

# St. Mary's PTO



## February/March Newsletter

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Hi there!

My name is Tara Testo and I'm the current PTO President. I'm so happy you are taking the time to read this newsletter. Our mission for PTO is to foster a close relationship between home and school to enrich the lives of our children. The PTO Board is a group of dedicated moms who want our kids to have super cool opportunities. If you haven't been to one of our events, please come! We have lots more in store for the school community. We are always looking for new ideas for PTO. Pop into one of our meetings or drop us an email [ptosecretary@smsbspa.org](mailto:ptosecretary@smsbspa.org).



### Polar Express

### Movie Night



Even though our original event date was cancelled due to a snow storm, we had a great turnout for our Polar Express Movie Night on January 6th. St. Mary's families lined our gym floor with blankets, sleeping bags, bean bag chairs and laughter. Everyone was decked out in pajamas and were served hot chocolate, cookies and popcorn, which were all a big hit! All the children left with great memories and a bell that I'm sure they rang all the way home. Thank you to Miss Eileen Lance, Mrs Sharon Martucci and the PTO board members who helped make this awesome event happen!



### Uniform Closet Update



Has your child outgrown their uniform pants or jumper? Did you know St. Mary's School has their own Uniform Closet? Stop on by and grab another size. It's located straight back from the front entrance, to the right. **Everyone** is welcome to use the clothes in it. We ask you to follow a few rules when using the closet; please be courteous and leave things neat. If you feel called to donate money, we ask you drop money off at the front office with a note saying "Uniform Closet." Suggested donations are \$5 per item. We also accept used uniforms. Please make sure they are in good condition (freshly washed & stain/rip free). There is a basket in the closet with a "returns" sign on it. A few members of PTO spent hours combing through hundreds of items and organizing them. Thank you to Danielle, Hilarie, Gabby, Jen and Tara for your efforts!

# MEET THE ST. MARY'S PTO BOARD!

## Tara Testo - PTO President

As a St Mary's alumna, I am overjoyed to be back at my school as a parent and also serving as your PTO President. After graduating from St Mary's school in 1992, I continued my education at Saratoga Central Catholic moving onto Siena College graduating with a degree in English Literature with minors in Theater and Creative Arts in 2002.

My husband, Kevin Testo, a partner at an accounting firm, and I met at Siena and were married at St Mary's Church in 2006. After a decade in insurance and Human Resources, I had my first daughter, Giana, a current fifth grader, and decided to stay home. Our family was complete when we welcomed Carlotta, a current kindergartner.



Besides being an active volunteer at St Mary's School, I love reading, baking, gardening and organizing anything I can get my hands on.

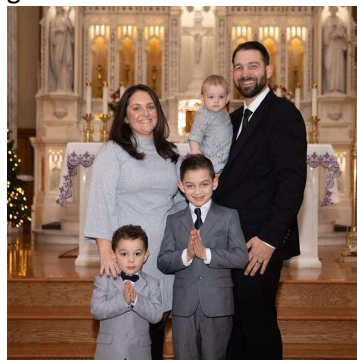
As the former PTO secretary serving in 2019 & 2020, I am looking forward to bringing some amazing programs and events back to St Mary's School. I encourage everyone to join us during our monthly PTO meetings. There are plenty of ways to help and if you're lucky like me, you can meet some awesome new friends.

## Hilarie Patrizio – PTO Vice President

This is my 3rd year here at St. Mary's and I'm so excited to be a part of bringing back St. Mary's PTO and to have some fun with our students & their families.

My husband Nick and I currently reside in Middle Grove, N.Y with our three children, Bradey (8), Jax (4) and Lylah (1). Bradey is currently in 3rd Grade with Ms. Torok and Jax in pre-k with Mrs. Norton. Lylah spends her days hanging out at home with Mom and waiting for her brothers to return home.

Prior to living in Middle Grove, I was born and raised in Clifton Park and was a graduate of Shenendehowa. After high school I worked a plethora of jobs all in the animal industry ranging from Kennel Technician, Dog Groomer (relocated to FL to work directly with Sister at her grooming salon), Veterinary Assistant, but my absolute favorite was serving as the V.P of my sister's dog rescue. Those were some of my favorite times and some of my most cherished memories. I worked for Capital District Veterinary Referral Hospital for over 10 years and have rescued and rehabilitated countless animals since then as well. Being that I was in the animal industry for SO long, we have, what I like to call, a small rescue of misfit animals here at home consisting of cats, dogs, a guinea pig and chickens! While my heart will always be in animal medicine and rescue, I shifted gears in my early 30s to another passion now turned career and I am currently completing my bachelors in Elementary Education and hope to teach right here at St. Mary's school after I graduate.



During the week I am a stay-at-home Mom with a very long to-do list for all 3 kids but on the weekends and in our spare time, when we get to enjoy time as a family, we love hiking, camping, fishing, being at the lake, out on the boat with my parents as much as possible, skiing in the winter and anything that

involves being outside! We love to travel and try to plan getaways as much as we can, but my favorite vacation to plan and take is by far DISNEY (I'm a huge Disney Fanatic and try to go at least once a year).

This year I am so excited to meet more of the St. Mary's community, assist in the planning and putting on of PTO events for St. Mary's families and students, and really get involved in our small school with a BIG HEART! See you around St. Mary's!

## MEET THE ST. MARY'S PTO BOARD Continued...

### Danielle Dixon - PTO Secretary

I am a Capital District native, growing up in Guilderland, New York. I graduated from the University at Albany with a degree in English and previously worked in the corporate 401(k) sector for 11 years. When the company I worked for was acquired, I began working as a facility manager and case worker for individuals who had suffered traumatic brain injuries. Two years later, I decided to be a stay at home mom when my youngest daughter Teagan was born. This has proven to be my most rewarding "job" yet.

My husband David and I share three children; James, Gianna and Teagan. David is a partner and busy orthopedic surgeon with OrthoNY. We enjoy staying active and spending as much time as possible in all four seasons at our home in the Adirondacks; skiing, hiking, paddle boarding, kayaking and running. We also enjoy traveling and spending as much time with friends and family as possible. We love our small school with a big heart and I am happy to be a contributing member of the PTO.



### Gabby Preston - PTO Treasurer



This is our first year at St. Mary's and we couldn't be happier to be a part of this school's community.

My husband, Will and I, live in Glenville with our two boys - Theodore (4 years old), who is in Mrs. Gimbels Pre-K class, and Benjamin (2 years old) who hangs with mom during the day but wishes he was with his big brother at school!

I was born and raised in the Capital Region, attended Catholic elementary and high school (which is how I met my husband 20 years ago!) After high school, I attended Maria College and Utica College, where I obtained my Master's in Occupational Therapy. After graduation, my husband's work brought us to Connecticut, which is where I started my career in OT. After getting married in 2015, my husband's career serendipitously brought us back to the Capital Region.

The majority of my OT career was spent working with the brain injury population and other varying neurological diagnoses, both pediatrics and adults. After 10 years and the birth of our two boys, I decided to focus my attention more on my family and became a stay-at-home mom! I loved my OT career and know that I will be back at it someday in the future.

In my spare time I love hanging out with my family and friends, event planning and organization projects. I also enjoy working out and in 2023 I have a goal set to run a 5K each month!

I am looking forward to meeting more people and getting involved in all of the festivities!

# MEET THE ST. MARY'S PTO BOARD Continued...

Michelle Goss -PTO Member at Large



As a St. Mary's Parishioner, I am proud to say that my daughter Sophia is a student here at St. Mary's school.

I am a Registered Nurse, being in the field for over 30 years. My career has mostly been in Critical Care and an Operating Room Nurse for Cardiothoracic Surgery. Most recently I have taken on the role as the Nurse at Mohonasen High School. I love working and caring for my students.

My daughter Sophia has been a student of St. Mary's since Pre-K. She is currently a third grader and recently has become an altar server. She loves being a part of our little school with a big heart!

Besides volunteering my free time at St. Mary's School, I love to bake for friends, read and enjoy the outdoors with my girl.

I have served on the PTO for 4 years and am also a member of our School Board for the past 3 years. I have been fortunate over the years to make some wonderful friends here at St. Mary's.

Please consider joining us at our monthly PTO meetings to help ensure that we continue to provide our children with the most exciting activities!

Is your child a budding **artist**?! This may be the **perfect** after school opportunity for them!



Tuesdays in March, a local business owner/artist will be visiting the school. Heather Heigl from **Paint n Gogh** will be leading our students in painting canvases. They will surely be a beautiful addition to your home décor. Each class is \$25 and includes all supplies. Be on the lookout for the sign-up flyers due back by **March 1<sup>st</sup>**.

# Catholic Schools Week/Parishioner Appreciation

The PTO was fortunate to be involved in some of the magic of Catholic Schools Week. Our volunteer students handed out over 600 packages of candies to our St. Mary's Church parishioners. The parishioners support our school every year with donations and prayers. Thank you to all the parents and students who gave of their time to help out!



We love our school and our parishioners, too.

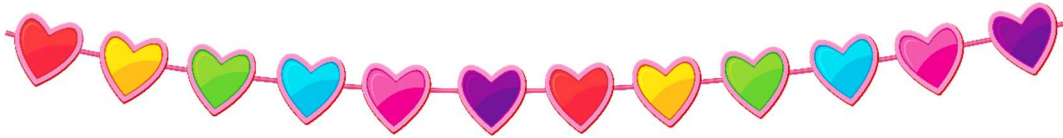
Thank you for your continued support.

Love, The Students of St. Mary's School



The PTO also purchased popsicles for all the students for Student Appreciation Day. Our very own secretary, Danielle Dixon and her husband were so kind to donate money to purchase lunch for our teachers on Teacher Appreciation Day. A massive thank you goes out to Hilarie Patrizio, our PTO VP, for baking three amazing desserts for our awesome teachers. As you can tell, we love being involved in our school and helping out.





**Speaking of volunteering and teachers, we are looking to form a committee to facilitate Teacher Appreciation Week, which is May 8<sup>th</sup> – May 12<sup>th</sup>**

**If you can help with donations, ideas or time, we would LOVE to hear from you! Please email us at [PTOsecretary@smsbspa.org](mailto:PTOsecretary@smsbspa.org)**

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HAVE YOU WONDERED WHAT PTO MEETINGS ARE LIKE BUT CAN'T MAKE THE NORMAL 6:30 TIME?

MAYBE THE MARCH MEETING TIME WILL HELP YOU OUT! WE ARE MEETING IN THE LIBRARY ON

**TUESDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup> AT 3:15PM**

**PTO  
Meeting**

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Contact us anytime

[PTOsecretary@smsbspa.org](mailto:PTOsecretary@smsbspa.org)