

The activities mentioned in this book would not be possible without many volunteers. We ask that you prayerfully consider helping our school in any way possible and enjoy the opportunity by participating in a PIE sponsored event!

The mission of Partners In Education is to help parents, students and teachers feel ‘connected’ by promoting open communication, stewardship and participation in social events that allow families and teachers to work together in supporting the school’s Catholic-centered mission.

We hope you find this information helpful and refer to it frequently. The PIE committee is always looking for ways to help our families and the staff of St. Francis in making our school the best it can be. If you have any questions or suggestions for the glossary, please let us know.

Partners In Education committee

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Mass days: Students attend mass once per week. Each class takes turns leading the parts of mass, such as the readings, presenting gifts and singing a special song. The first mass of every month is dedicated to everyone with a birthday that month by receiving a special blessing.

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.

All School Prayer: Monday mornings are started with prayer in the gymnasium for all students. The principal gives any news to the student body as well as drawings for prizes. Winners are selected from the parent's signature slips returned each week from teacher letters sent home in the Friday folder.

Living Rosary: Students sit in the formation of the rosary representing the beads. Older students lead the rosary prayers. This is done in October and May to celebrate Mary.

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Stations of the Cross: Students attend Stations of the Cross during Lent. A priest or deacon leads them through this special prayer.

Altar servers: Students in grades 4 and up are altar servers at the children's weekly Mass. Fourth graders, and anyone else that hasn't participated previously, go through altar server training.

Feast of St. Francis: Blessing of animals held in school parking lot the Saturday after Feast of Saint Francis in October.

All Saints' Day: Students attend Mass on this day. Older students write reports on saints, some of which may be read during the Mass.

Feast of St. Nicholas: This feast day is celebrated when St. Nicholas leaves a surprise for every student on his/her desk.

Adoration: Students participate in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament a few times per year. Each class goes over to the church and spends time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Reconciliation: Students in grades 2 and up receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before Christmas. Students in grades 2 and up receive this sacrament during Lent.

Crowning of Mary: The Crowning of Mary is held in May. Depending on when the date falls, it may be done before Mass or as a separate event.

Lenten Fair: Before Easter, students pair up with their Prayer Buddies to participate in a Lenten Fair. This allows students to 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.

Christmas Program: This event takes place in the school gymnasium on an evening the week before Christmas break. Each class participates in a song that is centered on the true meaning of Christmas. Children meet in their classroom prior to the program. All are welcome to attend!

Kinderfriend Day: This is a special day for all kindergarten children in the Brainerd school district. It takes place at the high school football field on the day before the last day of school. Each school receives a different color t-shirt to wear and the kids participate in various events throughout the morning hours.

the year. Contact any PIE member with questions or if you would be interested in becoming a host family in upcoming years.

Science Fair: Students in grade 4 and up research a science topic. They write a paper and come up with a project. This culminates with the Science Fair where students share their project with other students. It is open in the afternoon to the public. This typically takes place in April.

Multicultural Day: This event showcases various cultures. Volunteers come in to share part of their heritage or a place that they've experienced. This is a great way to show the students how small our world actually is and to build an appreciation for our differences.

School Patrol: Students have the opportunity to attend Safety Patrol Camp where they learn to be school patrollers after completing fourth grade. These students help to ensure safe crossing of streets by students on their way to Mass or after school.

State of the School Address: This event is held the Tuesday of Catholic Schools' Week and allows the pastor, principal and school board to share information of the school year with school families.

FUNDRAISERS

Contact the Fundraising Committee for more information. 20% of the school's budget must come from fundraisers, making this an important goal for all families to participate in.

All School Marathon: This is one of the main fundraisers for the school. Children get pledges and then walk or ride a predetermined route around the school to raise funds for the school. Students are eligible for prizes dependent upon the amount of pledges they receive. Families are encouraged to walk/ride together. The marathon takes place in October, rain or shine!

Box Tops: General Mills donates 10 cents for every box top collected off of various products. Simply cut them out and send them to school with your child. Each classroom competes for collecting the highest amount to win a pizza party twice a year! Team rankings are displayed in the hallway.

Campbell Soup Labels: Save your Campbell soup labels! These are redeemable for merchandise that the school can use (such as computers). Labels can be sent to school with your child and turned into the office. Labels can be collected year round and turned in at any time.

Carnival: This is held immediately following the marathon in the school gymnasium. It's a fun time for families with games, prizes, and blow-up games (i.e. giant slide and more!). Bracelets are available for purchase at the gym doors and allow bearers access to unlimited participation in games and toys. For an additional fee your family can also enjoy dinner in the school cafeteria. This event is open to the public. Volunteers are needed for this event.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration & Raffle: This is another major fundraiser for the school. It is held on the weekend closest to May 5th. It is an adult-only evening filled with food, dancing, and festivities. There are numerous silent auction items to bid on as well. Raffle tickets are also sold in advance with prizes worth thousands of dollars. A limited number of tickets are sold for the drawings. Families are asked to sell tickets for the raffle.

Fish Fries: This event takes place every Friday (except Good Friday) during Lent in the St. Francis Church basement. Every week, one or two grades are responsible for bringing desserts and providing the volunteers for the evening. Duties include breadng and frying fish, serving, selling tickets, and cleaning up. All families and students are expected to help with this event. It is open to the public. Tickets may be purchased at the door. If it's

Friday Folders: This is a vital means of communication between the school and teachers with the families of St. Francis. The folder is sent home every Friday with your child and should be returned on Monday. It includes a weekly newsletter from your child's teacher, flyers announcing upcoming events or volunteer opportunities, and general helpful information for grade school and middle school age children. Contact your child's teacher or room parent with questions.

Grandparents' Day: This takes place the second Friday in October. 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.

Host Family Program: The purpose of this program is to provide a personal resource to new families at St. Francis. Similar to the prayer buddy system, the PIE committee would like to assign all new families of St. Francis a host family in order to make them feel welcomed to the school and provide answers to the common questions asked by newcomers. Host families are encouraged to meet with the 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

February. Events at St. Francis have included an open house, participation in Sunday masses at area churches, the Scholastic book fair, and activities for students to participate in during the school day. At the open house, the principal gives a “state of the school” address followed by the student talent show. The week culminates with the Family Fun Dance. There are many volunteer opportunities available as part of Catholic Schools’ Week.

Open House: This is held twice per year: once in August and mid Winter as part of Catholic Schools’ Week. At the August open house, students may bring in their school supplies and parents have the opportunity to meet their child’s teacher. Host families are asked to attend this event with their assigned family new to St. Francis. All are welcome to attend the Open House during Catholic Schools Week as well. If someone you know is considering St. Francis for their child for the following year, they are also welcome to come and see all we have to offer during this registration period!

Talent Show: Students display their talents for all to see! The talent show takes place during Catholic Schools’ Week following the state of the school address. Both are part of Catholic Schools’ Week open house. The public is welcome to attend.

not your week to volunteer, come and enjoy some great food and fellowship!

Foundation Dinner: Held in the fall, this annual dinner, held at one of the local resorts, is a fundraiser for our school’s foundation. The goal is to have one million dollars in the account. After that, the interest earned would be used for tuition assistance and to increase teachers’ salaries. The Bishop, area clergy, teachers, alumni, and supporters of our school frequent this event.

Kemps’ Milk Caps: Bring in your Kemps’ milk caps and the school receives 5 cents for each. “Give ‘em five” can also be found on other Kemps’ products. There is a collection box located outside of the school office. This program also runs throughout the entire year.

Recycling Bins - Kans for Kids: Bring in all your Kans for Kids. Aluminum can recycling bins are located at St. Francis of the Lakes Catholic School, St. Christopher's Catholic Church in Nisswa, and St. Andrew's Catholic Church in Brainerd. Money is used to purchase classroom supplies.

Scholastic Book Fair: Books are set up throughout the hallways for students and families to purchase. The school makes a profit from each item sold. This is held at least two times a year, usually in conjunction with Grandparents' Day and Catholic Schools Week. Books are also available to donate to a classroom from a "wish list" each teacher compiles. Volunteers are needed for set up, take down, and to assist with purchases.

Scrip: This is a fundraiser that doesn't involve any time or extra money on your part. You purchase a certificate (much like a gift certificate) from local and national retailers. A percentage of this is donated to the school by the business. Scrip may be purchased at the school office or through the parish center. Some certificates are kept on hand while others may take up to two weeks to receive. A list of participating retailers can be found outside of the office. Scrip for Cub Foods and Super America gas station are kept on hand.

Tables of Plenty: This is a fundraiser used to help the Up North families recover costs associated with bus fees. The event is held the second Saturday in May where tables are decorated in a variety of themes. Participants enjoy a wonderful meal as well as entertainment.

FYI/MISCELLANEOUS

School Reach phone calls: These are automated phone calls with a pre-recorded message for all families, reminding them of upcoming school events. A call will also go out on days school is cancelled due to 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 PIE 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, and suggesting teacher gifts for classrooms.

Catholic Schools' Week: This is a national week-long celebration of our Catholic school system and its dedication to helping children grow academically, spiritually, and as individuals. Each year has a theme and is held the last week of January or early

Lenten Penny Competition: The students and teachers compete by saving pennies to go toward charity during Lent. Pennies count positively toward each team's point total, while the value of other coins or dollar bills are subtracted. Collections are counted each week and rankings are announced at all school prayer.

Choir Caroling: Students in grades 4 and up are eligible for choir. One of their activities is to go caroling at various establishments, often including the hospital and nursing homes.

Festival of Trees: Held before Thanksgiving, this event is a fundraiser for local nursing home facilities. Trees are decorated by sponsoring establishments. Our choir typically goes out for an afternoon of caroling.

Brainerd Jaycees' Ice Fishing Extravaganza: The school receives a donation from the Jaycees based on the number of volunteers it recruits to help at the Extravaganza. It is typically held in January at Gull Lake. Adult volunteers are needed for this event.

Parents Night Out: Parents can drop off the kids at school for a night of shopping or an actual "date" in early December. Donations collected for childcare are used to purchase items from the "Christmas Giving Tree" displayed at St. Francis church.

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Contact any PIE committee chair for more information.

Mornings with Moms: Students are invited to bring their mom, grandma, or any special female for donuts and juice. This event is held once in September, January, and May in the school cafeteria from 7:30-8:10am. Come and go as it fits your schedule.

Dads and Doughnuts: The same as Mornings with Mom, but students bring their dad, grandpa, or any special male friend. It is typically held the week before or after Mornings with Moms.

Family Fun Dance: A great night of fun for the entire family! This night starts with an optional spaghetti dinner in the school cafeteria followed by karaoke, games, and dancing in the gymnasium. The evening is held at the end of Catholic Schools Week. Concessions and photos are available for additional cost. Volunteers are needed to help with this event.

Bowling: This event is held one afternoon over spring break week at Jack's House. Regular fees apply. Several lanes are reserved for students and families of St. Francis.

School Picnic: This is held after school on the last day of school at Lum Park. Each family is asked to bring hot dogs to grill. Plates, silverware and drinks are provided. Each class is assigned something to bring such as salad, dessert, buns, etc. It's a great chance to get together with everyone before the start of summer!

Mississippi Belle: Enjoy a relaxing cruise on the Mississippi River! Families of St. Francis enjoy an afternoon on this riverboat and can enjoy the scenery, a potluck meal, and the company of others. Children are welcome to attend. This takes place in the fall. The boat departs from Kozy Kove Resort.

Advent Activity: This is a chance for your entire family to participate in a community service project. It is held just before Advent starts each year and emphasizes the importance of preparing our hearts for the Christ-child's arrival. Past events have included making cards for nursing home residents.

PIE Play dates: Play dates are scheduled in the summertime for Kindergarten and First Grade children (and new families) to get to know one another and just have some fun! The play dates are typically held from 10am – noon at Lum or Baxter park.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/

CHARITABLE EVENTS

Shoes for Haiti: Each Christmas, the school sponsors a shoe drive for the children of Haiti, who are not allowed to attend school unless they wear shoes. Students are asked to donate new or gently used tennis or tennis-like shoes for this mission. All donations are placed under the Christmas tree in the school foyer area.

Food Drives: A food drive is normally held before Thanksgiving and again in March. Students are asked to bring non-perishable items for donation and place them on the gymnasium stage. Food is then boxed and delivered to the local food shelf.

Adopt-A-Highway: This event takes place in April and October. St. Francis school is responsible for picking up garbage along a section of Highway 25 South near Jack's House of bowling. Adult volunteers are needed to assist, with about a two hour time commitment. Childcare and bowling is provided for all children of the volunteers for a nominal fee. It's a great way to teach your kids to respect the environment!