



Dear Parents,

April 22, 2026

What a fun SFA Quiz Bowl meeting we had last evening! Thank you to all who attended. I thought the children did very well and was highly impressed with the knowledge of our parents! All you bright and talented parents out there, please remember to let us know if you are interested in running for an SFA Board position for the 2026-2027 school year.

As promised, I am happy to announce our faculty and staff for the 2026-2027 school year. We have had multiple years of a surprisingly stable faculty and staff at St. James. Other principals were envious! However, for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year, life circumstances coincided to make a veritable tidal wave of changes including that of our Pastor and Chief Administrative Officer, Father Stoley. Father Stoley has been an amazing support to me in my role as principal and such a pleasure to work with over the nine years of his time in Crete. I, and I know many others, will truly miss him. Not to worry, however. God has our school in His hands and great things planned for our future. Knowing this, I can only be grateful for Father and those others who are being called to move onward. Likewise, I am filled with trust and confidence that the Lord will guide our new group to the heights of love and service in our mission of Catholic education.

St. James School Faculty and Staff for 2026-2027

Faculty:

Karla Tranmer– Pre-K

Diane Swinscoe – Kindergarten

Thank you to Megan Vasa for 12 years of service to our Kindergarteners. These children were blessed to have you as were all of us!

Donna Talkington - 1st grade

Sister Teresa Marie, C.K. - 2nd grade

Chloelia Braunsroth– 3rd grade

Best wishes to newly engaged Brooke Blessum who joined us this fall and did her very best for our third graders!

Leo Van Horn – 4th grade

Sister Mary Vainney, C.K. – 5th grade

Sister John Marion, C.K. – 6th grade

Thank you to Sister Mary Guadalupe who skillfully taught our 6th graders for the past four years. You truly gave your all and we are grateful, Sister!

Shannon Ward - Title I, Title III, Academic Support, Computer

Terry Van Horn – PE

Thank you to Christopher Teixeira who has been with us at St. James for the past five years in many different teaching capacities. You have been a gift from God and will be greatly missed.

Tana Van Slyke – Music

Sara Graeve – Library and Academic Support

Thank you to Jean Cerveney, a beautiful person, who worked hard to fill our library with beautiful books. You have helped our children grow by leaps and bounds in their love of reading.

Staff:

Secretary: Staci Tyma
 Teacher Assistant: Laura Ziems
 Teacher Assistant: Yesenia Homolka
 Maintenance Manager: Dennis Bargman
 Head Cook: Irma Lopez

Administration:

Chief Admin. Office – Father Doug Darro
 Principal – Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

Thank you to Rocio Mendez for 11 years of cooking for the St. James children. We wish you all the best in your new job.

Custodian: Silvia Adame Garcia

In this newsletter and upcoming ones, I want to introduce you to our new faculty members. Diane Swinscoe comes first. **Diane Swinscoe** is a top-notch experienced Catholic teacher of over 25 years. She has taught Kindergarten for ten of these years and it is her favorite grade level. She is coming to us from St. Joseph School in Lincoln where she was known for her students' outstanding reading scores. Diane shines when around little children. They love her and they love reading due to her teaching! Welcome to St. James, Diane!

In the Heart of Christ the King,



Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

USDA's Summer Food Service Program Outreach: The USDA's Summer Food Service Program provides no-cost meals to children ages 1- 18 years at approved locations across the state.

To find information about summer meals sites near you, visit the SFSP Site Finder.

*Please note: The Nebraska SFSP sites will be available in the Summer Meals Site Finder after the NDE approves site locations, which will be on approximately May 25, 2026.

CK Sisters Outdoor Spring Workday _ Sat., May 9, 1:30-4:30 p.m. We will be planting our vegetable garden, cleaning up brush and cutting trees. Helpful items to bring include wheelbarrows, shovels, gloves, pruning/lopping shears/saws, hoes, pickups and chainsaws. Children are also welcome! Mark your calendars now and contact Sister Mary Angela at sr.mary-angela@cdolinc.net if you would like to come and help. Please also print and complete a liability form (one per adult; children added to adult form.) Villa Regina Motherhouse, 4100 SW 56th St., about 2 miles west and south of Pioneers Park. (Walk-ins also welcome.)

Upcoming Dates:

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| April 24 | First Holy Communion Retreat Day |
| April 25 | First Holy Communion – 11:00 a.m. Mass |
| April 26 | Calendar Lottery Drawing after 9:00 a.m. Mass |
| April 28 | Children's Dilly Bar party for making the Calendar Lottery goal. We sold 1009 tickets! |
| May 1 | Pioneer Day for fourth graders. Mass begins at 8:00 a.m. |
| May 5 | K-6 th Spring Program 6:30 p.m. |
| May 6 | PK Spring Program 10:30 a.m. |
| May 8 | May Crowning 1:30 p.m. |

Coming Home Today: Calendar Lottery Memo, Read Aloud Encouragement, Tuition Reminders.

How to ask questions

What questions should I ask about what we read?

Open Ended

Here is the all-important test. Before you ask your child a question, test it in your mind: *Can this question be answered with just a yes or no?* If so, try changing up your question so it is open-ended, not just answerable by a simple yes or no. For example, consider changing “Did you like the book?” to “Who was a likable character in the book?” That question will require your child to think a little bit first, and then you can prompt them to explain why that character was likable - what did he or she do that was admirable, inspiring, entertaining, etc. Open-ended questions can lead to some great conversations.

Have a few trusty questions for any book

Here are five great open-ended questions that you can ask for pretty much any book. If any of these leads to some discussion, then go down that road with your child. You do not need to ask every question about every book. The goal is not the question but the conversation that comes from it.

1. **Should [character] have done that?** Ask this about a significant decision or action a character makes. Why do you think that was a good or bad idea?
2. **How is __ like/different from __?** This question is universally applicable. What made the main character stand out from his peers? How were two very different characters alike in some way? How were the circumstances at the end of the story different from the beginning?
3. **Who was very ___?** Then fill in the blank with any good or bad character trait: brave, careful, considerate, deceptive, faithful, foolish, friendly, generous, honest, humorous, merciful, etc. Ask your child what the character did that proves his or her answer.
4. **What other story does this one remind you of?** This encourages you and your child to make connections with stories you have encountered in the past.
5. **What is something you don't want to forget from this story?** This question is similar to “What was your favorite part,” but perhaps with less pressure because you're not looking for a “best” answer, just for your child's response to the story. Maybe they want to remember a part that was funny, or maybe a part that surprised them, or a part that impressed them.