10:30am, St. Jude

Save the Date

Eat Pray Run

April 28th

Lower Campus

Seasons of the Saints

Winter 2024



From the Principal

Dear All Saints Academy Community,

One of my favorite things to do at the end of the calendar year is to reflect back on the events of the last year. As you all know, the year at ASA has been filled with some major highlights, some challenges, and tons of growth and energy. Due to all of the events, I think I have to limit this article to the fall season.

First and foremost, I feel so grateful to partner with each of you in the spiritual, academic, social, and emotional formation of your children. The fall and winter of 2023 have been packed with some big ticket events.

In October, All Saints Academy was audited by a committee of Catholic teachers and administrators during our 5 year accreditation. All Catholic schools in the Diocese are required to be audited using the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools by the Michigan Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. It is a long process requiring much preparation, and I am happy to report that All Saints Academy has been recommended for accreditation for the next 5 years!

Early November was packed with action. Our entire school participated in All Saints Day activities at St. Isidore. Our students began their day together at the Lower Campus with a Rosary and some reading. Then, they were transported to St. Isidore for Mass, a cake reception, and a praise and worship concert. All Saints Day reminds us of our root belief, “We are one” as we come together to pray, break bread, and engage in the joy of the Gospel together as a whole school. We also honored our 2023 Eagle Award winner, Beckie Patterson, at the end of mass. We are so fortunate that Mrs. Patterson is here leading our Early Childhood program. This award is long overdue and much deserved!

All Saints Day was just the beginning of the November fun. November is also home to our Eaglefest Auction. This year, I am excited to announce that we generated over \$103,000 in total revenue. This marks the third consecutive year that our community of generous supporters pushed us past the six-figure mark. The money generated at Eaglefest is a very important component to our budget as it helps us cover operational costs. Thank you all for coming out and supporting All Saints Academy. If you were unable to make it this year, we hope to see you there next year!

December concluded with our annual Christmas Concert led by Mrs. Clark, Ms. Duflo, and Mrs. Byerly. This was the second year we were able to bring the whole school under one roof to celebrate the Joy of the Advent season in preparation for Christ’s birth. This concert is a wonderful celebration of faith, learning, loving, and serving and provides our community with yet another opportunity to come together to observe our students using their God-given gifts and talents.

The Holy Spirit is alive and well at All Saints Academy. I am forever grateful to each of you for being such wonderful supporters of our school.

God Bless,
Joe Gietzen
Executive Director/Principal

Thank You! For placing your Bets on ASA at Eaglefest!

On behalf of the Eaglefest Committee, the ASA staff, faculty, and students, we thank you for your support, donations, and purchased at Eaglefest 2023! Attendees had a wonderful night of games, food, fun and fellowship while raising money for our school.

2023 Eaglefest by the numbers
4,405 raffle tickets sold
228 guest tickets sold
\$90,790 total raised
\$71,962 net raised



We hope to see you in November for Eaglefest 2024!

Christmas Concert



At All Saints Academy, one of our root beliefs is that “We Are One”. This was proven true on Monday, December 18, when our Kindergarten through 8th grade students joined together to celebrate Christmas through music. Mrs. Cynthia Byerly and Mrs. Vonnie Clark led the Kindergarten through 4th graders in song while Ms. Lauren Duflo directed the 5th through 8th grade bands. Partway through the night, Mr. Gietzen dedicated the night to the late Ms. Mariae Firlit followed by the students singing *Love So Bright* in her honor.

The Middle School Jazz Band, led by Ms. Lauren Duflo performed their Christmas Concert on December 20.



While Early Childhood did not have a Christmas concert, they did have a sing along on Wednesday, December 20, immediately prior to lunchtime dismissal.

2023’s Eagle Award Winner is....

Written by Tara Truskowski, Home & School Co-President

The Eagle Award is presented each year on All Saints Day by the Home and School Association to a member of the ASA community in acknowledgement of his or her extraordinary contribution to the success of All Saints Academy. This award enhances the culture of All Saints Academy by drawing attention to those who are living our Catholic faith and supporting our school mission by holding them up as an example for others to follow. While it is true that no great achievement is accomplished by the work of one person, a significantly great work like the creation, building and operation of All Saints Academy requires talented and committed people.

This year’s recipient of the All Saints Academy Eagle Award is Mrs. Beckie Patterson. Beckie currently directs the Early Childhood Program at ASA which serves over 160 children. She has been a key member of All Saints Academy for all 16 years of our existence.

Beckie is very hardworking and dedicated to the core values of Faith, Learning, Loving and Serving. Not only does she take on the Administrative responsibilities of operating a childcare, but she also spends tons of time in classrooms supporting teachers and working with students. Our childcare and toddler programs are operating from 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. which means that Beckie never sleeps!

Mrs. Patterson was nominated by a number of people for the award.

One person wrote, “In a long list of someone who gives their heart and soul to All Saints Academy, maybe nobody does it better than Beckie Patterson.”

Another person wrote, “As a supervisor, you will not often find her working in her office, but rather working in a classroom. I am not quite sure how she manages all of the scheduling, paperwork, and countless hours it takes to keep an ever growing program running so efficiently.”

Another wrote, “She works until 6pm daily, she makes sure we are staffed to provide childcare for families from 6:30am-6:00pm over the summer, during the school year and even on snow days!”

Congratulations Mrs. Patterson on your much deserved award!



The winners of this award reflect the characteristics we hope for in our students and need in our school family. Prior recipients of this award have included:

- 2011: Chris Burns
- 2012: Pete & Peg Gonzalez
- 2013: Mariae Firlit
- 2014: Christine Jarecki
- 2015: Linda Kozminski
- 2016: Judy Hardy
- 2017: Jon Fournier
- 2018: Deb Westveer
- 2019: Jenny LaPonsie
- 2020: John Matlak
- 2021: Jill Ott
- 2022: Susan Zarzecki



Engineers at Work in the Helen Walsh SmartLab

Written by Marlene Wiser, Art & SmartLab Teacher

Thanks to the generosity of Helen Walsh, whose estate provided the funds to build and equip our new SmartLab, ASA students are building bridges, flying drones, programming robots, 3D printing and exploring technology. SmartLab learning is SO MUCH FUN!

SmartLab is a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) learning environment where students explore interests in 8 areas: circuitry, manufacturing technology, robotics and control technology, software engineering, environmental technology, scientific data and analysis, communication and media arts & mechanics and structures. SmartLabs are project-based, student-centered learning communities where many different learning activities are taking place simultaneously. The emphasis is on students to learn, not on the teacher to teach. For this reason, teaching professionals in a SmartLab are called “Facilitators” reflecting their primary role in facilitating learning. SmartLab learners practice professional conduct, work in pairs or groups with professional equipment and follow the iterative process of Explore, Plan, Do, Reflect & Share.



Explore a piece of technology without any preconceived notions, gather information, and learn how the technology works.



Plan a project, set SMART goals, determine the outcome, and identify the steps to reach it.



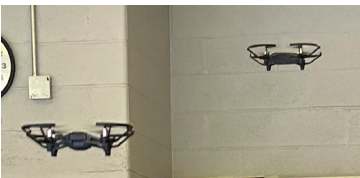
Do a project. Rigorous experiential, project-based learning opportunities help students become critical thinkers who can tackle complex problems.



Reflect on their progress. This iterative process encourages learners to document and reflect on their work throughout the project.



Share and celebrate their learning as they describe what did and didn’t work and transfer knowledge to their peers and teachers.



Drone Flying



3-D Printing



Exploring Circuitry



Bridge Building

Jump In: One Entrepreneur’s Advice

Abby Rakus, a 2014 alumna of All Saints Academy, always knew two things. She enjoyed working with children, and she had a creative side. Now, nine years later, Abby has utilized both strengths to carve out a bright future.

After graduating from Catholic Central, Abby chose to continue her education at Hope College. Why Hope?



“Well,” began Abby, “because it was close enough to home, but at the same time, far enough away. The cute and quaint campus was only a seven minute drive from the beach. I was impressed by the rigorous academics and the small size/ability to do research as an undergrad, and I felt I could grow in my Christian faith amidst the welcoming and friendly community I experienced through campus visits.”

So Hope it was, and it was there Abby earned a Bachelor of Arts

in Psychology.

Did Abby ever think she would use her creative side to venture into the world of small business? No. And yes.

“I’ve always had some sort of creative outlet, whether it be learning to decorate cakes in a middle school elective, making ribbon hair bows for my high school softball team, or painting canvases in college. At one point I thought, why not start a side hustle making things?”

Her inspiration came from working as an ER nurse tech at DeVos Children’s Hospital. Abby decided to make and sell baby top-knot hats, ribbon tag blankets, baby bibs, and matching baby and women’s turban twist headbands. With that thought, The Darling Daisy Company (<https://www.etsy.com/shop/TheDarlingDaisyCo>) was born.

It took off. Within her business, Abby is most proud of how intentional she is with the materials she uses and the thought she puts into coordinating the fabric and ribbon for the blankets. She is also proud of how well she’s done since starting the Darling Daisy Company in March of last year. She really enjoys vending at markets and meeting so many new people through her business.

What advice might she have for others who toy with the idea of beginning a small business, and what has she learned about herself through the process?

“Just do it. You’ll never know what might come of it and the

joy it will bring to your life unless you try. Jump in. I’m glad I did, and I’ve learned I can do whatever I put my mind to.”

Abby’s next steps include graduate school in Australia at the end of April. There she intends to earn her Masters in Occupational Therapy while she continues to grow her business.

You can find Abby on Instagram: [thedarlingdaisyc0_](#) & Facebook: The Darling Daisy Co.



How to MODEL for your children

Written by Sue Wuorinen, Evangelization and Youth Coordinator at St. Jude Parish



How many of us have sat around a table with our spouses or friends and talked about our plans for our kids’ future? Whether it be how we will pay for college or what we need to do to set them up for success? I would hazard a guess that many or most of us have. Now, how many of us have had similar conversations about our children’s eternal future and what we need to do to get them to Heaven?

I don’t ask that question to lead you to feel guilty and go sit with your head down in the corner or write 100 lines of “I will get my kids to Heaven.” Rather, to empower you to take hold of the opportunity to positively influence your children’s faith and future. One of the most important things we can do is to model the behavior we hope to see in our kids. We can’t wish our kids Catholic – we need to take action.

I am a big fan of acronyms, so I am going to use the word MODEL to break down some ways we can go make a difference (you can thank me later for getting that song stuck in your head.)

M – Messaging. You would be surprised how many messages we send to our kids every day. If we say God should be #1 in our lives, but then prioritize other things over weekly Mass or prayer – message sent. Likewise, if the kids know you only miss Mass if you are dead, they will get the picture.

O – Oration. (I wanted to get prayer in here but there’s no P in MODEL, so oration is what you get) Praying before meals, before bedtime, when an ambulance passes, or just because, shows your kids that there is always time or a reason to talk with God.

D – Do. Getting active in parish life is a great way to get invested in your faith. It’s a great place to serve others, too!

E – Experience. If we simply tell kids about faith it won’t be real to them. We can experience God through the sacraments, as well as, different ministry opportunities offered at Church. Is this a plug for youth ministry? You betcha it is! Going to a retreat or an event gives kids an experience they can attach to their faith. It makes it more real to them. The Shine Rally (open to all 5-8th graders Sunday, March 26) is a great example of that.

L – Learn. We can’t pour from an empty cup. It is important that we seek out answers and learn about the Church in order to teach. I have many spiritual, Catholic parenting, or mental health books available in the “Martin Lounge” part of my office. Please feel free to come and borrow any resources.

So there you have it! You have a great influence over your children’s faith – thank goodness! If I can support you in any way, please let me know.

You can reach Sue at St. Jude Parish via phone at 616-363-6885, ext 5166 or via email at swuorinen@stjudes.net