

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Susan Kasten, Treasurer.

OPENING PRAYER: Jesus, our friend and our brother, please guide us with your wisdom and love today. Help us to do your will and to be open to hear your voice as we speak and listen to one another. Amen.

PRESIDENT REPORT- Susan Kasten reporting for Natalie Gordon, *Interim President*

- Emails were sent to all families who still needed one or two tickets on Sunday, Feb 28.
 - 53 tickets from our school families have yet to be purchased
- In sending emails many were not auto filling and had to be typed in full - is there a way to ensure all family emails are included in the family list?
 - Plan to send a list of names to IT to double check email addresses

SECRETARY REPORT- Ashley Lack

- Approval of Minutes from January 3, 2024 meeting
 - A motion was made by Natalie Gordon and seconded by Susan Kasten to approve the Minutes as distributed.

TREASURER REPORT- Susan Kasten

- Checking Balance: \$72,897.96
- Monthly Income and Expenses
 - Income: \$39,525. Expenses: \$3,250
 - Expenses this month included reimbursement for movie night, ice skating, and teacher appreciation; SAPA paid for doughnuts for Catholic Schools Week; \$800 for electronic billboard for Cash Bash advertising; \$1000 for marketing video from Riverbender. SAPA also borrowed stakes from Applefest for Cash Bash banners; these were bent in the recent high winds and needed to be replaced.
- Cash Bash totals so far - projected profit
 - \$45,950 to date in total sales; projected profit (based on 450 tickets sold) is \$27,850.
 - Final email blasts will be sent out this week to push for the remaining few tickets to be sold.
 - Sales close at 6:00 pm Friday.
 - A suggestion was made to incentivize more sales for future drawings: drawing for ½ tuition or full tuition for families who sell X number of tickets. This will be looked into for future years.

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PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT- Emily Lacy & Natalie Gordon

- Cash Bash ticket sales end on the 9th
- First Early Bird winner chose to get another ticket
- Second Early Bird winner chose to have the cash payout
- We will begin posting about the Mother and Son Dance next (February 24)
- Bowling is in March as well (March 10)

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES REPORT- Sarah Mendoza

- Completed Events
 - Ice Skating at the Loading Dock - Thank you to Chris Varady for chairing the event. Thank you to all the families that came and enjoyed a morning at the ice rink.

- Upcoming Events
 - Mother / Son Dance - Sarah Mendoza reporting for Marli Nixon & Amanda Beiser, Co-Chairs
 - Date: Saturday, February 24, 2024
 - Time: 6 - 8 pm
 - Location: St. Ambrose Gymnasium
 - Theme: Glow Crazy
 - Wear your neon colors and glow necklaces
 - Snacks and drinks provided
 - Volunteer sign up coming soon
 - RSVP: <https://bit.ly/3OzCzga>
 - Donations (for a service hour): <https://bit.ly/3SNFgx2>

 - Bowling Family Event - Sue Stirnaman, Chair
 - Date: Sunday, March 10, 2024
 - Time: 1-3 pm
 - Location: Bowl Haven
 - Cost: \$9 per person for 2 games and shoes. Additional games \$3 per game.
 - There was a \$240 deposit required to reserve the 12 lanes. The Stirnaman family has donated this and would like the funds to be available for the kids to get drinks while they are at the event.

 - Father / Daughter Dance - Sarah Mendoza reporting for Lisa Jacobs, Chair
 - Save the Date: Saturday, April 13, 2024
 - More details to come

 - Golf Tournament - Jamie Frelang, Chair
 - Save the Date: Saturday, May 4, 2024

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- More details to come
 - Cinco de Mayo theme. It will be \$125/golfer this year. There will be a catered lunch from Taqueria Maya. The committee is also working to have \$5 margaritas available.
 - There will be new games this year.
 - There are 2 tiered sponsorships this year with \$100 silver sponsor and \$300 gold sponsor for each hole.
 - Registration will begin February 25; flyers will be sent home with students after March 1.
 - There are currently 8 people on the organizing committee. The profit was \$6,500 last year; committee goal is \$15,000 this year.
 - The committee is planning a February 25th restaurant hop to get sponsors. Katie Krueger will also be visiting businesses with a letter/tax id information to hand out to recruit sponsors.
 - We will also be asking for donations for water, soda, granola bars, and chips; a service hour will be given for donations. Sign up to come.

MERCY TREE ADVENTURES- Carlos Tejada

- <https://mercytreeadventures.org/>
- The focus is bringing Luke 19 to life. The program creates a physical shift of the earthly perspective. It primes the pump physically, emotionally, spiritually to encounter the Lord.
- It is fun for families with activities including geocaching and tree climbing. The tree climbing activities are only for ages 7 and up.
- The program often comes to open houses for the community to share information about the church/school with guests present at the open house.
- There are 75 minute time slots that families sign up for
- One day workshops are in the \$500 range; full weekend events (Friday night, all day Saturday, Sunday afternoon) are in the \$2,000-\$3,000 range (for tree climbing activities; other price points for other programs offered).

DEACON JAY'S REPORT- Jay Wackerly

- The Stewardship Report is out and also available online.
- Church Directory (books) will be coming out soon.
 - You can access the St. Ambrose directory on the website at <https://saintambroseparish.gbpd.co/directory/index.php>
 - Your username is your "firstnamelastname" and password is "grace"
- The Diocese is switching to a different database to make financials consistent among the parishes. The church management software will also be changing. There are plans to have a parish "census" to update phone numbers/addresses/emails etc.

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- Purified and Gender and the Theology of Your Body, presentations by Jason Evert, will be offered at St. Mary's. It is highly recommended for pre-teens. Both presentations are March 4th; cost \$25.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT- Bob Baird

Principal's Report SAPA 2-7-24

2-7	PreK Vision & Hearing Screening
2-7	SAPA Meeting, 6:00
2-9	Science Fair
2-14	School Board
2-19	NO SCHOOL, President's Day
2-21	1:30 Dismissal

- **ACRE Testing Coming Soon** - The ACRE (Assessment of Catholic Religious Education) test will be administered in February to 5th and 8th grade students. The test will be given the week of Feb. 19.
- **Registration & Tuition** - Registration for the 2024-2025 school year will open March 1. Shortly before the opening of registration, tuition information and other important updates for the 2024-2025 school year will be shared. Tuition will increase, with our Finance Council deciding the exact increase. This increase is a necessity due to continuing increases in personnel costs and increases in costs of other expenses (utilities, curriculum, safety and security, and more). The costs to operate a quality school, along with a slight downturn in enrollment and the struggle with volunteerism continue to necessitate a tuition increase. Additionally, Catholic schools in the Alton Deanery have prioritized collaboration with the other schools. Consistent tuition, sharing resources, and providing support to one another between the neighboring schools is one of the many goals of the collaboration. Tuition increases are not pleasant and the increases will never cover all costs to operate our school, but they are a necessity as our Parish does not have an infinite amount of money and cannot continue to subsidize the school at the rate it has done for the last few years.
- **National Catholic Presenter, Jason Evert, to speak to 7th and 8th grade students from our local Catholic Schools** - On Tuesday Mar. 5, 2024 7th and 8th grade students from St. Ambrose and our other local Catholic elementary schools will head to St. Mary's middle school in Alton to hear a nationally renowned speaker. Parents that attended his presentation last year, spoke highly of the messaging and delivery. This presentation is endorsed by our local Catholic leadership. In his seminar, which has been delivered to more than one million teens on six continents, Jason Evert reveals the compelling vision of God's plan for human sexuality and presents an uplifting case for practicing the virtue of chastity. By addressing the issues that teens struggle with most, such as sexual pressure, pornography, modesty, and starting over, Jason offers encouragement for teens to maintain their purity or begin again if they've made mistakes in the past. The night before on March 4, there will be a parent/student presentation that is a ticketed event (please see the attached flier). The ideal format is for the parents and students to attend the evening before and then the group of middle school students

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attend together with a session focused entirely on their age group. The time of the school presentation on March 5 is still in discussion and will be communicated asap. The students will be transported by bus to St. Mary's and permission slips will be sent home. Parents may opt their students out and they will be supervised at school. Please let us know if you have any questions.

- **10 St. Ambrose 8th Graders to Participate in Model UN** - On Monday Feb. 26 and Tuesday Feb. 27, ten of our 8th grade students will participate in the Model UN conference at SIUE. Schools from around the area will participate.
- **Congratulations to 8th Grade Boys Basketball!** - Congratulations to our 8th grade boys' basketball team on reaching the finals of the St. John's Regional. Although the team did not win the Regional, they displayed their talent and character in competing until the end, with an opportunity to win at the end of the game. We congratulate them on a great season!
- **Chess Club Update** - This year we have approximately 25 students in Chess Club. The competitive team is now 2-1-1. The Alton Deanery competitive league added 3 teams this year. We even have "friendly" matches scheduled with Alton Middle School.
- **5-8 Grade Monthly Talks** - This past week, we hosted the first of what will become a monthly event. We spent 20 minutes talking with the students about important topics, especially things like avoiding issues that cannot be joked about or made "light of," including threats to others or one's self, racially derogatory terminology, sexual harassment, and more. We also reminded them to share with parents and adults at school when matters of concern arise. We also reminded them of the available anonymous reporting tool on our school website. The next talk will be Feb. 23. We will share talking points with parents, so the topics can be discussed at home.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- A discussion was held regarding marketing ideas and targeting potential preschool families
- Chris Cakes will have a pancake breakfast on Fat Tuesday (February 13). It will be \$7/plate.
- Valentine celebrations will take place in the classrooms on Tuesday, February 13 due to Ash Wednesday being on February 14.
- Stations of the Cross will be Fridays at 2:00
- Tuesday, March 26 will be the Living Stations of the Cross (presented by the 8th grade)
- March 25th will be our IL State Recognition and Diocese accreditation. Diocese Accreditation will change for the 2024-2025 school year to a National Catholic Accreditation. The goal is to create consistency. Our accreditation is every 5 years.
- Committee for ELA curriculum: meeting will be set soon.

NEW BUSINESS

- No new business was brought forward.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION- Open Forum

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- No additional questions were raised.

CLOSING PRAYER: We give you thanks, Lord, for helping us to learn more and how to love one another. Please help us to always be instruments of your perfect peace in our school.
Amen.

With no additional questions/discussions, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m. by Natalie Gordon, Interim President.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Lack, Secretary