



Marinette Campus
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December 18, 2009

"Faith has to do with things that are not seen and hope with things that are not at hand." St. Thomas Aquinas

Dear Students and Parents,

Praise be Jesus Christ! Today's saint is St. Malachy. He was also known as Maolmhaodhog ua Morgair; Maol Maedoc; and Malachy O'Morgair. He was born in 1094 at Armagh, Ireland and died November 2, 1148 at Clairvaux. Malachy replaced the Celtic liturgy (the "Stowe" missal) with the Roman liturgy in an effort to bring uniformity and discipline to the clergy and those in religious life. A miracle worker and healer, he sometimes cured people instantly by laying his hands upon them. Friend of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux who helped him establish the Cistercians in Ireland, wrote a biography of him, and sat with him as he died. Malachy assigned short descriptions in Latin to each pope when he committed his vision to paper. These mottoes usually refer to a family name, birthplace, coat-of-arms, or office held before election to the papacy. Some of the phrases are multiple prophecies, written with ingenious word play. For example, Pius II, who reigned for only 26 days in 1503, was aptly described as "De Parvo Homine" (from a little man). His family name was Piccolomini, Italian for "little man."



Our Annual Giving Campaign is in full swing and much discussion is floating in the halls at Saint Thomas Aquinas Academy. Let me reassure students and their families that we will graduate the class of 2010. There are no plans to shut our doors prior to the end of the school year and teacher's contracts will be honored. Our goal for this year's campaign is \$300,000 so that we can continue to operate in the coming years. We have had a positive response so far. I will keep you updated with the upcoming President's Weekly Letters as the campaign progresses. Yesterday, we receipted in \$10,000 from donors. With this said, our Corporate Board will meet on January 22nd with the purpose of presenting our results of this campaign, our financials from year-end, our budget for next year and our enrollment trends. Yes, there is a great need but our need is no different than many other schools in our diocese and in our local area.

Education is under attack. Our schools are suffering across the board. Public and private schools are seeing shortfalls in their budgets. For example, the Appleton public school district is projecting a 2.5 million dollar shortfall while Neenah/Menasha is looking at a 3.3 million dollar shortfall. The same is true for some of our local area schools. I participate on the Wausaukee School District Strategic Planning Board (my son attends their special education program) and we too are feeling the pinch but our holding our own since the reduction of staff last year. Federal and State funding are declining for these schools just as our parish subsidies are on the decline for our school. We are all trying to weather this financial storm. Now is the time to pray for education as a whole. The future of ALL our children depend on it. Please take a moment to pray especially as you attend your church services for the celebration of Christmas. With God all things are possible. We are the oldest continuously running Catholic high school in the state of Wisconsin and have survived these types of financial storms before. A teacher told the children at my impromptu assembly last week, *Students the bible says, ask and it will be given to you, so students start asking!* How true, we must believe and not lose faith. *And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and never doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will be done. And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."* (Matt. 21:21-22)



The last day before our Christmas break is next Tuesday, December 22nd. It has been declared a "Jean Day". PLEASE NOTE: Jeans may not be torn, ripped or ragged even though they may have been purchased this way. Any student presenting him or herself in this type of jean will be sent home if they cannot get a replacement pair from home.

It has come to my attention that students are remaining on school property after school. Please understand that students may not wait in the lobby due to liability concerns. Our supervision policy also requires that a school adult employee must be on campus supervising any and all students. Our school day commences at 2:50 p.m. and students are allowed to wait at the East entrance for pick-up until 3:30 p.m. After that time all students must leave the campus unless they are participating in sport practice. This means that your practice is actually occurring at 3:30 p.m. If a sport's practice is delayed until 5:00 p.m., the student must leave and return at the appropriate time.

On Monday, December 21st we will host again the *Spiritus Retreat Team*. The junior high will participate in a retreat during the morning hours while grades three through five will participate in a retreat in the afternoon. Please keep all students in prayer during this Retreat Day so that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit and grounded in charity.

May the Peace of the Christ Child be especially with you and your family during this Holy time of Christmas. St. Thomas Aquinas, pray for us!



I remain yours,
Joyful in the service of Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer A. Elfering".

Mrs. Jennifer A. Elfering
President of Systems

P.S. Please note that there will be no brown envelope next week.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!