

September 11, 2009

Dear Parents,

It is with great joy that I begin this school year with your children! I know most of them very well, which puts me way ahead of teachers who have brand new students this year. I love these children dearly, recognizing their many gifts and talents. They are tons of fun and the days slide by quickly for us! I spent a lot of time this summer studying the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, as well as working with Mrs. Furtwangler and Mrs. Fotchman to make sure that your child's 5<sup>th</sup> grade experience is awesome! Things have run very smoothly these past two weeks and the kids are settling into the routine nicely!

As you saw in the letter we sent home on Monday, Mrs. Fotchman and I have decided to try a new approach to spelling this year. We are hoping that the "working with words workshop" will give your child more practical and authentic experience with their spelling words. We are aiming for them to know these words well and to spell them correctly in their daily work. Students are only being retested on words they misspelled on the pretest, and therefore should hopefully get them right on Friday. The challenge words are extra credit and not counted against them. If a student gets any of the regular words wrong, he/she will write each misspelled word 10 times and use each misspelled word in a sentence. These will be due on Monday. Students are also required to know the scripture verse each week. This is part of their Religion grade and does not count toward spelling. The students will receive 5

points for writing the scripture verse correctly. Mrs. Fotchman and I are trying to keep these short and meaningful so that students can truly commit them to memory. We are taking the scripture verse from the upcoming Sunday readings, so that the children will be somewhat prepared for the Sunday liturgy of the word.

I have information available about the Aquinas College Reading Clinic for students who struggle in reading. Please let me know if you are interested and I will send registration forms home.

I am enclosing Scholastic Book Club information. If you are interested in ordering any books or software, please return your order and a check made out to "Scholastic Book Clubs" by Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. It is fine to write just one check even if you order items from two different order forms. I earn points from the books you purchase, and in turn, buy books for our classroom library.

I am also enclosing a yellow note from *Highlights Magazine*. You are under NO obligation to purchase the magazine. You simply check "yes" or "no" and sign your name, returning the letter to school. If you are interested in ordering the magazine, you will fill out additional information. When I mail these forms back to *Highlights* I earn great things for the classroom, such as pencils, stickers, books, notepads, etc. It doesn't matter if magazines are ordered or not. Thanks for your help!

If your child is interested in running for classroom representative for Student Council, please be sure their nomination form is turned in by Monday to Mrs. Furtwangler. Classroom elections will be held on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.

We have been very busy learning classroom procedures and expectations. We are also plunging into a very packed year of learning. Next week I will bring you up to date on what we have been learning. You can expect a newsletter, any other notes, and corrected work in the Friday Folders each week. I think there were only a couple of weeks last year that I didn't send a newsletter. I have been having fun taking lots of pictures with my new camera and had intended to put some in this newsletter, but left my camera on the dining room table, so I'll put them in next week's update! I will also be sending information home at the Family Open House this coming Wednesday. Hope to see you all there!

Please know that as a parent of six children, I know that your children mean the world to you. When I interact with your child, I strive to do so with the same love, care, and compassion that I treat my own children. It is a tremendous responsibility I have been given, and I take it very seriously. If you have any comments or suggestions, or concerns please feel free to contact me. My school email is [dpieri@stthomasgr.org](mailto:dpieri@stthomasgr.org) and my extension is 321. You can also reach me at home at 453-7959. I always check email several times a day. I'm harder to reach at home, but will get back to you if you leave a message.

Have a wonderful weekend and I look forward to working with you and your child this year!

In God's Peace,

Mrs. Deb Pieri