

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary School

Frequently Asked Questions

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us! (616) 361-5126 ext. 251

School Policies

- **How will I know if school is delayed or cancelled?** Check Wood TV Channel 8 or WZZM Channel 13. You can also call the school office and listen for the “Special Announcements” prompt (361-5483 x600). You will also be notified through the Remind app. Please visit the front office for instructions on how to sign up to receive important school messages via the Remind app. If school is delayed, there will be no preschool and no lunch recess for grades K-8.
- **What is the drop-off/pick-up system?** Parents can drop their students off at the main, front door or the backdoor (preferred) by the science lab as early as 8:15am. For the safety of our students, please do not park at the main door during drop-off and pick-up times as the buses use the circle driveway. Pick-up is at 3:20 (carpool lines form around 3:15). Parents form a line of vehicles starting by the church office (on the side of the school) to Post Drive. To aid teachers, it is helpful to put your last name, in large print, on a sheet of paper in the passenger corner of your windshield. If your child is going home with someone other than the “normal routine”, please send a note to the teacher to avoid any confusion.
- **What is the process when picking up students for appointments during the day/bringing students late?** If a student needs to leave or return to the building during regular school hours, a parent needs to sign the student in and out via a clipboard in the office. It is always helpful to send an email or note letting the teacher know ahead of time.
- **Are the school doors locked during the day?** Yes! Each day, all doors leading into the school are locked at 8:30am and unlocked at 3:20pm. There is a button/buzzer near the main doors that can be pushed to allow entry into the school. A camera shows the office who is at the door. You may be asked to state your name prior to entering the building.
- **What if my child is going to miss school because of illness or another excused absence?** Please call the office if your child is not feeling well and/or will not be attending school. Homework can sometimes be sent home with a sibling or left for you to pick-up from the office, if requested.
- **How does Assumption handle bullying?** The staff, parents and students work hard to make our school a safe and caring place to be. Using the “Steps to Respect” lessons, students learn to recognize bullying behavior, develop strategies to refuse bullying whether as a bystander or a target, and learn how to report incidents to prevent them from re-occurring.
- **Is there a way to share uniforms?** Uniforms that have been outgrown by students can be found in the back room of the cafeteria. Uniforms can be taken or added to the collection as needed – you do not have to contribute to take an item! This is a free service!
- **Where should I purchase my child’s uniform?** Many stores in the area sell uniform clothing that meets our school requirements (Target, JC Penney, Sears, Meijer). However, we do have an exclusive account with Land’s End. Just click on the Land’s End icon on our school website or use the Preferred School Program code 900134917 to ensure your purchases will be credited toward the school. Assumption School receives 6% back on all purchases. Please note that Assumption

School must be mentioned at the time of purchase, as Land's End will not give credit to our school after a purchase has been made. Land's End can also add our logo to shirts. Look out for "Penny Logo" sales during the year.

- **Do students have to wear a uniform every day?** Yes, however, throughout the school year, we provide students the opportunity to "dress down". There are three types of non-uniform days:
Dress Up Days= no jeans
Jean Days = no sweatpants
Color Days = Growing in Faith or ABVM spirit wear
See the dress code on our school website for more specifics.
- **What is the "Blast"?** The "Blast" is our email newsletter. It's full of important information. It is our way of keeping the parents informed of schedule changes, upcoming events, appreciation, student highlights and more. If you aren't receiving the "Blast", please inform the office. Usually, the "Blast" is delivered weekly to your inbox on Wednesday and Friday.
- **Can I eat lunch with my children?** Yes! Lunch/Recess is scheduled from 11:55pm to 12:35pm. Lunch times are staggered. Fourth-eighth graders eat together the first half of the lunch period (11:55-12:15) and have recess the second half. Students in grades K-third grade have recess for the first half and eat together from 12:15-12:35pm.
- **Does Assumption School have a yearbook?** Yes! This is a collaborative effort from staff, students and parents. We are always in need of good pictures. If you have a picture(s), please contact the school office and they will be able to give you the contact information for submission. The best way to submit pictures is digitally. Order forms for the yearbook will come home with your child along with a friendly reminder in the "Blast". They are typically delivered the first day of the following school year.
- **Does Assumption School have a student/family directory?** Yes! Look for it during the first few weeks of school. The directory has all the families listed with addresses, phone numbers, and email address. Also, class lists, teacher's contact information and the daily school schedule are included. This is a great resource!
- **What is VIRTUS?** The "Protecting God's Children" program was developed as part of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* adopted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002. All dioceses and parishes are required to establish a safe environment for all children. The "Protecting God's Children" program is provided as a vehicle to help accomplish this important mission. Any adult in a paid or volunteer capacity that is working with or around children in the school, church or any extra-curricular activity related to the school or church, **MUST TAKE THIS TRAINING AS REQUIRED BY OUR DIOCESE.** Teachers, Catechists, classroom parent volunteers, sports coaches, Children's Liturgy volunteers, recess/lunch supervisors are all examples. Parishes around the Diocese of Grand Rapids hold VIRTUS "Protecting God's Children" training sessions. If you are in need of training, contact the school office for assistance.
- **What happens in an emergency?** In the event of an emergency, all doors will be locked – classroom and exit/main doors. Teachers and students remain in a safe place in the classroom until an "all clear" is given. Students and staff will practice the Lockdown procedures several times each school year. If possible, parents will be notified via email of such an occurrence.
- **How do I make tuition payments?** Assumption School has partnered with Smart Tuition. Each family needs to register at www.enroll.smarttuition.com to set-up their payment schedule. Any family having difficulty paying their tuition at any time is asked to contact the school office. Assistance may be available.

- **Does Assumption School have a lunch program?** Yes! Assumption School has its own lunch program that is extremely popular with the students. Each week, a sign-up sheet is sent via e-mail for the lunches the following week. Simply click on which day your child would like lunch, based on the menu. Each lunch is \$2.75. Parents pay directly to Rev Trak. There is no fee this year for this service. Parents will have control on how much to put on each of your children's accounts. When their balance is \$5.00 or below the parent will get an email notification. Students can also purchase milk a la carte. A microwave is available for those bringing in their own lunch.
- **Does Assumption School offer a before- and after- care program?** Yes! We are proud to offer a very flexible and affordable program for parents who need additional help before and after school. Our before- and after-school care programs are housed in our school. No need to transport your child anywhere else! They can enjoy playing with their classmates and finishing homework in a supervised environment. All before- and after-school care programs run from 7:00 a.m. to the time that the school starts (\$6/day), and from the time school ends until 6:00 p.m. (\$9/day). There is a yearly \$30.00 registration fee. Sign-up forms are available in the school office.

Classroom

- **What is the role of the room parent?** Room parents are responsible for organizing the Halloween and Valentine's Day parties. The Room parent coordinates the needs of the party with the teacher and all class parents. Room parents, as a group, are also responsible for organizing Field Day. In the past, Field Day takes place just before the last day of school.
- **Who organizes the Christmas Party?** To help alleviate the business of the season, Christmas parties are usually celebrated individually with teachers and their class.
- **What if my child needs extra help or is struggling academically?** Every Assumption teacher goes above and beyond to ensure the academic success of each child. If you feel that your child needs additional support it's important that you communicate with the teacher. All of our teachers are willing to meet with students before or after school to provide the extra support needed. We also have on staff an Intervention teacher. This role is to proactively respond to the learning needs of all learners when a learner faces a pattern of academic struggles after classroom intervention has taken place. The Intervention teacher continuously consults with teachers to suggest intervention strategies to utilize within the classroom to help struggling learners make good progress. This is called Tier I intervention. If the student continues to struggle, Tier II intervention merits more individualized instructional time provided in small group and/or on an individual basis. If a student shows a pattern of strengths and weaknesses defined by special education criteria, Tier III, this may lead to a referral to Rockford Public Schools Special Education services.
- **What is the homework hotline and how does it work?** Each day, teachers record a message on the homework hotline that enables students to call and check on assignments. Each teacher's homework hotline number is listed on the front of the directory. (361-5483 ext. 30(grade#)) Example: 2nd grade homework hotline is 361-5483 ex 302.
- **Are there special privileges for student birthdays?** Yes! Treats can be brought to the classroom and the honored student can dress in non-uniform, appropriate clothes. Also, a student or family may donate a book to the library in honor of a student's birthday or any other special occasion. A child may take a book home from the birthday book shelf in the school library. If the parent approves of the student's choice, payment for the book is sent to school. The donor's name and birth date are placed in the front of the book.

- **What supplies are needed for my student?** Each teacher has a list of requested supplies. This list can be found on the website at: www.assumptionbvm.com and the list will be sent home with the students at the end of each year. Donations of Kleenex and paper towel are always greatly appreciated.
- **How do I find out if my child is missing any assignments?** If a child is missing an assignment, communication with the teacher can happen via phone or email. Some teachers send home missing work notices that need to be signed by the parent. Every child in grades 2nd- 8th is asked to record their homework in an assignment notebook. Notebooks can be purchased for \$4.50 from your child's teacher.
- **Can students bring food and drink in the classroom?** All grades have a morning snack period. We ask that the snack be healthy (crackers, fruit, breakfast bar). Students can also bring a water bottle filled with water only to have during class.

Our Faith

- **When do altar servers begin training?** Usually in 4th grade, students learn how to become an altar server. Deacon Peter Conigliaro trains interested youth. If you would like to become an altar server or to find out when the next training session will occur, contact Deacon Peter at 616-949-6577 or DeaconPeterABVM@gmail.com
- **Will students prepare for the Sacraments during school hours?** Yes! 2nd grade students prepare for and complete the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Eighth graders prepare for and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Classroom teachers along with Cheryl Sokolowski of the ABVM Religious Education office coordinate these sacraments. All the Sacraments are parish based and students from Assumption and the Religious Education receive their sacraments together as one united parish. If a child has missed a sacrament, contact Cheryl Sokolowski for information regarding completion.
- **Is there a Youth Group at Assumption Church?** Yes! The Youth Minister is Beth Baltruczak. She can be reached at 361-5483 x258 or YouthMinister@assumptionbvm.com. This is open to all youth! They meet on Sunday evenings in the school gym following the 5:30 PM mass. They plan social nights, activities, bible studies, teaching moments and retreats.
- **Can parents attend school Mass on Friday mornings?** Yes! Students sit with their classmates and teacher toward the front of the church. Younger students are paired with older students to help them during Mass. Parents sit in back of church behind the classes of students. Classes take turns each week planning and leading the Liturgy.
- **What other prayer opportunities are available for parents?** Parents are welcome to pray the rosary at 8:30am just before Friday Mass begins at 9am. Parents are also invited to come to the church on Monday mornings after drop-off to individually pray on behalf of our school, church, students and staff. Additionally, 24-hour Eucharistic Adoration is available beginning on Thursday mornings at 7:30am through Mass on Friday morning. Last, there is a coffee club one morning a month when parents meet together for coffee. Watch the blast for info, as the day/location alternates between the church and school to accommodate varying schedules.
- **Can I attend Morning Prayer with my children?** Yes! Each morning Mr. Apkarian greets the students with daily encouragement. The Pledge of Allegiance is said along with a brief student led Liturgy.

School Day Opportunities

- **What does the Student Council do?** Student Council is made up of student-elected male and female representative from 5th-8th grades. Members are responsible for some of the planning and the leadership roles during Catholic Schools Week. The students are often asked to lead prayer during special celebrations. The Student Council meets with Mr. Apkarian about ideas for school improvement and reports back to the class following the meetings. Inside the classroom, Student Council members are role models for the class and serve in various roles, depending on the grade level. In sixth grade, they organize and plan the activities and volunteers for our holiday parties and take lead roles when we have guests in the classroom. They are often the eyes and ears on the playground and in the hallways, letting teachers and staff know if there is a student in need of assistance.
- **What is a Middle School Friend or Reading Buddy?** Students in preschool, kindergarten and 1st grade are paired up with middle school students to help with reading and special activities. They frequently sit with each other at Mass on Fridays. On some occasions during the year, middle school friends and the younger students exchange inexpensive gifts.
- **What is the Student Credit Union?** Students in 5th grade run a real credit union one day a week during the school year. This program is run just like a drive through bank. Students can open an account and make deposits and withdrawals. The program's main goal is to promote saving and to give the students real life experience with money.
- **What is Survival Swim?** 4th grade students participate in Survival Swim as a way to teach water safety. As residents of Michigan, we have many bodies of water near us and this program helps prepare students in water safety strategies.
- **What is the DARE program?** This is a drug and alcohol prevention program. Students in 5th grade participate in the DARE program each year which includes lessons, a visit from a DARE trained police officer, and a student essay contest. DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) is a highly acclaimed program that gives kids the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs and violence.
- **What other classes are available?** Music, library, art, physical education, Spanish and computer. Some of these teachers are Rockford Public School teachers and some are employed by Assumption. A current schedule is available from the school office.
- **Does Assumption School have a band?** Yes. Students in 5th – 8th grade are invited to participate. The 5th grade students meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays during recess time. The 6th/7th/8th band students meet on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during their recess time. There are 2 concerts each year at West Catholic High School (Christmas and spring). Our band instructor is Mr. Josh Doe. There is an extra fee to participate, as well as the cost of the instrument. The participation fee is approximately \$200 with the Home and School Committee contributes to each student's total cost. There is financial assistance available for families.
- **When does the Spelling Bee happen and what grades participate?** The Spelling Bee happens in December with grades 4th-8th participating. A list of words will be handed out to students for studying. Classroom competitions will take place for those students interested in participating. Finalists move on to our school competition, then to a local competition and then to a regional and state competition.
- **What is the Safe Touch Program?** The Safe-Touch Program is taught by the classroom teacher using sensitive, developmentally appropriate materials to offer children the opportunity to learn and practice safety skills to help protect them in potentially dangerous situations. Parents will be notified before the lessons are taught and are given the opportunity for their child to be excluded from these lessons.

- **What is the National Geographic Bee?** Each year, Assumption School participates in the National Geographic Bee using materials prepared by the National Geographic Society. The contest is designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject and increase public awareness about geography. Schools with students in grades 4th-8th are eligible for this entertaining and challenging test of geographic knowledge.
- **What extra writing opportunities are available to middle school students?** Middle school students enter their writing such as compositions, stories, poetry or essays to various competitions throughout the year. The “My American Hero” Essay Contest is open to 8th grade students across the state of Michigan each year. All Assumption School 8th graders participate.
- **What is MAP testing?** The Measures of Academic Progress or MAP testing is the standardized testing now incorporated by the Diocese of Grand Rapids, Office of Catholic Schools in all the Catholic schools in our diocese. It is a nationally normed test created by the Northwest Evaluation Association or NWEA. Grades 2-8 participate. You can find the dates of MAPs testing on our school calendar. We encourage all students to make sure they are well rested and ready to do their best during testing week.
- **Will there be school pictures taken?** Yes! Pictures are taken in the fall and spring. Picture Day is considered a “dress up” day, which means students can dress up in non-uniform, appropriate clothes. See the school calendar for dates.
- **What is Battle of the Books?** Battle of the Books takes place in 5th grade. Students voluntarily read a prepared list of books and then test their knowledge of the books against other schools in a “bowl” type event. The school library purchases and houses the collection of "Battle Books". After a class competition, a team is chosen to represent Assumption School in the local area competition.

Just for Middle School

- **Does my middle schooler need a gym uniform?** Yes, all middle school students are asked to wear a special gym uniform; grey T-shirt & royal blue athletic shorts. An order form for the uniform is on our website and can be turned into the office. There may be gym uniforms in our uniform exchange area. Students are encouraged to wear appropriate athletic shoes to gym class.
- **What grades use lockers?** Our middle school students (6th-8th) are assigned a locker. Each locker has a combination lock already mounted on it. If for some reason you need to get into your child’s locker, any of the 3 middle school teachers can assist you. Locker ladders or hanging cloth shelves can be purchased at the Open House and re-used each year to organize books and supplies. Several Assumption graduates continue to use them even in their High School lockers.
- **Which grades switch classes?** The middle school students will rotate through a schedule that includes Mrs. Rybicki for math and social studies, Mrs. Sack for science and religion, and Mrs. Sochacki for Language Arts.

After School Activities

- **What is Odyssey of the Mind?** Teams of students develop a solution to one of five long-term problems and are trained how to respond to spontaneous problems. The teams compete at the regional competition in Greenville in the winter. If they do well, they go on to the state and world competitions. This group is based on parent and student interest each year. Our 2013 team went to the World Competition!

- **What is Science Olympiad?** Mrs. Sack coaches interested students. Each year, students in grades 6th-8th work after school on different science topics and challenges, such as, building rockets or learning about fossils. In the spring, GVSU hosts the state-wide competition where our students compete against schools from all over the state. Science Olympiad is a national non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of K-12 science education.
- **What is MATHCOUNTS?** Mrs. Rybicki coaches interested students in 6th-8th grade. MATHCOUNTS inspires excellence, confidence and curiosity in middle school students through fun and challenging math programs. MATHCOUNTS is providing today's students with the foundation for success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers. It is a national enrichment club and competition program that promotes middle school mathematics achievement.
- **Does Assumption School have a Theatre Club?** YES! In March of 2013, Assumption School had its first-ever school musical – Disney's "Beauty and the Beast, Jr."! In 2014, students performed "Willy Wonka, Jr.". And, in 2015, the Theatre Club will perform Peter Pan, Jr.! Thanks to generous ABVM parents, Mr. and Mrs. McGee, students experienced auditions, singing and acting in a Christ-centered way. Students from pre-school to 8th grade are welcome to participate in either performance or backstage help.
- **Does Assumption offer Boy Scouts?** Yes, **for grades 1-4, Cub Scout Troop 3283:** www.pack3283.org Pack 3283 of ABVM Catholic church is part of the of the eagle spirit district of the Gerald R. Ford Council that covers west Michigan. The pack has boys from Belmont Elementary school, Assumption School, Chandler Woods Charter Academy and All Saints Academy. Boys from other schools are always welcome, as well. For info about Pack 3283, please contact Melissa Pakiela at 581-7242 or melissa.pakiela@kentcountymi.gov or John Walsh at 301-9843. **For boys in grades 5-12: Boy Scout Troop 283:** www.grfctroop283.org Troop 283 is a growing Boy Scout Troop Chartered by Knights of Columbus; Bishop Kevin M. Britt Council 13526 of Belmont, MI. With the support of the Knights of Columbus, Troop 283 was established March 17, 2009. We also welcome the support of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church and School, where we conduct our meetings. The Troop is composed of boys from the Belmont, Northview and Rockford areas, including Belmont Elementary, Assumption School, Chandler Woods Academy and North Rockford Middle Schools. Contact Pete Luczyk at Luczyks@hotmail.com for more info.
- **Does Assumption offer Girl Scouts?** Yes! Girl Scout Daisies meet once a month after school. If you are new to Girl Scouts or have any questions, please contact Annette Rybicki (troop leader; 6th grade teacher). **In grades 2-3** - Girl Scout Brownies meet for 1 - 1/2 hours twice a month after school. Contact Karen Roersma (armamak@aol.com) or Julie Tighe (julie.tighe@comcast.net) for more info. **Girls in grades 4-5-** Junior Troop 3770 Contact Karen Roersma (armamak@aol.com) or Julie Tighe (julie.tighe@comcast.net) for more info.
- **How does the sports program work and what sports are available?** All students in 5th-8th grades can participate in a variety of team sports; such as soccer, football, cross country, basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, baseball, softball and track. ABVM belongs to the GRACEAC league (Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council). www.graceac.com Our athletes may be combined with another school in our league to form one team. We may also host games in our gym for schools other than our own school teams. We have an Athletic Director that coordinates team schedules, coaching and our facilities use. Before each season a sign-up notice will come home with the students informing you of the sports being offered. All coaches are volunteers. Any student that participates must have a current yearly (dated after 4/1 of the previous school year) physical form on file. Physical Forms can be found on our

website. Currently, Assumption Boosters, AABC, is able to provide this athletic program free of charge to our students. Coaches are expected to complete VIRTUS training.

Parish and School Leadership

- **What is the Home and School Committee?** H&S is comparable to a parent-teacher organization. H&S holds fundraisers that raise money to help Assumption students have some of the “extras” throughout the year in the form of playground equipment, new library books, speakers, refreshments at school events, etc.
- **What is the Parish Council?** This group advises Father concerning the goals and policies of the parish as they affect spiritual and pastoral activities.
- **What is the Finance Council?** This group of men and women advise and assist Father in providing fiscal and physical resources necessary for the parish to accomplish the goals and objectives set for the parish via the Pastoral Council.
- **What is the Board of Education?** The Assumption Parish Board of Education is an advisory board for the School, Preschool, Religious Education and youth ministry programs. Membership and meetings are open to registered members of the parish and/or parents who have children enrolled in a formal education program in the parish. The date/time of the Board meetings are published in the parish bulletin, the parish monthly calendar, the school “Blast” and school monthly calendar. To address the Board, a person is required to contact the Board Chairperson, the Director of Religious Education or the School Principal at least six working days prior to the scheduled meeting so the topic may be placed on the agenda. The Board chairperson may impose time limitations on any presentation to the Board.
- **What is the Assumption Education Endowment Fund?** The Assumption Education Endowment Fund supports and helps to ensure the continuance of Assumption's high quality Catholic School and Religious Education programs by making needed tuition grants to families who currently have limited financial resources. The AEEF holds several fundraisers annually and helps donors establish planned gifts like bequests and life income gifts to grow our endowment in support of our mission. Additional information can be obtained in the rectory office, or by accessing our web page: http://www.assumptionbvm.com/parish/site_flash/AEEF.html
- **What is the AABC/Assumption Athletic Boosters Club?** The AABC is a volunteer-based organization that supports quality athletics by fundraising activities to help school students grow spiritually, mentally and physically, through teamwork, leadership and fair play. AABC hosts the annual “Fly like an Eagle” 5K run/walk each spring and manages newspaper drives throughout the year. It also runs our concession stand in the Family Life Center. The concession stand is open for all sporting events as well as a few other functions. All parents are asked to volunteer in the concession stand if they have a child participating in our sports programs.

The Body of Christ – Fundraising, Giving and Service Opportunities Great and Small

- **What fundraisers take place at Assumption?** We are excited to have a Fundraising Committee to provide visibility into the fundraising efforts as well as organize 1-2 key events each year. More information on this year’s plans will be communicated through the Blast.
- **What is the Paper Gator?** The Paper Gator is a recycling container located at the back of school. Proceeds from the Paper Gator go toward the school environment.

- **What service opportunities are available for students?** Various volunteer opportunities are offered and encouraged. They include: babysitting, set up/tear down/clean up after events, leaf raking for elderly members of the parish and grounds clean-up. Each 8th grade student preparing for Confirmation is asked to volunteer 20 hours for service credit.
- **Who collects Box Tops at ABVM and what does the money go toward?** A Box Tops container is in the office. Money earned goes toward various needs in the school.
- **What is the SCRIP program?** SCRIP is a program that allows you to buy gift cards for popular businesses (i.e. Meijer, Speedway, etc.) that earn a percentage back toward your tuition at ABVM and the Assumption Endowment Fund (AEEF). SCRIP cards are sold Sundays between the 9am and 11am Masses, each Monday morning and Wednesday evenings. SCRIP works great if you can get friends and family to also buy the cards and build your earnings even more! To set-up a SCRIP account simply submit a SCRIP Program Form found on our website or anywhere SCRIP is sold. For your convenience there are 3 ways to purchase SCRIP. 1) Scrip to Go – gift cards on-hand that are ready to be sold on SCRIP days listed above. 2) Special Order SCRIP – order forms are available in the school office. Special orders are ready for pick-up the following Wednesday. 3) Online at www.shopwithscrip.com. All online SCRIP orders are paid for through a Pay Pal account which takes approximately 3 days to establish. The SCRIP website link and forms are available on our school website. The official SCRIP office is located in the back of the Religious Education Building.
- **I have empty printer cartridges. Can they be recycled at ABVM?** Yes! A box near the main doors is available and the cartridges will earn money for our school.
- **What are Meijer Rewards?** Meijer teams up with customers in an effort to help people earn money to go toward a school or organization of their choice. Meijer rewards 1% of a customer's purchases to the chosen institution when they register here: http://www.meijer.com/content/content.jsp?pageName=about_mcr.
- **What service projects take place at Assumption School?** Service projects that are school-wide happen during Christmas, Catholic Schools Week and Lent. Other projects may take place individually among classrooms. In the past, Kids Food Basket, North Kent Service Center and the Consolata Sisters have all been supported by ABVM.
- **What is the Kent County Recycling Challenge?** Each year, the Kent County Recycling Center puts on a recycling challenge. Our school collects specific types of recyclable paper for a given time period. 4th grade students do the collecting and recording. Volunteers transport the collected items to the recycling center.
- **What is the VIP program?** VIP Academic Volunteers are parent volunteers who provide academic support to ABVM students through classroom teacher requests. Please note that the VIP Academic Volunteers are not a part of the designated room parent(s) duties such as organizing classroom parties. If you are interested in becoming a room parent for a certain grade, please personally speak to your child's classroom teacher. The VIP Academic Volunteers have been requested to do a wide range of activities from clerical such as cutting, photocopying, assembling teaching materials... to mentoring individual or small groups of students with math facts, computer-based programs, academic tutoring support, handwriting, reading partners... to active involvement such as leading art projects with classes or recycling missions. If you are interested in directly impacting the learning of ABVM students, consider joining the VIP Academic Volunteer distribution list. Every time a teacher posts a request, you can choose to volunteer based on your availability and schedule. If interested, you respond to the e-mail and the teacher who requested the assistance will contact you. If you are not interested, simply delete the e-mail request - no obligation to volunteer unless you are interested. Once the

position is filled, the teacher will create a new e-mail post stating that the position has been filled.

- **How do I get involved in volunteer opportunities?** Complete and return the volunteer form that will be sent home at the beginning of the school year that lists volunteer opportunities. You can also let the teachers and office staff know you're interested in helping. Every bit of support is greatly appreciated.
- **Who takes care of the church and school grounds?** Mr. Bill Fix takes care of all our facilities, maintenance and grounds. To assist him we have two gardening groups. Saint Dorothy's takes care of the church gardens and the Saint Phocus Group maintains the gardens for the school. Both committees are always looking for volunteers.

Special Events

- **What is the school Open House/Supply Drop-off Day?** The school will notify you of a special day, just before school starts for students to visit their new teacher and classroom. This is also a time for students to bring any supplies that they want to lighten the load for the first day. Middle school students are assigned a locker and can practice the combination. "Locker ladders" are soft organizational shelves that hang in the lockers. Students can purchase a locker ladder during the Open House and set-up their supplies. Locker ladders, once purchased can be re-used each year and many students use them in their High School lockers as well.
- **What is Parent Orientation / Curriculum Night?** At the start of each year, a parent orientation goes through the high-level policies and procedures of school. That same night, each classroom has 20-minute sessions to discuss classroom expectations and key learnings for the year. This night is also a way to learn how to get involved by visiting the many organization booths located around the school gym.
- **What is the Welcome Back Cook-out?** This cook-out serves as a way to welcome everyone back to school in early fall. This event is also a great way for new families to get to know others. The Assumption Home and School Committee hosts this free event with hotdogs and drinks. Families are asked to bring a dish to pass.
- **What is the Scholastic Book Fair?** This is a school book fair that benefits our library. It is held during Parent/Teacher conferences. Shopping for students and parents is available during the school day and in the evenings at conferences.
- **What is the St. Ignatius Book Fair?** This book fair sells Catholic-based books at both the school and church. A wide variety of adult books as well as some children's selections are available. Proceeds benefit our school library.
- **What are Movie Nights?** To raise money for their class trip in the spring, movie nights are held twice a year in the FLC as a fundraiser by the 8th graders. Movie nights are a great family-friendly event. Raffles are held for prize baskets, popcorn is served, refreshments are available for purchase and the movie of the evening is always rated for younger children. Families can bring sleeping bags, pillows and/or chairs to relax on while watching the movie. PJ's are welcome! The cost is donation only - a suggested \$5/person or \$20/family is graciously accepted.
- **What is Catholic Schools Week?** CSW is similar to spirit week, as we celebrate our treasured Catholic faith and school. Each day there is a different dress-up theme and many activities are planned during the week. In the past, for example, a pancake breakfast for the students was served by the teachers and there was an all-school Pando sledding trip.
- **What is Donuts with Dads?** In January, dads are treated to donuts and coffee with their child. These mornings are a way to say thank you to our parents and spend a little quality family time

together before heading off to work and school. If dads aren't available, grandparents, aunts and uncles are welcome.

- **What is Santa Secret Shop?** Students are given an envelope before the shopping day that asks who they are shopping for and how much money they can spend. Items are truly reduced in price and the students really enjoy buying gifts for those special someone's (items are typically less than \$5). Volunteers are needed to make the day go smoothly – setting up the shop, wrapping gifts, shopping with younger students and handling the money are all included in the day's work.
- **When is the Santa Breakfast?** the Santa Breakfast is hosted by the Assumption Athletic Boosters Club and the Knights of Columbus. Each year, the breakfast is held the first Sunday after the Thanksgiving weekend. There are activities for the kids, special treats and a visit from the big guy himself – complete with a photo opportunity! A donation to the Knights is kindly accepted.
- **What is the Art Fair/Fine Arts Night?** Each winter, students are asked to create an original piece of art to be entered into the Art Fair. Pieces are judged by staff as well as the student body and awarded ribbons. Principal's Choice items are displayed in the school office for one school year.
- **What is Songfest?** 4th graders from our diocese practice the same group of songs each school year and then meet for one recital (Songfest) each spring to sing together the songs they have been practicing. In past years, Songfest has been held at West Catholic High School. This is a free event and very enjoyable!
- **What is Muffins with Mom?** In May, Moms are invited to have a muffin and coffee with their student(s). These mornings are a way to say thank you to our parents and spend a little quality family time together before heading off to work and school. If Moms aren't available, grandparents, aunts and uncles are welcome.
- **What is the spring awards ceremony?** The ceremony recognizes student academic successes in 5th-8th grades. Special awards such as the Mercian Award, Steven May award and others are presented to accomplished students. Some of these awards can be seen adorning the walls of Assumption School.
- **What is the student book exchange?** Each spring, just before school ends, the school library has an annual student book exchange. Students are allowed to bring three books within their reading level to exchange. Whatever level you bring in to exchange is the reading level you can chose from. This is a great way to get new reading material for the summer.
- **What is Field Day?** This is a special day to celebrate the end of the school year. We begin the morning with a whole-school group prayer at the Mary Rose Garden. Classes K-5 rotate through the super-fun and sometimes wacky parent-planned activity stations. Stations are set up in the Family Life Center, open soccer fields and on the north side of church. Breaks are provided for lunch and snacks. Each child will be asked to purchase a school box lunch. Sunscreen and play clothes that can get wet are recommended.
- **What is the 8th grade talent show?** Each spring, the 8th grade class organizes and performs a variety show showcasing student talent, humorous skits, and family fun entertainment for the ABVM students and parents. Don't miss this event!
- **Is there an 8th grade graduation?** Yes, the graduation ceremony takes place at Assumption Church. The evening begins with Mass and is followed by the graduation ceremony. Afterwards everyone is invited downstairs for refreshments provided by the 7th grade class and their parents. This is always a special night. The 8th graders dress in their best and enjoy a time of reflection, prayer, and one last pep talk from our principal, Mr. Apkarian.