



St. Mary School--Middle School Musings: September Happenings from the Third Floor

“Middle School is exactly what it sounds like. A mixed-up mess of nothing and everything at the same time.” Middle school students met collectively on the first day of school to review expectations and set goals. We dedicated time to middle school team building activity, “Save Sammy” who was a hopeless gummy worm on a tipped over row boat adrift in the ocean. Teams worked together to save Sammy, develop clear communication skills, and work as a unit. We have worked *diligently the past few weeks to remain organized with folders, notebooks, and books. Please check your students’ assignment notebook EACH NIGHT and SIGN.* Also, encourage them to keep a clean locker and wash their gym clothes.

“When you get up every morning with determination, you go to bed with satisfaction.”

To encourage student success, please encourage students to get to bed at a reasonable hour and fuel their bodies with a good breakfast. All students were given a water bottle for daily use, or students can bring one from home.

“That moment when your teacher forgets you have homework, but then that one kid says, ‘We have homework’.”

Please expect your child to have some homework each night. Science has a current events assignment due each TUESDAY.

English Language Arts/Reading:

We started with close reading techniques and sensory details. Students worked on summarizing and retelling techniques.

5th and 6th World History Students started learning about early humans and created a proposal for a mural with great connections to our Saint Mary School.

7th and 8th World Geography

Students started with the Five Themes of Geography and reviewed map reading skills.

5th/6th Grade Math The year started with a vocabulary review of key math terms. Happily, students took timed-math fact tests. Students took their STAR math test. The upcoming units for math: Statistics, Decimal, and Fractions.

7th Grade Math Vocabulary words and basic facts were part of the start to 7th grade math. *Coming next:* Algebra and functions & fractions and proportions and percent.

8th Grade Math We started the year with a fact inventory, math Star Testing, and IXL assessment 8th graders The first trimester will include Number Operations & Patterns and Relationships.

5th and 6th Grade Science The start of the school year included an introduction to life structures and their functions. Students explored current events and completed one in class to prepare for future weekly current events.

7th and 8th Grade Science We started our year out with “Bring a Rock to School Day.” Students explored the characteristics of rocks and minerals. Weekly Currents Events are in full swing.

We are planning a field trip to one of our local jewelry stores to learn firsthand about precious stones like a diamond, ruby, pearl, sapphire, emerald, opal, turquoise, alexandrite, amethyst, topaz, and garnet and how these minerals are purchased and eventually turned into beautiful jewelry.

5th and 6th Religion: We have started working on the subject of what we believe as Catholics. Starting with the gifts of faith and what those entails. Reading scripture that pertains to the topics and praying the Rosary weekly. I have conferred with Fr. Paul and requested adoration and confession (for Catholic students) once a month. We have had the blessing of Fr. Matthew and Fr. Vincent who visited our class. *Mr. Anderson*

7th and 8th Religion: Students started the year celebrating the Good News of Jesus and the covenant and savior that God promised us and an introduction to sacred scripture. Next students studied the four Gospels and that being the Good News of Christ. I have conferred with Fr. Paul, and I requested adoration and confession (for Catholic students) once a month. We have had the blessing of Fr. Matthew and Fr. Vincent who visits our class often. *Mr. Anderson*

Middle School Art: We started off the year with a little *All About M*, so as a new art teacher I will get to know the students better. We did a silhouette drawing of ourselves, filled the inside with words and pictures that describe us, our final step was to watercolor the background. Our second project of the year, which we have just started, is *Fall Optical Art*. *Ms. Henning*

Musical Notes: This week we welcomed our new music teacher--Mrs. Allison McCawley. Mrs. McCawley is shared with Our Lady of Assumption School in Beloit. This year we have adopted the *Quaver Music Curriculum* that provides lessons with movement videos, activities, interactives, games, and assignments. Assessments are built into the lesson structure to measure student acquisition of their skills. We are also in the process of learning the Mass of St. Mary Magdalene to be sung at weekly and Sunday Masses.

Middle School Physical Education: We have begun the year focusing on movement and getting comfortable with our new classmates! So far, we have played multiple team games emphasizing cooperation and teamwork. We are excited to be incorporating more of our community to expose our students to life-long fitness opportunities. This past Friday we visited the outdoor fitness area placed across the street from the YMCA which was donated to the city by SSM Health. This fitness area incorporates different bodyweight equipment ranging from beginner to advanced movement patterns. Our idea is to expose our students to exercise and emphasize the importance of movement in our everyday lives. We hope this becomes a life-long goal for the future of our students. Thank you for your cooperation and we are excited to continue this the rest of the year. Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns you may have! *Mr. Peter Larson*