

SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNAE OFFICE



Season's Greetings from Saint Mary's!

*A Message from Grandparent Co-Chairs
Mary Jane Jenkins and Vicky McKenzie Armes '62C*

As co-chairs for Saint Mary's grandparents and grandfriends [Annual Fund campaign](#), we are excited to share this edition of our quarterly e-newsletter, which was created especially for grandparents and grandfriends of our Saint Mary's girls. To kick off the holiday season, [click this link](#) (or the image to the right) to watch the YouTube video of the **40th annual Lighting O' the Grove**, which was livestreamed on Nov. 19, 2020. There is a full schedule of performances to help celebrate the holiday season and the video is about 53 minutes long. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did!



This year's comprehensive 2020-2021 reopening plan was designed to safely deliver in-person learning for most of the fall while eliminating travel between home and school during the holidays as the COVID-19 virus surged nationwide. Thus, after the Thanksgiving break and following three months of

successful in-person learning from September through November, Saint Mary's students and faculty began three weeks of virtual learning and community activities that will last until the Christmas break begins Dec. 18.

The 2020-2021 academic calendar, which is adapted to navigate the pandemic while continuing to deliver an excellent educational program, calls for students and faculty to return for in-person learning in January with the continuation of our extensive COVID protocols which worked so well this fall. However, they will begin the spring semester again with virtual learning, prior to coming back to campus safely. You can learn more about Saint Mary's plans for re-opening by clicking [this link](#).

In closing, we hope you will take note of all the important information below and join us this year in [making a gift](#) to Saint Mary's School. (For those who have already given, THANK YOU!) We also hope you are as excited as we are for the wonderful learning experience our granddaughters receive at Saint Mary's, and we look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Warmly,

Mary Jane Jenkins and Vicky McKenzie Armes '62C

Special Event Reminders



GRANDPARENTS & GRANDFRIENDS DAY 2021

Families are an integral part of the Saint Mary's experience, and *Grandparents & Grandfriends Day* is an annual, no-cost event that provides an opportunity for students to share their Saint Mary's experience with their grandparents and grandfriends. Guests enjoy a faculty Q&A program, a special Chapel service, lunch and a photo with



VALENTINES DAY OF GIVING 2021

Each Valentine's Day, members of the Saint Mary's community come together to show their love for the institution and participate in the Valentine's Day of Giving. If you haven't yet made a gift to Saint Mary's, this day of giving campaign is a terrific way to ensure your gift has double the impact -- thanks to a special, anonymous alumna who offers to match, dollar-for-dollar, each gift made during the

their granddaughter(s), and the opportunity to visit an afternoon class to get a firsthand experience of life at Saint Mary's. Optional campus tours are offered at the end of the day, while a continental breakfast with the Head of School for donors to Saint Mary's Grandparent Campaign is offered first thing in the morning. (Make a gift in honor of your granddaughter to make sure you're on the list by [clicking here](#).) Check our website for updates at www.sms.edu/grandparentsday.

campaign. If we raise \$20,000 between Feb. 1 and Feb. 14, the funds will be matched by our donor, which means your gift has double the impact on Saint Mary's for our granddaughters. To make a donation over the phone, or to pledge a gift to be paid by June 30, 2021, call Lauren Gerber, Director of Annual Fund and Major Gifts, at 678-920-1591. To give today, visit www.sms.edu/ilovesms.

Save-the-Date for Sunday, Feb. 14, 2021.

Save-the-Date for Friday, April 16, 2021.

School News

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL BRENDAN O'SHEA

'Tis the Season!

Dear Members of the Saint Mary's Community,

The words above likely grabbed your attention. You're probably thinking a holiday message or greeting will follow. Read on.



Every five years, independent schools go through an accreditation process to ensure the school meets standards and expectations set by our accrediting organization - the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS). Another critical part of the accreditation process is the development and presentation of a school improvement plan. Just as we encourage and support our students in the continual learning process, Saint Mary's also strives to improve as an institution. Accrediting organizations review improvement plans and offer commendations and recommendations to the school so it can move forward.

In order to develop meaningful improvement plans, the school gathers information, input, and feedback from a variety of constituencies including students, parents, faculty and staff, and alumnae. Surveys are used to allow everyone a chance to participate and provide input. Over the next couple months, relevant surveys will be sent to our various constituent groups with a limited window for response.

First up, our students! We will introduce the concept of the student survey to the students next week during assembly, and we plan to have the students complete the survey during advisory time on Monday, December 14. While we would prefer to have the students complete a satisfaction survey when times were more normal, we need to gather the important feedback to begin this vital accreditation process. We plan to send the parent

surveys out in January. More details will follow in upcoming Buzz messages. **So, 'tis the season for surveys!**

'Tis also the Season of Advent – the season of preparation, anticipation, and reflection. If you have a minute, please ask your granddaughter to share the Service of Lessons and Carols presented by Chaplain Stoddard, Ms. Moran, and our students earlier this week. Your granddaughter will need to play it for you, as it is stored in Saint Mary's Microsoft Teams and only accessible to students and employees. The messaging is powerful and the singing is glorious. Watching the service will fill you with the spirit of the season.

I also encourage you to [watch this video](#) of our amazing Chorale students singing Christmas Carols. The girls singing, in this order, are:

- "Come All Ye Faithful" by Cokie Daniel '22
- "White Christmas" by Sydney Sheppard '21
- "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" by Bonnie Yin '24 (Recorded at home in China.)
- "Lully, Lullay" by Vivienne English '22
- "Angels We Have Heard on High" by Hannah McMinn '22
- "What Child is This?" by Pipi Pi '22 (Recorded at home in China.)
- "Little Town of Bethlehem" by Audrey Jones '23
- "Deck the Halls" by The Saint Mary's String Ensemble (Sophia Cimballa '22, Vivienne English '22, and Jane Usher '22)
- "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" by Lillian Fendelman '24
- "Away in a Manger" by Elizabeth Zhang '23 (Recorded at home in China.)
- "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Annie T. Ham '21
- "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" by Pearce Burlington '21
- "The Christmas Song" by Matilda McCard '21
- "Silent Night" by Pearce Burlington '21, Annie T. Ham '21, Matilda McCard '21, and Sydney Sheppard '21
- "Holy Night" by Chorale and Chamber Choir Seniors (Class of 2021: Sarah Benton, Lauren Bowen, Pearce Burlington, Annie T. Ham, Matilda McCard, Jane Caroline Minchew, Isabel Moran, Anna Noelke, Rosemary Raynal, Lilli Russell, Sydney Sheppard, Aniver Smith, and Sylvie Yates)

Warm regards, 🎄

Brendan J. O'Shea

Brendan J. O'Shea
Head of School



LADIES IN BLUE | "Parting Glass"

Enjoy [this performance](#) by Saint Mary's a cappella group, Ladies in Blue, as they sing "Parting Glass" in Saint Mary's Chapel, November 2020.



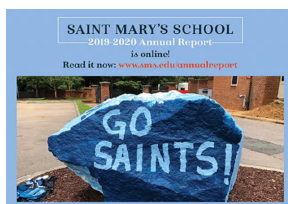
GIVING TUESDAY PROVIDES \$58,302 FOR SAINT MARY'S!

A generous, anonymous alumna stepped forward with a surprise \$20,000 challenge to kick off #GivingTuesday this year, and our Saints answered the call! Saint Mary's parents, grandparents, alumnae, and friends donated \$58,302 to the Annual Fund during the campaign, soaring past the \$20,000 goal. Thank you, Saints!



SHOP1842 ONLINE AND IN-STORE! Just in time for your holiday shopping!

- Check out the [NEW shop1842 ONLINE](#)
- Reserve a time to shop in person on Wednesday, Dec. 16, from 4:30-6:30 p.m.! Email [Mary Brown Taylor '08](#) or Margaret McGlohon '81C to reserve your time to safely visit shop1842



THE 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT IS ONLINE

Saint Mary's alumnae, parents, and friends have once again lifted our spirits and inspired us with your generosity during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, which ended June 30. [Click here](#) or on the image to view our 2019-2020 Annual Report online celebrating all those who supported the school during the

previous year. We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the report, so, if we made any error or omission, please let us know as soon as possible so we may correct it. If you would like a printed copy, please contact the Development Office at 919-424-4104. Thank you, generous donors!



BIRTHDAY GIFT REPLACES LOST CLASS RING

Birthdays are always special, and when this Saint, Sara Frances Walters Borden '70HS '70C, lost her class ring while working in the Saint Mary's Admissions Office many moons ago, her family

decided to replace it this year. Not only was the gift for her 70th birthday, it was also in honor of her 50th Saint Mary's college reunion! Sara's granddaughter, current student Sara Elizabeth Bell '23 presented it to her!

Happy birthday, Sara! #foreversaints #rings #legacy birthday 🎂💕👰

This Week's Gallery



[This week's gallery](#) features scenes from our 40th annual Lighting O' the Grove Christmas and holiday celebration held Nov. 19, 2020, including musical performances by the Echo, Ladies in Blue, and Chorale; the dedication of the memorial candles and the giant Christmas tree in the Grove!

Check out our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages for more great photos and updates!



©2018 Saint Mary's School
900 Hillsborough Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603

(919) 424-4118
www.sms.edu/give
Email: development@sms.edu

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