

Dear St. Ethelreda Families,

Happy New Year!

How many times have you heard this expression in the last two weeks? Have you ever thought about what these words mean? Someone is wishing you happiness for the next 365 days. Whenever you said it to family, friends and strangers, you wished that person happiness for the next 365 days, also. Just think about it, happiness for all of 2009. That's powerful! Blessings come with happiness. Therefore, we really are asking God's blessings and happiness for each other for the next 365 days. What an unselfish act and a good way to begin the year.

ST. ETHELREDA WILL SHINE IN 2009! This is our motto as we begin the second half of this school year. We have new programs and events coming up this year and I want to share some of them with you now.

- **FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT:** This event is sponsored by the Booster Club. Students and family member are invited to see a movie in the Harold Washington Assembly Hall from 7:00 until 10:00 P.M. on Friday, January 16. Bring a blanket, sleeping bag, pillow and wear your favorite lounging clothes (no pajamas). Admission is free and refreshments will be sold. Flyers were sent home detailing all information. All proceeds benefit the athletic program. Parent volunteers are needed. If you are available to help out, please call the office.
- The St. Ethelreda School Choir has been invited to sing at Holy Spirit Catholic Community in Naperville on Sunday, January 18. The choir will sing for the 10:00 and 12:00 Masses. The guest speaker for both Masses is Dr. William Carroll, President of Benedictine University. Dr. Carroll was very instrumental in forming the partnership between St. Ethelreda and Benedictine University. Some of the members of Holy Spirit Church make Christmas special for students every year. You are welcome to join us, if you like the bus will leave from St. Ethelreda at 8:30 A.M. and return around 2:30. All choir members have notices.
- The students will have projects work on this weekend about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President Barack Obama. Please check their blue folders or their assignment notebooks. Assignments are due Tuesday.
- **WASHINGTON D.C. HERE WE COME!** Some of the faculty members, students, parents and grandparents are making the trip to witness the inauguration of the first African American President of the United States of America. The bus will depart the school at 5:30 P.M. Monday and return early Wednesday morning. Students can wear their Obama shirts over their gym attire Tuesday. Most of the students will watch the inauguration in class. **THIS IS HISTORY!** Buy the newspaper and keep it for the future. Keep us in your prayers.
- Students in kindergarten through eighth grade will receive their second quarter grades on the 23rd. I encourage you to meet with your child's teacher even if the grades are good. We need to keep the line of communication open. Studies show that children whose parents are actively involved in their school work and activities and tend to make better grades than others.

- Our clothing and food pantry will be open on Saturday, January 24, from 10:00 until 12:00 noon. The need both in our school and in the community is great. Last month we were able to serve 137 families, a number that shows the necessity to continue doing this. Every Saturday St. Ethelreda School in partnership with GilGal Ministries, 9050 S. Ashland, operate a food pantry from 10:00 until 12:00. You are always welcome to come there on the Saturdays St. Ethelreda is not open. A friendly face from St. Ethelreda will always be there to welcome you.
- Our Family Mass has been moved to the last Sunday of this month due to the choir's engagement on the 18th. The fourth graders will read at this Mass and we want to see all of the fourth graders and their parents at Mass at 11:00. All students and their parents are expected to attend Family Mass once a month. We are looking for some of you whom we haven't seen at all or only when your class was responsible for the readings.
- The next all school skating trip is planned for January 30.
- TEACHER TALK is something new on our website. Teachers will provide you with an inside look at one of their class lessons. An explanation of the lesson/project and pictures will be posted on the website to give you the opportunity to see your child at work in the classroom. Take a look at Ms. Finn's science lessons this past week with the junior high students.
- Speaking of pictures, did you see the Santa Christmas pictures on the website? The expressions on some of the children's faces are priceless! Santa was a big surprise for the entire student body and the faculty and staff.
- Have you been looking at the website lately? Most of the information is posted on the website before it is sent home. And using email, whenever possible, is a good way to keep in touch with your child's teacher, the bookkeeper and the principal.
- The 26th-the 30th is Catholic Schools Week. Look for something exciting to happen during this week.
- Congratulations to our K-2 basketball team! They are in the playoff trophy round next Sunday, 1:00, at St. Columbanus, 71st and Calumet. Come out and cheer them on to victory.
- Way to go cheerleaders! Have you seen our new cheer squad? Our new cheer coaches, Coach Murray and Coach Nash have brought the girls a mighty long way in a short time. Check them out at the next basketball game.
- Plans are in the making for a big alumni and parents event in the spring. More details will be forthcoming.
- Thank you to all who order from Market Day on a consistent basis. We need your continued support and help from others. The Market Day food is delicious and nutritious. You can freeze it and microwave it. Market Day food helps to make a quick, balanced family meal. We plan to purchase more lightweight tables for the school hall with the profit. This will allow the students to eat lunch downstairs.
- Please post the KNOW BEFORE YOU GO flyer in a prominent place to check for school closing on snowy days and when the temperature is extremely cold.

Once again, we wish you a HAPPY NEW YEAR...365 DAYS OF HAPPINESS!