

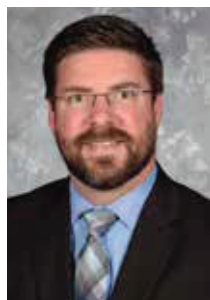


ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH SCHOOL'S

BRICK LOT *Bulletin*

November 2020

From the Principal's Office



Deep Gratitude

I hardly know where to begin to express my gratitude for the St. Sebastian community, which really pulled together to get school started this year despite the constant changes and challenges of the pandemic. Our teachers and staff in particular have

been working so hard every day and have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Our families have been doing their part too, being thoughtful and adaptive, and our students have been fantastic. I'm proud of our students for quickly adjusting to the new safety procedures and different daily schedules and for jumping right back into learning, both in person and online. Thank you to everyone for your efforts and support.

Forward With Christ in Hope

In September, I offered the theme of "Forward With Christ in Hope" for the theme of this school year, and I am pleased to see this theme evident around school in so many ways, from service learning opportunities such as harvesting crops in the school garden, to efforts by students to improve their relationships with their peers and to make positive choices every day. In everything we do, the school aims to help students better understand how they can make Christ present in all that they do.

The school-wide Friendly program that we initiated this year ties in perfectly with the "Forward With Christ in Hope" theme. Students have been learning about how to encourage one another and to build each other up. Teachers have been encouraging students to rally around the catchphrase "We Need Each Other," with the goal of strengthening our culture of building up rather than tearing down.

The Friendly program will soon turn its focus to the idea of "Love at All Times." Students will be learning and exploring how this does not mean simply saying "I love you" to each other, but also showing God's love through our actions. God's commandment to love one another is an important focus as we continue to "Move Forward With Christ in Hope."

Classroom Improvement Initiative

We are happy to have completed the final phase of the Classroom Improvement Initiative this fall. Many members of our community put a great deal of thought and planning into this major project to upgrade the storage and furniture in our classrooms. All the classrooms in grades 1-8 are now outfitted with new student desks, student chairs and teacher desks. In addition, large customized classroom storage units were installed in the grades 1-5 classrooms, and students in grades 1-8 are enjoying new lockers or expanded access to existing lockers.

All of our new student chairs are the same model, with a flexing seat back that promotes proper posture while providing back support and allowing students to turn with less restriction. More movement encourages students to be alert and happy by assuring that they are physically comfortable. Students in grades 1-6 have the stackable, four-leg version of the chair, which comes in a variety of heights, while the junior high students have the cantilevered, sled version of the chair.

All of our new student desks are also the same model, with a trapezoid-shaped desktop and legs that can be raised and lowered as well as hooks for backpacks. The desks are designed to be durable but easily moveable. The consistency in the look of our desks and chairs across grade levels really makes our classrooms look great, and their movability allows for many varieties of classroom configurations when COVID-19 restrictions are removed. The new desks were easy to arrange to accommodate social distancing requirements, and the simple design makes the frequent cleaning tasks easier than it was with our old desks.

A major portion of this project was paid for with proceeds from the 2019 and 2020 St. Sebastian Spectacular. Thank you to everyone who supported this initiative for helping to provide our students and faculty with these wonderful improvements to our classroom learning environments.

Flight 93 Field Trip

The 8th-grade class was very fortunate to be able to visit the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pa., this year. In years past, our school has conducted this trip on the day of the Sept. 11 memorial ceremony. This year we postponed the trip to a later date when fewer people would be in attendance, allowing our group to remain distanced from others. The trip still had a great impact on our students, as evident in these student reflections:

"The bravery of the passengers that I learned about is what stood out most to me. Religiously, I can take away how unselfish and caring they were for others."
— Matthew Langen

"The fact that everything there had meaning was very impressive to me. For example, the Tower of Voices had 40 chimes, one for every passenger, and the memorial was 93 feet tall. The fact that they did not give up and helped so many people really inspired me." — Jacob Dennée

"They worked together to stop something terrible and became heroes. One thing I took away was that even though they had differences, they worked together to become heroes." — Ben Wisberger

"I took away from this that we need to come together in times of need. It also shows that we need to rely on God." — Teagan McCafferty

"The takeaway of this memorial is to be the best version of yourself that you can be." — Gianna Pillitiere

This trip always serves as a powerful reminder of how much we can achieve when we work together for the greater good. With the strength of our faith as a firm foundation, our school works to develop young people who will work with others to make a positive impact on the world.

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Rohr
Principal

Questions or Suggestions?

Please email Anne Dennée, Newsletter Editor, at Anne@DenneeFamily.com. Items for the Jan.-Feb. issue should be submitted by Friday, December 4th.

From the STEM Coordinators

Grades K-2, by Susan Vernon

The primary grades have been busy with STREAM activities this quarter! The kindergarten students used toothpicks and marshmallows to build a variety of structures. They are engineers AND architects! The 1st-graders celebrated Oct. 12 by designing a new boat for Christopher Columbus using cardboard, tinfoil, straws, and tape. Sail on, Columbus! Both 2nd-grade classes welcomed fall with a visit to the school garden where they harvested tomatoes, green beans, peppers, and squash for the Good Samaritan Hunger Center. Mrs. Vernon's 2nd-grade class learned about Johnny Appleseed and his journey through Ohio, and they investigated real apples with seed counting, graphing, and diagramming. Skeletons don't scare Mrs. DeKatch's class! These 2nd-graders learned about bones and their importance to our bodies. Then the class drew their hand and arm bones, coated them with oil, and held them to the light like an X-ray! How cool is that? The annual leaf walk provided 2nd-graders with an opportunity to collect specimens for a leaf book and leaf rubbings. What a great way to explore our beautiful campus!



Grades 3-6, by Jennifer Slegus

Our 3rd-grade students have been using their own bags of individual tiles to create multiplication problems. They have been making equal groups and comprehending that repeated addition is the same as multiplication. Students in 3rd grade also wrote their own multiple-step real world math problems and figured out the answers so they could quiz their classmates. The 4th-grade students have been busy with many STEM-based activities. At the beginning of the quarter, they worked in small groups to design and construct a tabletop football field and goal posts, where they launched paper footballs for touchdowns! The students had to predict measurements and outcomes, graph results, and plan improvements to make their designs the best they could be. Most recently, the 4th-graders were challenged to design the tallest free-standing tower using candy corn and toothpicks.

Our 4th-graders ended the quarter with several other Halloween-themed activities, including a pumpkin STEAM lab. In this lab, they used their math and science skills to complete tasks such as measuring a pumpkin's circumference, testing for buoyancy, and comparing characteristics. Then, using their artistic talents, they created a character to make their pumpkin come to life, complete with a descriptive story! Along with studying Greek root words and mythology, the 4th-grade students made replicas of a monster of their choice, creating an origin story and a "Monster in My World" fact sheet, in which they used

scientific terminology to describe these monsters' habitat, diet, adaptations, and classifications. The 4th-grade also took a trip to our school garden to help harvest food for the Good Samaritan Hunger Center. Stay tuned to hear about our upcoming learning project with the Hunger Center, where we will be helping to plan and design a new fence for the garden space!

The 5th-graders have worked through the engineering design process (EDP) by completing a paper airplane engineering lab. After the students compared the EDP with the scientific method, they revised their paper airplanes to improve the flight distance. The structured lab reinforced the necessity of criteria and constraints in science investigations. In another lab, "Inventing a Bobby Dropper," students were introduced to the important role of "failure" in science investigations. The students invented a paper device to slow the fall of Bobby the bobby pin. Students learned by sharing observations and ideas. This lab showed the students that we all benefit from each other's successes and failures. The 6th-grade students have been participating in virtual science labs through their online Science Fusion access. These labs give students a chance to focus their knowledge of the scientific method, designing a hypothesis and testing variables. One recent lab covered heat absorption through investigating various fabric types and colors to determine which could absorb the most heat.

Grades 7-8, by Megan Ritchie

In 7th-grade science classes, students have been learning about scientific tools and measurements, representing data, the scientific method, and the engineering design process in preparation for our upcoming science fair, which will be held virtually in December. Our 7th-graders seem very excited, and I cannot wait to see what projects, experiments, and discoveries they come up with! Be on the lookout for these exciting projects from our junior high students!

In 8th-grade science, our students are studying experimental design and data analysis. Using data from the CDC, students graphed and analyzed the current COVID-19 statistics. Students are preparing digital science fair projects using a topic of their choice. Science fair is a great opportunity for students to apply the scientific method to conduct independent research. Exceptional projects may advance to compete in the regional digital fair. Our 8th-grade students also did some hands-on learning when they helped harvest vegetables and clean out the school garden this fall.



This year, St. Sebastian students (including the 8th-graders pictured above) helped harvest the over 2,000 pounds of fresh produce that was grown in our school garden. All of the produce was donated to the Good Samaritan Hunger Center.

8th-Graders Visit the Flight 93 Memorial

Our 8th-grade students went on a field trip in October to the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pa. In years past, our 8th-grade students have taken this field trip on Sept. 11 and participated in the annual memorial ceremony on that day. This year, the trip was delayed to avoid crowds and give families time to adjust to being back in school with new schedules and health protocols before doing a field trip.

Most of the students rode on a bus that was large enough for them to spread out (with masks on), while some students drove separately with their parents. Students who rode the bus watched the movie *Flight 93* on the way to the memorial, helping them to understand what the passengers and crew experienced on Sept. 11. Our group spent the day exploring the memorial, which features three major sections: the Tower of Voices monument, the memorial plaza, and the visitor center.

The Tower of Voices is an impressive, 93-foot-tall concrete structure that is designed to be both a visual and audible reminder of the heroism of the 40 passengers and crew. The tower contains 40 wind chimes, each of them slightly different, representing the unique lives of the 40 passengers and crew. Before our group started their tour of the memorial plaza, they listened to a talk by a park ranger and paused to say a prayer together for those who lost their lives on Sept. 11.

The memorial plaza is located just a quarter-mile from the crash site, which is the final resting place of the passengers and crew members. The plaza includes the Wall of Names, which features 40 white polished marble stones inscribed with the names of the passengers and crew. The visitor center has many exhibits, from those that put the Flight 93 crash in context with the other attacks on Sept. 11, to those that recount the stories of the passengers and crew members.

"Most of us know exactly where we were on 9/11," Principal Rohr explains. "But for our current eighth grade students, they did not experience this tragic day first hand, so it is important that we are able to continue to provide our students this opportunity to visit this profound museum and sacred site. This visit, now an annual component of our curriculum, is impactful for students in many ways as they learn about this historical event and the 40 brave men and women who set aside their differences to devise a plan, vote and finally carry out their plan. This experience takes students through a range of emotions, from bitter sadness to enduring gratitude. As shown in the photo at right, there is a quote at the site that reads, 'A common field one day, a field of heroes forever.' These brave men and women may be gone, but they will never be forgotten."



Students observe the Tower of Voices monument, which is designed to provide a living memorial in sound to remember the 40 passengers and crew through their ongoing voices.



Our 8th-grade students pause for a photo outside of the visitor center at the Flight 93 National Memorial in Shanksville, Pa.



Students reflect on the words etched on the wall near the impact site, which says "A common field one day, a field of heroes forever."

Students in the News

Student Council

Congratulations to the following students who were elected to student council for the 2020-2021 school year: Lola Hall, president; Jacob Dennée, vice president; Owen Schlueter, secretary; Jude Rothkopf, treasurer; Alexander Hayes and Teagan McCafferty, 8th-grade room representatives; and Peter de Boer and Susie Thomas, 7th-grade room representatives.

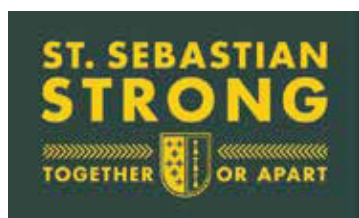
Canned Food Drive

In September, the student council members held a mini canned food drive to support the Good Samaritan Hunger Center that yielded over 1,000 items. Thank you to everyone for their donations!



Start of School in 2020: One for the History Books

Administration, Staff, Teachers Work Overtime to Plan, Teach for 2020-21 School Year



School started a week later than usual in 2020, and that was the first of many changes and adaptations resulting from the pandemic, including mask requirements, social distancing, and other health protocols. St. Sebastian Parish School offered families three

options for their students to return to learning: full time (in person every day), hybrid (in person 2 days, remote 3 days), or all remote. At the start of school, about 82% of our students chose full time, with 6% choosing hybrid and 12% choosing all remote. By the end of the first quarter, several families had switched to full time. For the second quarter, the school is offering only two options (full time in person or all remote), with about 92% of families choosing to go full time. Preparing to offer all three options for the start of school was challenging, but our administrators, teachers, and staff pulled together and really rose to the occasion and responded to issues as they arose, as evident in the following perspectives shared by some of our parents.

"Our experience with remote learning this fall has been positive for our whole family. Our children have been engaged and challenged — and we rarely see our oldest son between the hours of 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. He is nearly 100% on his own. This independence has built a lot of confidence in him, and we are very proud of him. We did not expect to do remote learning without some challenges, and in the beginning we experienced some technology issues that have since been resolved. We have all learned a lot! We are overwhelmed with the support the teachers have offered both of our boys. It has been outstanding. They are heroes! We cannot thank them enough for going above and beyond to make sure our children receive a quality education and have fun while doing so. We are grateful for the opportunity to remote learn until our family is ready to come back in person ... we look forward to that day!" — Jennifer McDonald

"We've had positive experiences with both in-person and remote learning. Our youngest son is in preschool doing in-person learning. Preschool has been a welcoming experience for him. He absolutely loves his teacher, school and new friends. He is not required to wear a mask all day, but is encouraged, and he washes hands frequently. ... Our 5th-grade son started out the school year using the hybrid option. We were blown away by the flawless execution of remote learning. I can only imagine the level of planning that went into the infrastructure for remote learning prior to the school year beginning. It truly was

like being in class. We printed the "Daily Doc" for our son's schedule, and he would simply follow it throughout the day. He was able to easily switch Zoom sessions for classes and hear all lessons. He never fell behind or felt left out from class. However, after 4 weeks we decided to switch to full time in person since the back and forth was an unnecessary stress for him. Our son is so happy to be back at St. Sebastian five days a week. He has adapted so well to all changes that have been put in place. In fact, I think he welcomes them as someone who has always been a bit of a germ-o-phobe! He feels safe at school and can focus on learning. ... We have so much appreciation for what the school and teachers have done to welcome kids back to school remotely and in person. Having a choice means so much to so many. We are thankful for the teachers and all their continued hard work. They have truly been amazing through all of this." — Ashley Woodford Lawson

"We are thankful for the teachers and all their continued hard work. They have truly been amazing through all of this."

— Ashley Woodford Lawson

"Due to the uncertainty of so many things because of the pandemic and other personal reasons, my family decided that our children would start the school year virtually. From the start, I knew that this decision was the right one for us. The hard work of our amazing teachers and staff at St. Sebastian made learning from home successful. Both boys were able to access all of their teachers' lessons and complete assignments from the comfort of their own desk at home while still feeling they were part of the classroom. The teachers included my boys in daily discussions and group activities, and they checked in on them to make sure they were understanding. Any technical issues that my boys had were dealt with quickly. Both of my boys were nervous about attending school and having to wear a mask all day. Seeing that the in-person students were able to still enjoy school while wearing a mask and maintaining social distances made our choice to go back in person for the second nine weeks much easier. I'm confident that we made the best choice. Thank you to the wonderful teachers that spent endless hours to ensure all students had the best education during this extremely difficult time!" — Becky Whitney



Fall Sports Wrap-Up

Fall sports looked quite different this year, with the pandemic causing the school to cancel our Soccer Stars program (preschool-K), DD Soccer (grades 1-2) and CYO volleyball. St. Sebastian students were able to participate in some skills sessions and/or local scrimmages for volleyball, flag football, and younger soccer players. And, St. Sebastian was able to field a few CYO teams (season recaps included below). Special thanks to all the coaches and our Booster Club leaders for all the extra time they spent adjusting plans, learning new health protocols, and helping our teams follow all the new rules so they could have a season.

Soccer and Football

St. Sebastian fielded just one CYO girls soccer team this year, which included students in grades 5-8. Despite playing in the 7th-8th-grade division, our team held their own against older teams, finishing with a record of 3 wins, 4 losses. St. Sebastian football players participated in CYO tackle football teams in the 5th-grade, 6th-grade, and 7th-8th-grade divisions. Congratulations to the 5th-grade team, which finished with a winning record of 3-2.

Cross Country

The 6th-8th-grade girls team finished first or second in every meet. The team was led by Scarlett Powell, an 8th-grader at Our Lady of the Elms who is a St. Sebastian parishioner, who finished in second place every meet except one, and she went on to earn a fourth place medal (out of 59 runners) at the 8th-grade CYO championship meet Oct. 18. The 6th-8th-grade boys team was deep with talent, winning one meet and finishing in the top five in the other meets in fields of 12-15 teams. At the 8th-grade championships, four of our five 8th-grade boys recorded their personal best times. The 3rd-5th-grade girls team won every single meet with strong performances by another deep field of talented runners. The 3rd-5th-grade boys team only had five runners, but they finished third or fourth in almost every meet in fields of 10-13 teams.



News & Notes

STEM Excellence Award — Repeat Winners!



St. Sebastian Parish School was one of 37 schools statewide selected by the Ohio Academy of Science to receive the Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM Education and Student Research for their accomplishments during the 2019-2020 school year. This marks back-to-back years for this award! In addition to the school's award, 20 of our educators were selected from a field of 464 teachers to receive individual commendation and a complimentary membership to the Ohio Academy of Science.

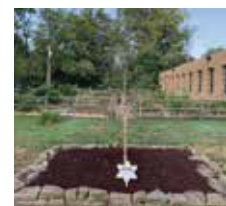
To be considered for the award, schools had to meet four criteria: conduct a local science fair with 12 or more students, qualify two or more of those students for one of the academy's 17 district science days, have students participate in at least one or more youth science opportunities beyond the classroom, and convince external STEM professionals how (and to what extent) the school's program met the academy's definition of STEM education.

The Ohio Academy of Science defines STEM education as both the mastery and integration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics for all PK-12 students. It incorporates scientific inquiry and technological design through student-focused, project-based curricula to develop skills of communication, teamwork/collaboration, creativity/innovation, critical thinking and problem solving.

Congratulations to our teachers and administrators, and thank you for continuing to offer our students the very best in STEM education!

Alumni-Led Campus Projects

Charlie Wilt, Class of 2017, built a flower bed in front of the school garden as part of "The Daffodil Project," in which daffodils around the world are being planted in remembrance of children who were persecuted during the Holocaust. The Daffodil Project aspires to be a worldwide living Holocaust memorial through the planting of 1.5 million daffodils that honor the lives of the children who were lost and is a part of a humanitarian effort for children in crisis today. Charlie, with a crew of helpers, completed the flower garden as his Eagle Scout project. The garden features a raised bed surrounded by stone, with 500 daffodil bulbs, a plaque that explains the importance of the daffodils, and a Himalayan birch tree that symbolizes new beginnings, regeneration, hope and new dawns in many cultures. The memorial features daffodils because their shape and color represent the yellow stars Jewish people were forced to wear during the Holocaust. Yellow is also the color of remembrance, and daffodils represent our hope for the future since they are resilient and return with a burst of color each spring.



Andrew Powell, Class of 2018, also chose St. Sebastian for the site of his Eagle Scout project. His project is the construction of a "gaga pit" for the playground area. It is a small playing field with a low wall built around it. Many St. Sebastian students have enjoyed playing gaga during their visits to Camp Christopher. The game is played like dodgeball, but players may only eliminate their opposition by striking the ball below their opponents' knees. Like dodgeball, gaga involves dodging, striking, running, and jumping, with the objective of being the last person standing. Thank you to Andrew and Charlie for these wonderful additions to our campus!



Explorer Days

Are you or someone you know thinking about kindergarten for your child for next year?

Plan to join us for this year's Virtual Explorer Days Program on Friday, Nov. 20 at 8:30 a.m. You will have the opportunity to speak with Principal Anthony Rohr as well as both kindergarten teachers, Jennifer Kidder and Michele Kellner.

We will provide an overview of the curriculum and explain what a typical day in kindergarten looks like. Your child can join in an activity along with our current kindergarten students, and there will be a question-and-answer session as well as a link to our virtual school tour.

You must register for this program so we can send you the login information. Registration is available on the school website at stsebastian.org/events/explorer-days.

Scholarships for 2021-2022

Thanks to the generosity of our school and parish community, there are several opportunities for St. Sebastian Parish School students to earn scholarships for next year. Scholarships for the 2021-22 school year, listed here, are available for students currently in grades K-7 (to be applied to next year's tuition at St. Sebastian) as well as 8th-grade students (to be applied to high school tuition).

The St. Sebastian Parish Foundation, which acts as a clearing-house of information for all these scholarships, has posted applications and additional information on the school's website at stsebastian.org/school/scholarships. The application deadline is Jan. 25, 2021. Completed applications must be submitted to the Foundation or the school office with all of the required materials on or before Jan. 25. If you have questions, please contact Anne Dennée at scholarships@stsebastian.org or 330-836-2233, ext. 119.

Scholarships Funded Through the St. Sebastian Parish Foundation

NEW! Christopher James Consilio Scholarship – (grade 8) one or more available, essay based
 Dayspring Opportunity Scholarship – (grades pre-K-7) up to two available, need based
 Denise Maroon Finley Scholarship – (grade 8) up to two available, need based
 Lynn Frey-Steward Scholarship – (grades K-7) one available, merit based
 The Gerstenmaier Family Scholarship – (grade 8) one or more available, merit based
 GOAL Scholarship – (grades 2-7) three or more available, merit based
 Frances L. Sharp Scholarship – (grades 4-7) up to two available, need based
 John A. Trecaso Scholarship – (grade 8) one available, need based

Scholarships Funded Through St. Sebastian Parish School/Parish Related Groups

HASA Youth Christian Service Scholarship – (grade 8) two available, merit based
 Reverend Terry Peacock Scholarship – (grade 8) two available, merit based
 Sanctuary Society Service Scholarship – (grades 5-8) one available, merit based
 St. Irene Scholarship – (grades 1-7, grade 8) two available, merit based

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

SAVE THE DATE

End of 2nd Quarter — January 15
 No School, MLK Day — January 18
 Open House — January 31
 Catholic Schools Week — Jan. 31-Feb. 6
 Parent/Teacher Conferences — Feb. 9 & 11
 No School — Feb. 12
 No School — Feb. 15
 1 p.m. Dismissal — Feb. 25
 No School — March 5
 Confirmation — March 5
 End of 3rd Quarter — March 25
 No School — March 26

NOVEMBER

Parent/Teacher Conferences (virtual)	November 4-5 (Wednesday-Thursday)
No School - Parent/Teacher Conferences (virtual)	November 6 (Friday)
No School	November 9 (Monday)
Virtual Explorer Day (for families of prospective students)	November 20 (Friday), 8:30-9:30 a.m.
Confirmation Meeting (8th grade)	November 23 (Monday), St. Sebastian Church, 7-8 p.m.
No School, Thanksgiving Break	November 25-27 (Wednesday-Friday)

DECEMBER

Christmas Plant Sale Pick Up	December 5 (Saturday), 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
First Reconciliation	December 12 (Saturday), 9:30 a.m.
No School, Christmas Break	December 21-January 1

The 17th Annual St. Sebastian Spectacular ~ April 24, 2021

This year's theme, "Denim and Diamonds," captures the experience of this event: It's simply fun but also a fabulous night out — and all for a great cause! Proceeds from the Spectacular are used for tuition reduction for every student, for technology investments, for strengthening our endowment, and for other special projects. This year we will be raising funds to update the main entryway to the school, place additional security cameras throughout the campus, update the PA system, and add additional locking mechanisms for classroom doors. In the past 16 years, this event, which is the school's largest annual fundraiser, has raised close to \$1.2 million to benefit our students and our school.

As of now, we are planning an in-person event on Saturday, April 24, 2021. The event, which is chaired this year by Carrie Pozsgay and Lori Krohn, is off to a

great start! Over 200 coupon books have been sold, donation requests for auction items are being mailed, and cute classroom art projects for the auction are in the works. Vaccaro's will return as the caterer of a delicious sit-down meal. The ticket price will be \$75, which includes an open bar with a signature drink offering, tasty appetizers, and a wonderful dinner, with dessert served at your table.

If you would like to donate an auction item, place an ad in the program, or make a sponsorship donation, please contact Logan Rice at gatheringsolution@gmail.com, or visit the Spectacular page on our website: stsebastian.org/school/st-sebastian-spectacular. Stay tuned for more information! We are looking forward to another successful event with your continued support. Thank you!

