

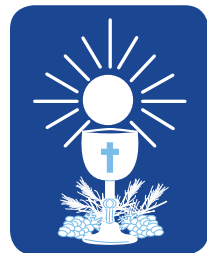
## SECOND GRADERS CELEBRATE SPECIAL MOMENTS WITH GOD



On May 1, the second-grade students of St. Michael School celebrated Jesus Day with one another, helping to prepare them for their First Holy Communion. They started the morning creating their own unique communion banners to help them remember their special day, and spent the day together celebrating their relationship with Jesus. They made prayer bead necklaces, participated in a bread ceremony, decorated crosses, and watched 'Rainbow Fish,' helping them learn what it means to give unselfishly and be a true friend, just as Jesus did.



## FIRST HOLY COMMUNION



May 4, 2019 was a gloomy day outside, but the "Son" was shining on our 2nd graders as their made their First Holy Communion at St. Michael Church. They walked two-by-two in procession, eagerly anticipating their new connection with Jesus. The Mass was celebrated by Fr. John Muelle and Fr. Walt Jenne. In Fr. John's homily, he shared his thoughts about how the Mass opens our eyes to the Eucharist and transforms us. He talked to the children about how God sent Jesus, our Bread of Life, to open our hearts and transform us to be a light for the world. This transformation doesn't happen all at once - it takes a lifetime to gain eternity. The children participated in reading scriptures and led prayer intentions, rang bells for songs, and brought up the offertory gifts. The children wore their excitement on their faces as they offered peace to one another, and then received Jesus in the Eucharist. A special thank you to Mrs. Campisi and Miss Lasecki for preparing the children for their First Communion.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Family and Friends of St. Michael School,

This is my last newsletter as Principal of St. Michael School. At the end of this school year, I will be officially retiring from St. Michael School. Although I will miss all of the kind and wonderful parents, students, grandparents, and friends of this wonderful community, I am looking forward to spending time with my incredible husband and family.

As I look back on the last 13 years that I have been at St. Michael School, I feel blessed to have the support of our wonderful pastors, awesome staff, parents, and both parishes to accomplish great things together...the beginnings of our Jr. Kindergarten program, added curriculum like Algebra 1 and Choose Life, enhanced one-to-one technology, and wiring at both campuses for improved internet use. Not only did we receive the Blue Ribbon, but we also added the Governor's Award in STEM. Our students have represented us very well in Pen Ohio (Power of the Pen), Science Olympiad, and Science Fair, just to name a few. Also, I am so pleased to see upgraded security to our buildings continue throughout the years and so many improvements that are in the works. Our students receive an excellent education at St. Michael School—academically, emotionally, socially, and most importantly, spiritually. I am very confident in our educational system at St. Michael because of all the great comments I hear and receive from returning parents, returning students, and from high school administrators. We have a great deal to be proud of in our school and students.

I welcome Ms. Saunders to the St. Michael School family as the next principal. Ms. Saunders and I are already meeting and planning for a smooth transition into the next school year. I can assure you that the future of St. Michael School is bright!

I thank you for your kindness, help, and understanding over the years. I wish all of you the very best that life can bring. May God's blessings come upon you and your families for a healthy and happy life.

God's Peace and Blessings,

Mrs. Margaret Campisi, Principal

## CALENDAR



### August

- 5 School Office Opens
- 13 Parent Meeting - Grades 2-4
- 14 Parent Meeting - Grades Pre-3-1st Grade
- 21 First Day of School - Grades 1-8
- 22 Junior K - Boy's Orientation 9:00am to 10:30am
- 23 Junior K - Girl's Orientation 9:00am to 10:30am
- 26 Junior K First Day
- 26-29 Preschool Orientation

### September

- 2 No School (Labor Day)
- 3 Preschool 3's First Day
- 4 Preschool 4's First Day
- 5 Parent Meeting - Grades 5-8





# MORE THAN 400 GUESTS ENJOY ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL'S "ANGEL GALA" AND RAISE \$150,000



St. Michael School hosting its annual Angel Gala Benefit Fundraiser on Saturday, March 30 at the Embassy Suites Cleveland on Rockside Road in Independence. This evening of excellence brought together parents, alumni, family and friends of St. Michael School, St. Michael Parish and St. Basil the Great Parish to raise funds to benefit and improve the school campuses, as well as the student experience. The event consisted of a live and silent auction, wine tasting, dinner, dancing and special awards ceremony. Vicar General Rev. Donald Oleksiak, representing the Diocese of Cleveland Bishop Nelson Perez also attended the event. Approximately \$150,000 was raised.

St. Michael School presented its Distinguished Alumni Award to the children of Sam and Mary DiGeronimo: Don (deceased), Vic (1954), Rich (1956 - deceased), Bobby (1961), Florence (1963), Cathy (1966) and Tony (1971). The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes those individuals who have shown outstanding achievements in their chosen field or profession, use their talents and skills for those in need, consistent with the St. Michael School Catholic School foundation, and serve as positive role models for students through consistent application of high moral and ethical standards. St. Michael School also presented its Honorary Blue Angel Award to The Sisters of Notre Dame. The Sisters' association with St. Michael School dates back to the early 1900's. They provided religious education at St. Michael for over 100 years and have bettered the

lives of thousands of students. Sr. Carol Marek, former principal of St. Michael School, accept the award on behalf of the Sisters. Principal Margaret Campisi also we recognized for her years as principal and assistant principal at St. Michael School. She will be retiring at the end of this school year.

Proceeds from this year's event will allow for capital improvements and provide general operating support for the school. The Angel Gala was led by co-chairs Robert and Patti Ciresi, Brad and Jen Harrison, and Scott and Jenny Phillips, as well as a committee comprised of more than 50 school parents and teachers.

## Sisters of Notre Dame & St. Michael School

For more than 80 years of St. Michael School's history, the Sisters of Notre Dame devoted themselves to the education of the children of this parish. Answering Father Aust's call for teachers to staff the school, two Notre Dame sisters came in 1908, only to be called back to teach an overcrowded Cleveland school a decade later. It wouldn't be until 1920 that they returned to St. Michael School in Independence, commuting back and forth to their convent in Cleveland, being driven by Joe Gaab, who was the 2018 Distinguished Alumni Wes Gaab's grandfather. Wes remembers his family expressing concern about Joe's age (70s) and his driving and Joe said, "I don't worry. I have three rosaries 'spinning' while I'm going and coming!"

# EIGHTH GRADERS ARE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT



## CONFIRMATION

The Holy Spirit filled the hearts of our eighth grade students from the day school and the PSR program at St. Michael Church through the Rite of Confirmation celebrated by Bishop Roger Gries, OSB on May 9.

In his homily, the Bishop relayed Pope Francis' three points he wants the youth of our world to know: 1. Jesus loves you, 2. Jesus died for you and 3. Jesus lives and walks with you. Bishop Gries likened the Holy Spirit to a special GPS system, "God's Positioning System" and the computer that fuels the GPS is our conscience. He encouraged the confirmandi to use the GPS to become the best version of themselves, to "choose your mission," and to be active and present in the Church to give it new life and energy. "We need you to build our church" was his closing plea.

The Mass continued with the renewal of Baptismal Promises, the Laying on of Hands, and the Anointing with Chrism. Bishop Gries stayed in the church after Mass to take pictures with the newly Confirmed.

Please continue to pray for our young men and women as they continue their faith journey as fully initiated members of the Catholic Church.







# MAY CROWNING

St. Michael School held its annual May Crowning on May 10 at St. Michael Church. It was a special day for the school, as they honored the Blessed Virgin Mary. It also was a special day for the second graders, along with two third graders and eighth graders who had just received their First Holy Communion and had just been sealed with the Holy Spirit at Confirmation, respectively. Both the second and eighth graders led everyone in the rosary. Crowning Mary were eighth graders Sammy Barther and Diego Calixto, who also read reflections they wrote on Mary's courageousness and how their "yes" like Mary's, can change the world. The St. Basil Campus held their May Crowning on May 3.



The first two sisters were Sister Mary Ernfred and Sister Mary Juliette, who became principal in 1926. By 1934, the old frame house that had served as a rectory was rebuilt to become the parish convent, the sisters' new home.

Many advancements took place in the school under the direction of the Sisters. Some of these included the introduction of computers and technology, hot lunch, the modular unit, Advisory Board, and communications committee. In the early 1990s, there were further milestones as the school became a viable entity in the 21st century and the enrollment climbed to 420 students, 265 families in 14 communities. Over the next decade, our youngest learners moved to the St. Basil Education Center, the first-grade Smiles program began, and playground equipment was installed. Spanish classes were introduced in 1999 for seventh and eighth graders, a new science lab was built, the library became automated, and the school building was wired for internet and cable. The Drama Club also began in 2000. Initial steps were also taken for the beginnings of a preschool program in 2000-2001. In 2007, the school applied for and received State validation as well as the Blue Ribbon Award by the U.S. Department of Education. Today, the current faculty and staff continue to build on the foundations laid by the Sisters of Notre Dame by nurturing success in learning, technology, and most important in preparing faith-filled leaders for tomorrow.

### The DiGeronimo Family & St. Michael School

Sam and Mary DiGeronimo, along with their five children at the time (Vic, Rich, Don, Bobby and Florence), moved from Cleveland to Independence in 1950. Siblings Cathy and Tony were born after they moved to Independence to complete their family of seven. They became parishioners of St. Michael Church and since then, have had

a lasting impact on not only the church, but the school, on so many levels. Rich DiGeronimo was a server for the first Mass in the new church. Don DiGeronimo was an usher while in his early 30s before he died of colon cancer at 34. Sam DiGeronimo was active in the Holy Name Society as a member and officer. He also was involved in the publishing of the St. Michael Parish 125th anniversary book. Sam's wife, Mary, was involved in the St. Michael School PTU, the Altar and Rosary Society, and a hospitable parishioner to many.

The DiGeronimo's construction business allowed the family to contribute to many parish projects. They demolished several structures of the evolving parish. Notable includes the old red brick school and the original church building that faced Chestnut Road where the current driveway is. They also did the earthwork for Rappe Hall, construction of the church canopy/ drop-off, the interior demolition for the current church renovation, and the snow melt for the church front entrance.

Individually, many in the DiGeronimo family have served on various committees and associations throughout the years, and as important room moms, lunch moms, fundraisers, and readers in the Smiles program. In addition to the seven siblings, most all the 30 DiGeronimo cousins attended St Michael School during their grade school years. Currently, there are 23 third generation students attending the school.

When Sam DiGeronimo came to the United States in 1928 from Abruzzi, Italy, little did he realize the impact his life's work would have on not only our school and parish of St. Michael, but truly the City of Cleveland. Mary DiGeronimo was a mother whose love and compassion shaped her sons and daughters, making them the family they are today.



For more information on St. Michael School, visit [www.stmichaelschoolinfo.com](http://www.stmichaelschoolinfo.com) or visit the school on social media at [@smsblueangels](https://www.instagram.com/smsblueangels).



# God Bless You and Best Wishes!

St. Michael School is proud to congratulate its graduating eighth graders as they move on to their chosen high schools this fall. We will miss you, and we wish you much success in high school and beyond!

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL CLASS OF 2019



**AYDEN ALONSO**  
ST. IGNATIUS



**HUNTER BARTKO**  
CUYAHOGA HEIGHTS



**MAXIMUS ANDERSON**  
ST. IGNATIUS



**SAMANTHA BARTHER**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**THOMAS BORCUCH**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**EVAN BEACHER**  
INDEPENDENCE



**LILIANA DALTON**  
BEAUMONT



**GABRIEL GUIDO**  
ST. IGNATIUS



**PAIGE HOJDAR**  
HOLY NAME



**SAVANNAH HORNER**  
BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL



**RYLAND BORDEAUX**  
WALSH JESUIT



**DIEGO CALIXTO**  
ST. IGNATIUS



**JOSEPH CANZONI**  
WALSH JESUIT



**KAITLYN CHALMERS**  
BRECK-BROADVIEW HTS.



**ZACHARY DELMORE**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**SERENA JOHNSON**  
CORNERSTONE



**OWEN LEIGH**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**MICHAEL MALCUIT**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**CHLOE FIRRELL**  
INDEPENDENCE



**MARIKA FOURTOUNIS**  
INDEPENDENCE



**TOMMY FUTEY**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**KENDALL PALANGE**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**BRODY PESHEK**  
TRINITY



**JACK PETERS**  
TRINITY



**OWEN GURITZA**  
BRECK-BROADVIEW HTS.



**IAN KORECKO**  
INDEPENDENCE



**DUSTIN (DJ) LAMER**  
COVENTRY



**ANTHONY POLZELLA**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**PATRICK SCHUSTER**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**MARK SOWERS**  
BRECK - BROADVIEW HTS.



**AVA WARD**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**LEAH ZISS**  
BEAUMONT



**LOGAN PETTI**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**KASEY RIVES**  
HOLY NAME



**SAVANNAH SO**  
GILMOUR ACADEMY



**GABRIELLA TAKACS**  
PADUA FRANCISCAN



**SCOTT VERGILII**  
GILMOUR ACADEMY