

The 411 on St. Helena Catholic School



If you're new to St. Helena, there are a lot of things that your family will need to figure out as you go along. To help sort things out and let you hit the ground running, here's the low-down on many of the events, activities, and lingo that will become a part of your life at St. Helena. The most important thing to know is if you don't know.....ask!

St. Helena Parent Volunteer Network – This is St. Helena's parent volunteer organization. The Network organizes many fundraisers and activities that help to keep St. Helena tuition affordable and to make it a welcoming place for families. We meet at school on the second Monday evening of the month, and childcare is provided. Involvement of parents is vital for making fundraisers successful and St. Helena School feel like a community. All parents are encouraged to attend. New ideas and energy are always welcomed!

Room Parents – Each grade at St. Helena has two or more "Room Parents" who coordinate communication with the other parents in that grade. A class or several classes take the lead on various fundraisers and activities. The room parents help to recruit volunteers from their class. They usually attend the Volunteer Network meetings and bring back information, but they need the help of all the parents in their classes.

Rowan Hall – Also known as the lower level of the church, Rowan Hall is home to many of St. Helena's assemblies, events, and fundraisers.

Back to School Night – Not really back to school, but your chance to meet your child's teacher and other staff, other parents from school, and maybe even a chance for your child to connect with other kids. The first tuition payment of the year is made at this event.

Autumn Daze Festival – While not technically a school event, the school is heavily involved in this important parish event. Many St. Helena School parents volunteer in leadership roles, the school is heavily used during the festival, and the school benefits from this fundraiser both financially and in visibility. Plus, it's a lot of fun!!! If you haven't been to it before, *you gotta go!*

Marathon for Nonpublic Education – This is one of the school's most profitable fundraisers each year. It's not an actual marathon, but families raise money for school by asking friends, family, neighbors, the community, and anyone else that you can think of for pledges for the Marathon. Then students can walk, bike, or skate the Marathon route which starts at Minnehaha Falls and continues to Franklin Avenue and back. It's a 9 mile round trip, so while not an actual marathon, not a cakewalk, either. Many other local nonpublic schools participate in this event as well. Volunteers are used to prepare food and staff rest stops for the St. Helena participants.

The Marathon Store – Some children are motivated by knowing they are raising money for school, others enjoy more tangible rewards. Children earn points for the Marathon Store by collecting pledges for the Marathon for Nonpublic Education which can be redeemed for fun prizes in the store. Money can be turned in weekly leading up to and following the Marathon to gain access to the Marathon Store. The kids love the store, and it's always interesting to see what comes home!

Dress Down Pass – A dress down pass is a child's pass out of uniform for the day. Dress down passes can be earned through a variety of ways throughout the year. For example, for each \$50 raised for the Marathon, a child earns a dress down pass. Passes are good for one day and are not transferable.

No Busing Provided – You will notice on the school calendar that there are a number of days identified as “School in Session No Busing Provided.” If your child relies on Minneapolis Public School transportation, arrangements need to be made for alternative transportation. The office helps to coordinate car pools so that everyone can get to school.

Doughnuts - Every Sunday after 8:30 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. Masses the St. Helena community is invited to Rowan Hall to chat and have doughnuts. One weekend each month, a different class at St. Helena organizes this for the parish as a thank you for all that the parish does for the school.

Santa Shop – Each year children are given the opportunity to shop for special gifts for their loved ones from the Santa Shop. Donated items are for sale for \$1. Parent volunteers help the youngsters shop, and some gifts from this shop have become legendary!

Christmas Boutique – This boutique brings together crafters and artists from the area to sell their wares just in time for Christmas giving. Held on the second Saturday in November, there are always unique finds and delicious food like our famous cinnamon rolls.

Catholic Schools Week – Usual scheduled during the last week in January, this week is a fun celebration of the Catholic education that your child is receiving. Each day has a fun theme or event such as spirit day, pajama day, spelling bee, science fair, storybook character day and so much more. There is something for everyone.

Special Visitors Day – Traditionally the first day of Catholic Schools Week, this is a day when children can invite special people in their lives to come to Mass and join their class for a visit at school afterwards. Cake is served in the cafeteria. This is a great time for grandparents, family, and friends to see first hand what is so great about St. Helena School.

Skating Party – Held on the Saturday of Catholic Schools Week, kids and parents get together at Lake Hiawatha skating rink to show off their moves on the ice. Hot chocolate and cookies warm everyone’s bones.

Spaghetti Dinner – Held in Rowan Hall, the annual Spaghetti Dinner is put on by the St. Helena sports participants and their families. Team members help cook and serve food to thank their supporters and to raise money for the St. Helena sports program.

Spring Extravaganza - This spring fundraiser is an evening party for adults that includes appetizers and drinks, entertainment, presentations by eighth grade students, a silent auction, and quilt and tuition raffles. Students from each grade contribute items for theme baskets for the silent auction and help make decorations that fit the evening’s theme.

Living Rosary and Reception for Volunteers – The middle school students lead the students and their guests in the rosary. Each child represents a bead in the rosary and offers their prayer intentions for all of the school’s benefactors and volunteers. Afterwards refreshments are served in Rowan Hall for the honored guests.

Track and Field Day and Family Picnic – This fun end-of-the-year event is full of silly and serious physical activities in friendly competition. Parents come and cheer on their athlete and then stay to enjoy lunch with their kids. An awards ceremony follows in the afternoon.

Awards Ceremony – It is important to recognize all the great things St. Helena students do all year long with this awards ceremony. Some awards recognize academic achievement or reading, while others spotlight the positive attitudes and good deeds of the children at St. Helena. This is held on the last day of school, and all are welcome.