

August 31, 2007

Dear St. Francis Xavier Families,

We have had a wonderful first week. Yesterday we had visit by Father John McDermott and Bishop Severine Niwemugizi from the Diocese of Rulenge in Tanzania, Africa. On Wednesday, Bishop Niwemugizi visited Rice Memorial High School, and we were fortunate that his schedule worked out so he could spend some time with us. The Bishop was able to meet with one of our new students who is from Tanzania. Sr. Doris and Sr. Marie, who are both Missionary Sisters of Africa and who volunteer in our library, were also able to spend some time with the Bishop. It was a lovely visit for all of us, and we are grateful for their time.

We have a few **safety notes and reminders**. The **parking lot is restricted to faculty and staff** only. This is a serious safety issue, as we can not have many cars entering and leaving while students are out and about. We realize that the stair work at the parish has further reduced the parking, both on the street and in the parking lot, and we apologize for the inconvenience. Please remember that **St. Peter Street is one way** from Weaver St. toward North St. from **7:30 AM to 8:30 AM, and 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM**.

Thank you to the parents who are volunteering their time as crossing guards in the afternoon at dismissal. This is a great help and they work hard to keep our students safe. They have asked us to remind people to **please cross at the cross walks and not between cars**.

Students must be picked up immediately after school or their specific after school program, or be enrolled in the Extension Program. **If students are not picked up by 3:10, they will be sent to the Extension Program and families will be charged the applicable rate.** We are concerned for the safety of our students and cannot permit them to remain unsupervised. Thank you for your help.

Our Lunchroom Coordinators asked us to remind families that **we are not able to heat lunches from home**. If students wish to bring soups, stews, and other hot meals, they should be sent already heated in an appropriate thermos. We appreciate your assistance.

As part of the uniform review we are evaluating suppliers and that has **delayed the distribution of order forms for the physical education uniform with the St. Francis Xavier school logo**. We will send home information and forms as soon as we have it. Plain navy blue t-shirts and shorts or sweatpants are also part of the uniform and they may be purchased online at www.buckheaduniforms.com, www.hallclosetuniforms.com or through www.schoolpop.com (check to make sure your purchases are going to support St. Francis Xavier School) at LandsEnd or FrenchToast. Also, please note that **skirts and skorts are not part of the Early Education or Elementary girls' uniform**. Jumpers can be purchased online through www.schoolpop.com at French Toast, Kohl's, JC Penney, and Land's End.

School Picture Day is Tuesday, September 4. This is a Mass day and **students must wear their Mass uniforms for the group pictures (class and whole school)**. They may change for individual pictures. You are not required to purchase pictures; however, all students will have a picture taken for our yearbook. Order forms are being sent home with this letter.

There will be a **Cross Country Running Team** informational meeting for students and parents in room 201 (Mr. Gaudette's classroom) on Tuesday, September 4 from 3 to 3:15. Cross Country Running is **open to students in grades 5 through 8**. If your student is unable to attend, please contact Mr. Gaudette or Mr. Becker.

We are accepting **registrations** for our **Drama, Woodshop, and Martial Arts After-School programs**. Additional information about these programs and registration forms are available at the front office. **Drama**

will be held on Mondays and will begin on September 10 and is **open to students in grades 3 through 8**. **Martial Arts** will be held on Thursday, and we anticipate it beginning on September 20 and is open to students in grades 3 through 8. **Woodshop** runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays and begins on **Tuesday, September 11**. Woodshop is open to students in grades 5 and up (Rice High School Students are welcome!) and students may attend either Tuesday, Thursday, or both days. If your student is interested in these activities, yet is currently participating in fall sports or other activities that conflict, please talk to the teacher (s). In most cases, they are able to make accommodations.

In 2005, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops revised the Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth. The Charter re-affirms a deep commitment to creating a safe environment for young people and provides the focus for a consistent, ongoing, and comprehensive approach to doing so. Educational efforts outlined in the Charter include children, youth, parents, youth ministers, Pastors, educators, and volunteers. As part of the educational effort for children and youth we implemented the Child Lures program for all of our students. The Diocese of Burlington implemented “**Shield the Vulnerable,**” a **law based program**, for all priests, deacons, teachers, and other persons in a position of trust. **All volunteers, which include the majority of our families, and other persons in positions of trust who spend time with students are required to complete the Shield the Vulnerable online training program.** The program takes about 90 minutes, although you do not have to complete it in one sitting, and completely internet based. You can access Shield the Vulnerable at <http://www.shieldthevulnerable.org/>. If you do not have internet access, please let us know. If we have families in that situation we will schedule some times in our computer lab so that our families can complete the course. When you have completed the program, please bring in the certificate of completion. If families have completed the program for Rice or another organization, please let us know and provide us with a copy of the certificate of completion.

The diocese is working to streamline the process of completing background checks to make it easier for everyone. As part of the process, they have given us a new form to be used. We are sending one home with each letter, and additional forms are available at the office. **All volunteers must submit the form for a background check.** If you have already gone through the background check, you do not need to go through it again. If you have a background check with fingerprints on file at another location, such as a school district, there is another form you can fill out so that information can be sent to the diocese. Nancy has that form also.

Please review the Family Handbook with your student(s). Please **sign and return the last page** to the homeroom teacher of your oldest student by **Tuesday, September 4**. Our handbook is also available on our website www.sfxwinooski.org.

Thursday, September 6 there will be a **Home and School meeting starting at 6 PM with Open Classrooms following until 7:30 PM**. This is a great time to meet teachers, see your student’s classroom and sign up for Parent Teacher Conferences on Friday, September 14. Traditionally, the day after a Home and School meeting is a dress down day.

We are participating in the **Price Chopper Tools for School Program** again this year. Point accrual begins August 26 and runs through December 15. In years past we have been able to get some computer equipment and additional materials to use in math, music, and physical education. Every year we earn more points and are able to get more equipment. Please help us continue this increase. If you or your family members have not registered your AdvantEdge card, you may do so online at <http://www.pricechopper.com/>, at Price Chopper, or here at the school. **Our school code is 15195.**

We are also continuing to **collect ink and toner cartridges, outdated cell phones, Boxtops for Education and Campbell’s Soup Labels** on an ongoing basis; you may drop those off here at school or at the back of the church at any time. We are sending home a booklet with coupons for Campbell’s products with this

newsletter. Please pass the word about these programs; they are easy ways to help our school. If you are interested in helping us with these programs, please let Louise Lynch or Kim McCain know. Many aspects of these programs can be done at home.

Thank you again to all our students, faculty, families and friends who work so hard to make our school and our school community such a special place. We are off to an excellent start to this school year.

Mrs. Maria Horton

Mr. Jesse Gaudette

Mrs. Kathryn LaVigne