**SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS**

In-School Party Guidelines for Elementary Schools

Parties conducted during school time should be limited to one hour. They should be simple and respectful of all people and things. (Ex. Food throwing or excessive eating contests or destruction of things are not appropriate. Forcing people to do something they do not wish to do is also not appropriate.)

Appropriate Secular and Religious Recognition of Feasts, Seasons and Holidays

Whenever there is a feast, holiday or season, the Catholic school will emphasize the religious meaning and not the secular meaning.

EX. 1. Halloween will be “all hallows eve”, prepare for All Saints Day

Not only monsters, witches, and trick or treating

2. Advent will be preparing for the coming of Jesus and celebration of

our Savior’s birth, not shopping and expecting gifts

3. Christmas will be Jesus’ birthday, not Santa Claus coming

4. Easter is a celebration of life and resurrection, not Easter bunnies

At lower primary grades it is appropriate to have both secular and religious meaning as long as the religious meaning is emphasized. Usually the two meanings can be related to each other. It is also appropriate to teach how the religious feast or season came to be celebrated at that time of year. Prayer services or liturgical celebrations are good ways to highlight the religious significance.

Environment of school and classrooms should always have a religious tone to them. The secular holidays and meanings will not overshadow religious meanings.

Staff will be trained in appropriate activities and celebrations for holidays, seasons, and feasts. Each school should build a teacher resource file on each of these holidays, seasons and feasts.

Keep in mind that we are a Catholic school and as such have the opportunity and the responsibility to teach the religious meaning of any feast or season. The secular is all around us and children will get enough of this out of school.

**SPECIFIC WAYS TO INTERPRET AND CELEBRATE SEASONS, FEASTS AND HOLIDAYS**

Labor Day (1st Monday of September) - Discuss the dignity of work and the right of all people to work for a just compensation.

Grandparents Day - Usually in September - Celebrate grandparents

Columbus Day (2nd Mon. of Oct. / Oct. 11) - How have we respected indigenous peoples and immigrants in our country, in the world? What is the missionary work of the Church

Halloween (October 31) All Hallows Eve/ Day before All Saints Day

All Saints Day (Nov. 1) Celebrate everyone’s call to be saint, patron saints.

All Souls Day (Nov. 2) Why do we pray for the dead?

Veterans Day (Nov. 11) What is patriotism? How have men and women served our country in the armed forces? How can we honor them?

Thanksgiving (4th Thursday of Nov.) We give thanks for the many blessings God has given to us and our country. We share our resources.

Advent - Prepare for the 2nd coming of Jesus, celebrate his coming into our lives now.

Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) Holy.Day, U.S. is dedicated to Immaculate Conception. Mary was conceived without sin.

Our Lady of Guadalupe (Dec. 12) Patroness of the Americas

Christmas - Celebrate Jesus’ birth, becoming one of us and his continued presence among us and his coming again.

New Year’s Day – At the beginning of a new year, celebrate time and new beginnings.

Day of prayer for world peace is January 1.

Martin Luther King Jr’s Birthday - Celebrate non-violence and peace, respect and inclusion, the example of King’s life and his non-violent ways.

Church Unity Octave (Jan. 18-24) Celebrate unity of all peoples, respect differences in religion, culture, etc.

Valentine’s Day - A day to renew our love for all people and celebrate God’s love for us, a time to focus on friendship.

St. Patrick’s Day - Irish day to celebrate the spread of Christianity

President’s Day – A day to remember and celebrate leadership of our country, state, and city

Ash Wednesday / Lent - A season of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, a season of sacrifice and acknowledgement of our sin and God’s continual forgiveness

Holy Week - Celebrate the Passion and death of Jesus

Easter - Celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, Jesus lives now and forever!

This is the greatest of all the Church feasts!

May Day - May 1 Feast of Joseph the worker - Celebrate work and the right to work.

Mother’s Day (2nd Sunday of May) Celebrate motherhood and families.

Memorial Day (last Monday of May) Remember all those who have died, especially our own loved ones.

Father’s Day (3rd Sunday of June) Celebrate fatherhood and families.

School Feasts

Blessed Sacrament - Corpus Christi or Holy Thursday

Guardian Angel PK and Day Care - Feast of Guardian Angels (October 2)

J. E. Cosgriff - Saint Ambrose (December 7)

Judge Memorial - Feast of Christ the King (last Sunday of Church year)

Juan Diego - Blessed Juan Diego (December 9)

Kearns-St. Ann - Saint Ann (July 26)

Madeleine Choir - Saint Mary Magdalene (July 22 or November 22 St. Cecilia)

Our Lady of Lourdes - Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes (February 11)

Saint Andrew – Feast of Saint Andrew (November 30)

Saint Francis Xavier - Feast of Saint Francis Xavier (December 3)

Saint John the Baptist – Feast of Saint John the Baptist (June 24 or August 29)

Saint Joseph Elementary – Feast of Saint Joseph (March 19 or May 1)

Saint Joseph High School – Feast of Saint Joseph (March 19 or May 1)

Saint Olaf School – Feast of Saint Olaf (July 29)

Saint Marguerite - Feast of Saint Margaret Mary (October 16)

Saint Thomas More – Feast of Saint Thomas More (June 22)

Saint Vincent de Paul – Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul (September 27)