

SMS Today

Learning Beyond the Classroom



At St. Mary School, learning doesn't stop when the final bell rings. With **over 50 extracurricular offerings beginning as early as Pre-K 3**, students have countless opportunities to explore interests, build confidence, and discover new talents. From Yoga Club, Dino Club, Jewelry Club, Cooking Club, Kindness Club, Karaoke Club, crafts, sports, and STREAM-focused clubs, there is truly something for every child. Our robust athletics program includes boys' and girls' basketball teams for every grade from 3–8, cheerleading at multiple levels - including our Junior Jags Cheer Team and Competition Cheer Team - and additional sports clubs that foster teamwork, leadership, and school spirit.

Several of our signature programs truly set St. Mary apart. **The Elementary News Network** gives students the chance to step into the spotlight as news anchors, producing engaging segments such as Joke of the Day, Kindness Corner, and Mystery of the Week, which are shared daily with classrooms throughout the school via video in the classrooms. Our **Ski Club** welcomes students in grades 2-8 and brings families together for unforgettable winter experiences on the slopes, while our **Golf Club**, hosted at The Orchards Golf Course, allows students to build skills, sportsmanship, and friendships outdoors each fall and spring. The SMS **Volleyball Club**, open to students in grades 5-8, emphasizes fundamentals, teamwork, and preparation for future play; in fact, many alumni proudly continue the sport at the high school and travel levels.



Innovation and teamwork shine brightly in our **Robotics Program**, where students in grades 5-8 meet weekly over a 16-week season to plan, build, and code robots for competition. This year, St. Mary entered five teams in the Archdiocese of Hartford's VEX IQ Robotics Tournament, earning an impressive Second Place finish and Teamwork Challenge Award, along with a Fifth Place finish among strong regional competition. These achievements reflect not only technical skill, but perseverance, collaboration, and school pride. At St. Mary School, extracurriculars are more than activities - they are an extension of our mission to educate the whole child.



Stay Connected!

www.saintmaryschoolmilford.org

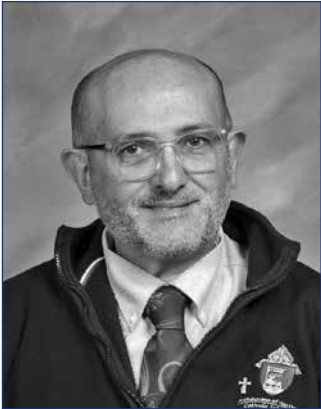
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 @smsmilfordalumni  For Alumni



From the Principal's Desk



Dear Friends and Family of St. Mary School,

All of us at St. Mary School are working very hard to prepare our school by striving to keep our community aware of our mantra-Live the message of Jesus. It is my privilege and honor to continue to lead in sharing the rich tradition and heritage of our faith and providing the excellent education that our children deserve.

St. Mary's School continues to grow. When I joined this beautiful community six years ago we had an enrollment of 263 students. This year's enrollment is almost at 430 students. We have added so much to our school during my time here and all to enhance the SMS experience for our students and families. We have wonderful programs that are developed to shape the entire student. Many extracurricular opportunities continue to flourish in our school. These combined with a strong and rigorous academic and religious program make our students

sought after by area Catholic High Schools. The Presidents and Principals of our Catholic High Schools always tell me how well our SMS students are prepared for high school

All of us at St. Mary's School are anxious to share in our students' faith and academic development. St. Mary's School continues to work on a school-wide goal driven from our mantra, "Living the message of Jesus." We daily strive to develop a great moral fabric for our students which is something that our world needs now more than ever. This will be strongly and consistently reinforced in each class and throughout all activities throughout the school year. Our goal and special word for this year is UNDERSTANDING. All students learn about this word, embrace it and put it in action. I can see it!

My personal prayers and those of our school's daily prayers are that God abundantly bless all members of our school community.

Sincerely,

Deacon Dominic Corrado

Deacon Dominic Corrado

Principal

More fun being had during our Clubs and Activities at SMS!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Emily Vella, *Class of 2023*

A standout student-athlete at Jonathan Law High School. Emily broke the girls' soccer record of a previous 39 goals scored all-time by one player...in just the beginning of her junior year! Emily has also made All-State twice. She will leave a huge legacy for Law's girls' soccer and we are so very proud of her!



Welcome Danielle Hogan



We are so excited to welcome Danielle Hogan, who will now be assisting St. Mary School as the Alumni Relations Coordinator and Advancement assistant. Many of you may already know or remember Danielle as she has been actively involved at SMS — in both the school and the parish for many years. She is also mom to Devyn (Class of '23) and owner of Jimmy's Apizza. Her ability to wear many hats, love of being involved, knowledge of so many SMS school and parish families, and strong capabilities, make her a perfect fit for this position.



It's going to be a great year ahead for the **Class of 2026!**

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SMS HOOPS

Our 50th anniversary of the St. Mary School Basketball Tournament was nothing short of tremendous! The school spirit was proudly displayed, demonstrating the best of what SMS has to offer. **Congratulations, too, to our 6th grade boys and 8th grade boys, who respectively are the JV and Varsity Champions!**

There is a LONG list of people who work tirelessly to make this happen, and we are overwhelmed with gratitude for all they do - starting with our AMAZING chairwomen, **Caroline Baird** and **Liz Shea**. Job well done, ladies! Huge thank you to ALL our tireless volunteers, who have spent countless hours making milkshakes, grilling dogs, cleaning floors, scheduling games, selling tshirts, and so much more. Our referees and scorekeepers are top notch!

Our student athletes have played hard, and with a dignity and respect of which we can all be immensely proud. Teams whose run in the tournament ended continued to come down and cheer for their friends, joining fans from

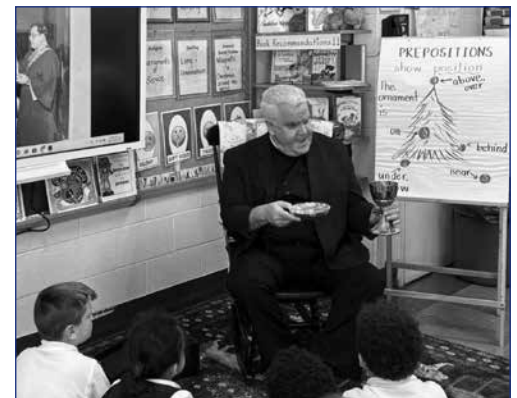
all grades. The debt we owe our coaches cannot be overstated. Their impact on our players goes far beyond basketball skills, and we are deeply thankful. Our parents, who show up night after night, supporting our athletes, our kitchen, and our raffles, are simply the best. The younger students who come out to watch and have fun are learning a love for the game and for our community that will last a lifetime. The teachers, who manage tired students with grace and also fill the bleachers to watch them play; that means so much to the kids! Finally, none of this would be possible without the unwavering support and dedication of our principal, **Deacon Dominic**, and our Athletic Director, **Mrs. Dubin**.



Thank You doesn't begin to cover it!

SHARING IS CARING

Fr. Aidan spent time with some SMS students as part of their unit on the Seven Sacraments to teach the children about Holy Orders. Father showed the children pictures of his ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood nearly 40 years ago and shared with them some of the most exciting and special parts of being a priest. He even brought along his own chalice, which was a gift to him on his ordination. The children got to pass it around and hold it themselves! Second grade had so many questions for Father and he was so patient and detailed in answering them all. What a way for us to feel the Holy Spirit upon us! Thank you, Father!



HSA HAPPENINGS

With thanks to our parent organization, the following enhancements have been made:

- New Playground
- New Volleyball Nets
- Pads for outside Basketball Hoops
- Portable speaker for the gym
- Some minor kitchen upgrades:
Freezer, Fryer, Food warmer

COMING SOON - Two Go Bot Cameras for basketball teams to review game footage

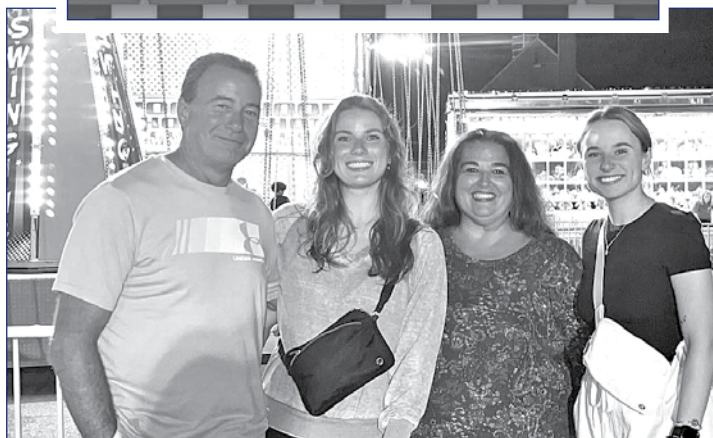
We are in the process of searching for Jaguar or SMS customized gym wall pads. Stay tuned for an awesome upgrade that is in the works and near completion!



In June 2025, St. Mary School HSA planned the first of what we hope to be many annual Galas to which parents, staff, faculty, and alumni were all invited! Held at the beautiful Milford Yacht Club overlooking

the Milford Harbor, it was a night to be remembered filled with delicious food, dancing, a silent auction, and camaraderie. Planning for the next Gala is already underway, and we look forward to expanding on this wonderful event for many years to come!

Our HSA continues to hold various fundraisers and events throughout the year, and the community is so grateful to the board and volunteers who help to make this happen! We are looking forward to all of the ideas that the new leadership brings to the table, and we encourage parents to continue to be involved!



A Big THANK YOU to all of our sponsors, attendees, and volunteers!

The St. Mary Carnival is fun for all ages! Mrs. Adler and her husband, Ken stopped by the carnival Saturday night with their daughters, Erin & Tanya (SMS Class of 2012), and they wanted to go on all the rides! Mrs. Adler shared, “So many fun memories made at the carnival, no matter how old they get!”

Have you seen the New Playground?!



A HUGE thank you to our HSA for all their fundraising efforts and hard work over the last few years. We were blessed with a beautiful state-of-the-art playground this past summer!



SMS Artists Shine!

This is the first year that SMS students submitted their artwork to the MAC student art exhibit (sponsored by Milford Pediatrics), which was on display at the Milford Arts Council all summer. The MAC hosted a closing ceremony event featuring the exhibit and it was quite a turn-out of SMS students and their families.

All submissions were amazing and four of our SMS students won awards! Their artwork was chosen to be on further display in the Milford Pediatrics office.

Congratulations to **Zoey, Elle, Macy, and Chris!** We are beyond proud of all of our SMS Artists! It was such an exciting night and we look forward to seeing what our SMS students come up with in the classroom this upcoming year!



Spread the Word about SMS

Rooted in faith, academic excellence, and a deep sense of community, St. Mary School offers a nurturing environment where students are known, supported, and challenged to grow both intellectually and spiritually.

During the **Walk-Through Wednesdays**, families will tour our campus, meet our dedicated teachers and staff, learn about our strong academics, enrichment programs, and student support services, and discover how SMS partners closely with families to help every child thrive. We look forward to welcoming you and sharing what makes St. Mary School a place where children grow with confidence, purpose, and heart.



All in the Family!

One of the best parts of our school!
Older siblings returning to read to younger sibling's classes!

ST. MARY SCHOOL
PRESENTS
WALK THROUGH WEDNESDAYS
MARCH 4TH, 11TH, AND 18TH
10AM - 11AM - BY APPOINTMENT

GROWING IN FAITH & KNOWLEDGE SINCE 1961
72 GULF STREET, MILFORD, CT 06460
WWW.SAINTMARYSCHOOLMILFORD.ORG



Our SMS Learning Center

Every child learns differently, and at St. Mary School, we honor that.

Our Learning Center provides targeted support in reading and math, led by dedicated specialists who work with students individually or in small groups. This personalized support reinforces classroom learning, builds confidence, and helps ensure every student has the tools they need to thrive. Because at St. Mary School, we don't just teach, we meet students where they are and help them grow.



A Royal Response

Two second graders in Mrs. Holder's class wrote their persuasive letters to the Prince and Princess of Wales this fall. They received a letter in response on official Kensington Palace stationery along with a photo of the Prince and Princess! The students had been eagerly awaiting a response and were taken completely by surprise the unique delivery! Congratulations on this amazing writing assignment and memorable experience.

Faith In Action

written by Lisa Monahan and Tania Armellino

Our parish began celebrating a weekly Children's liturgy in February, highlighting the faith, energy, and leadership of the students, staff and families of St. Mary's School. The Children's liturgy gives our young parishioners a chance to take an active role in the Mass, asking questions and sharing their knowledge with others. Students from various grade levels participate by guiding and helping our younger parishioners to understand the mass and readings. They serve as lectors, leaders and helpers. Their prayerful presence creates a warm environment and they are positive role models for everyone gathered. The involvement of families adds even more to the liturgy.

Parents and guardians support their children, reminding us of the important partnership between home, school, and parish. Tania and I would like to extend our gratitude to the teachers and staff of St. Mary's School, who help prepare the students and gather volunteers each week. Without their help the Children's Liturgy would not have grown to what it is today. We would also like to thank the parents who continue to nurture their children's faith along with our parish community for welcoming and supporting our young parishioners. The Children's Liturgy is a beautiful reminder that our Church is alive and growing. We look forward to each week where our children can shine and share their love for God.



Each month winners in each grade are chosen for our **Growing in Faith and Knowledge Award**. These students exemplify living the message of Jesus!

Invention Convention and Science Fair

Our halls were abuzz as our 4th and 5th graders held their annual Invention Convention this fall. We were blown away by their creativity, problem-solving, and confidence. The ideas they shared were thoughtful, original, and so impressive. We hope to see many of these inventions in stores, someday.

We are so proud of their hard work and imagination. The future engineers, creators, and innovators are right here in our halls at St. Mary School!



SNOW Much Fun

Mrs. Zsampar's preschool class helped Facilities Manager Mr. Lynch snow the trees to get ready for the Christmas Masses! This is a beautiful tradition they do each year in anticipation of the celebration of the birth of Our Lord!



A Sweet New Tradition!

Every last lunch of the week, our students look forward to a fun tradition: ice cream sales! For \$2.00 students can choose from a variety of options! Talk about a sweet treat.



Living the Message of Jesus

We are so proud of these 8th grade girls who made a bunch of handmade ornaments and sold them at the Christmas tree sale. They raised \$476 and they are donating the entire amount to St. Jude's. They also made handmade cards to send in to some of the kids at St. Jude's. This was all 100% their own idea and their own hard work and time.

Service in Action

On Saturday November 22nd the players and coaches from the 6th Grade JV basketball team volunteered for The Sterling House "Great Rake" Community service project. Thanks to their hard work, a neighbor in need has a yard free of leaves helping to beautify their Stratford neighborhood.



Thanksgiving Food Drive

Wow, we are so overwhelmed by the generosity of our families in donating food pantry items to the SMS Student Government food drive! Thank you all for living the message of Jesus and helping others in our community!



Confirmation Retreat

Our SMS Class of 2023 Confirmation candidates enjoy their retreat before receiving their sacrament on November 16th at St. Joseph's Cathedral.

Leave Your Mark at St. Mary School

A great gift idea for graduation, birthday and to honor a loved one.
 \$100 donation - 4" x 8" brick paver
 Three lines of text, maximum of 13 characters,
 engraving in upper case letters.



Honor a student, alumni, special teacher, or memorialize a loved one by ordering a personalized brick. Create a lasting tribute that all visitors to St. Mary School will see. Email admissions@smsmilford.com for more information.

Brick Walk Donors

through 6/30/25

Donna Breen
 Kevin Cursaeden
 Missy Dubin
 Brittney Goodman
 Tom Leone
 Mishika Malik
 El Marrone
 Dawn Puvogel
 Jo Kilbride Utzler

Help us “pave the way” and support St. Mary School. Order a customized brick with your name or that of someone special and create a lasting tribute.

Thank You to our SMS Annual Appeal Donors

Gifts Received by June 30, 2025

Mary Ellen Bergstrom Smith,
 George Bergstrom,
 & Timothy Bergstrom

*In loving memory of our parents,
 George & Betty Bergstrom who
 were life long parishoners and very
 proud of their three St Mary School
 graduates*

Chris Burns, Class of 1971

*In honor of Jeff Burns,
 Class of 1972*

Peter Burns

Michael & Lynn Gabriel

Tom & MJ Higgins, Class of 1971

*In memory of Raymond
 & Mary Higgins*

Michele Karg

*In honor of my grandchildren
 Tess & Jonathan*

Mary Kriksciun

Tom & Emily Leone

Jenna LeVecchia *The Bainer Family*

Mrs. Therese (Bradley) Marino

*In honor & memory of Therese's
 parents, Helen & James Bradley*

John F. McCabe

Jill Miller

Barbara Ortoleva

In memory of Guy G. Ortoleva

Pops Family Restaurant

Jim & Dori Reidy

Michael Scagliarini

Jack Sirotnik

The Surgue Family

SOMPO International

Elizabeth Wetmore

S. Wilson

Christine & Lyle Zwiegler

**Please Support
 St. Mary School
 and our
 Annual Appeal NOW!**
See instructions on back page

If we have made any error, please accept our apologies; we will reprint your gift with the correct information in our next issue. Please contact admissions@smsmilford.com.



OFFICE OF MARKETING
& ADVANCEMENT

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www.saintmaryschoolmilford.org

Pastor

Rev. Aidan Donahue

Principal

**Deacon Dominic
Corraro**

*Assistant Principal and
Director of Instructional
Support Grades 5-8*

Melissa Dubin

*Assistant Principal & Director
of Instructional Support K-4*

Lisa Bradley

*Director of Marketing,
Enrollment, & Advancement*

Emily Lucibello

Prekindergarten Director

Robin Zsampar

Share a story, photo, or an item
of interest for the next newsletter.
Email **Emily Lucibello** at
admissions@smsmilford.com.

Call 203-878-6539 to learn more
about admission and enrollment.



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ONLINE

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www.saintmaryschoolmilford.org

Click on the Donation tab
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St. Mary School Annual Appeal

St. Mary School is a very special place. Please consider a generous gift to the
St. Mary School Annual Fund and help us maintain a quality education for our children.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____ Grad Year: _____

Your gift is tax-deductible. Please (✓) your giving level below. Mail this form along with your check made
payable to "St. Mary School" to St. Mary School, Attn: Annual Appeal, 72 Gulf St., Milford, CT 06460.

___ **St. Mary's Steeple** \$2,500+

___ **St. Mary's Circle** \$1,000 - \$2,499

___ **Archangel** \$500 - \$999

___ **Guardian Angel** \$250 - \$499

___ **Seraphim** \$100 - \$249

___ **Cherubim** \$99 and less

Name as it will appear in the *SMS Today* newsletter: _____

My Gift is: _____

In Honor of: _____

In Memory of: _____