Celebrating ears

THE CELTIC MAGAZINE

5th edition *Twenty 22*



Dear Parents, Alumni, Parish Members and Friends of St. Nicholas School

Our "why" was originally formed by the Sisters of Mercy 70 years ago with their vision to bring Christ to young children. We honor those who laid the groundwork for offering the highest quality education while instilling Catholic values. Today, we see a school that offers exceptional opportunities for our students in the same fashion as our founders but also recognizes the growing needs of our community. Our faculty and staff are committed to fostering a culture that exuberates the goodwill of all that is possible. As we turn the page, there is a renewed energy and fire for continuing to create the next - generation St. Nicholas Catholic School; a school that innovates and accelerates learning while also remaining true to its core values.

Our annual magazine, The Celtic, is in its fifth publication. You can read the wonderful news happening around our school campus, you will view our school performance in the face of adversity during a pandemic, and you will also hear from our alumni who are testaments of our mission. Catholic education at its core, yields not only students who are prepared for the rigorous high school environments, but who also realize the profound impact of using their gifts and resources to serve others within our school neighborhoods and in a global response. This year our school theme is focused on truth and integrity. The outside surroundings are plagued with opportunities to test our students' moral courage. We are committed to explicitly teaching and fostering a culture based on Jesus' example of how to live a life of integrity. These important lessons in humanity occur every day in our classrooms and in partnership with our parents. Our enrollment continues to be strong especially as new families resonate with our mission and see the value of our offerings. We continue to rely on funds raised by our fall Annual Appeal to directly impact the opportunities for our students. With these precious resources, we support families who are balancing their basic needs as they desire a Catholic education for their children. Our parish has always supported our mission and we are eternally grateful for the prayers and the response to our call. As we look forward to paving the next 70 years, we know that anything is possible with God. May the peace of Christ remain with you and your family.



With Appreciation,

Jan Dopolizio

Principal St. Nicholas Catholic School

Recognizing 70 years of Catholic Education at St. Nicholas Catholic School is indeed a celebration that should inspire great pride and joy in our local Catholic community of St. Nicholas & St. William Parish. Seventy years ago, families of our Catholic Community saw a need for Catholic education for their children. Seventy years ago, in 1953, this vision became a reality.

Fr. Reilly, the Dominican Sisters and later Fr. Meade and the Sisters of Mercy were pioneers in setting the solid foundations of St. Nicholas Catholic School 70 years ago. It is now our turn to continue to build upon this rich legacy of Catholic education that has been tried and true for over 200 years.

This rich foundation of Catholic education takes on the holistic approach to learning. It is a transformation that we guide intentionally, through engaged relationships between our faculty and students, and structured activities outside the classroom that help define our students' character. Catholic education is seen as not merely the imparting of knowledge, but the formation of a Christian.

Catholic education also recognizes that a complete school is an extension of the family. The lives of the family and of the parish are intimately linked; parents and teachers, church and school form an integral part in the holistic development of the children.

To keep this legacy alive, I am asking that you consider a gift to our Annual Appeal this year. Each gift, no matter the size, is a statement of your belief in our mission and I encourage all members of the parish to support the Annual Appeal.

With gratitude and prayers, I thank you for your support in embracing our School, our Church and our mission.

Celebrating 70 Years of Catholic Education





Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. John L. Doncini

Pastor St. Nicholas & St. William Catholic Parish

In 1969, B.J. and Bebe Cassin made the decision to move their four kids from Moraga to Los Altos Hills, to start his company - Xidex Corporation. They guickly joined St. Nicholas Parish, always knowing they wanted a Catholic education for their children. After several years enjoying their time as a part of the St. Nicholas Parish community, B.J. and Bebe moved three of their children to the school. Their eldest, Joe, continued with the public school as he was starting high school at that time. Robbie joined in 7th, Kelley in 4th and Jon in 1st Grade.

"Joining St. Nicholas Parish and then the school was the best plan for our family. All our kids were well prepared for high school and enjoyed the extra-curricular activities St. Nicholas had to offer."

– B.J. Cassin

It wasn't until a couple of years later, that B.J. and Bebe decided to expand their family with their daughter Catherine. Jon just happened to be in Sister Catherine's class at the time and was very excited they shared the name Perhaps his sister would end up a nun?

B.J. and Bebe were very active parents in the school community for many years. B.J. and Robbie helped paint the gym. B.J. and his oldest, Joe, coached his kids on the basketball teams and Bebe was always helping as a room parent and with school events. They have always loved this school, the community, and made life-long friends with those they met. When their son, Robbie, was in a serious car accident during his junior year in high school, it was the St. Nicholas community that helped them get through the

hardest of times. The Cassin Family will always be extremely grateful for the 50+ years they've had with this community and the beautiful relationships they made along the way.

"St. Nicholas holds a special place in my heart. It was there that I built friendships that have lasted over 40 years. I wanted my kids to be a part of the same tradition that I benefited from a welcoming community that guided Catholic values and was committed to academic excellence."

"I have always loved the St. Nicholas community. It has always been a very tight community since I went there. I know my parents gained lifetime friends a I have as well. My class was very close and continues to be. I keep in regular touch with many of my classmates. We are so thrilled that our kids attend St. Nicholas now and are getting a great Catholic education like I did, and they get to do that with their cousins. The school leadership and teachers have been amazing too, especially the last couple of years."

B.J. and Bebe have cherished their time as a part of the St. Nicholas community with six grandchildren having graduated and four currently attending. It has been incredibly special to see them benefit from the same kind of friendships B.J. and Bebe made and have cherished for so many years. St. Nicholas is more than a special place with its focus on the importance of the community and faith. Thank you.

"We are truly blessed."

- Kelley Cassin Surdey

- Bebe Cassin

– Jon Cassin







A Look at 70 Years





The first day of school at St. Nicholas.



1978

The 6th Grade class yearbook page with

1992



Mr. Guzman's 1st year at St. Nicholas and he still works at St. Nicholas, keeping our campus beautiful.

1999

1953

1961

1972

The first Christmas program at St. Nicholas School, featured shepherds, David Osler, Stephen Moulds, angels, Barbara Davis, Janet Broughton, & Christine Boscacci, Joseph played by Steven Hall and Mary played by Mary Bator.



The faculty and staff yearbook photo.



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St. Nicholas Jr. High, hard at work on a service project.

2004





St. Nicholas 8th Grade Class with Mr. K.

2009

Our faculty is proud to be a part of our 70th Anniversary celebration.

2022



Our Middle School students now have lockers in the quad.

2018





Learning Then & Now



Catholic education knew no boundaries and offered education to anyone who sought a universal desire to learn Catholic values while obtaining an excellent education. This was the typical class size in the 1960s & 1970s, and can be seen across the Bay Area, with upwards of 45 students engaged in a classroom with ONE teacher.

Although this was the direction many years ago, we now know that in order to personalize instruction and help all children succeed, a departure from the norms would need to happen. A new direction prioritized individualized support which ultimately led to limiting our class sizes. Today, you will see optimal sizing for the number of students within each classroom that offers many advantages:

- Prioritizes personalized learning
- Offers opportunities for students to connect with their classmates that have the similar interests
- Expands their awareness of different perspectives

Another departure from years past - there is abundant evidence in organizing teachers into collaborative teams in which they work together

to achieve common goals for which members are mutually accountable. Improving student achievement requires the synergistic effect of all who are working towards common goals. In days past, a less effective approach for raising student achievement was evaluating individual teachers and providing feedback and measuring individual progress. The focus now is not only how it was taught but did students learn.

At St. Nicholas Catholic School our weekly schedules prioritize teachers working collaboratively with teams examining evidence of students learning, and strategies for improving results. Our teams in Science, Math, and English Language Arts discuss skill articulation, data performance and how to share best practices. Seventy years ago, the sophisticated computer platforms that offer our students a rich and engaging learning environment did not exist. In these critical collaboration team meetings, teachers support each other to understand how to utilize these tools in the most effective way.



We also know how to better support students when they have made a decision that is not in alignment with the school's expectations. In years past, excessive writing sentences on a chalkboard or even the use of corporal punishment were the go-to strategies. Now we use restorative justice practices to help students recognize the impact of their decisions and we provide opportunities to help them repair the damages. In every classroom at St. Nicholas School, morning meetings are conducted each day to help build community and remind students of the collective community agreements that form the basis of how their classroom will honor each other and the workspace.

We also have time and space areas inside a classroom so students know where to go to reflect on their choices and contemplate how to move forward. We embrace peer conflict managers who help individuals learn how to resolve differences by listening and empathizing with how to render a mutual solution.

All these measures activate agency and help our students become more keenly aware of their actions, and fosters empathy so they can successfully navigate the world beyond the doors of St. Nicholas School.







Measuring Predictability of Educational Success

Research shows that reading ability by the end of third grade can predict educational success. Educators pay close attention to 9 year old literacy rates.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Education shared data that across the nation, math and reading scores for 9-year-olds in the U.S. fell between 2020 and 2022 by a level not seen in decades.

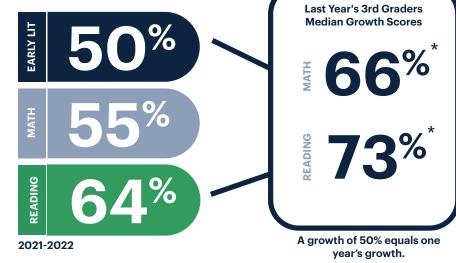
At St. Nicholas Catholic School, we did deep into early literacy instruction, consulting with several language specialists to assist students and use a multitude of curricula to address all facets of early reading. Our efforts are paying off.

In 2021-22, our 3rd graders' scores in reading and math surged - solidifying their academic future. In addition, our aggregate scores for the school showed no signs of learning loss.

"Catholic schools need innovative ways of uniting research with best practices so that teachers can serve the whole person in a process of integral human development. In short, this means forming the head, hands, and heart together: preserving and enhancing the link between learning, doing, and feeling in the noblest sense. In this way, you will be able to offer not only an excellent academic curriculum but also a coherent vision of life inspired by the teachings of Christ."

-Dope Francis

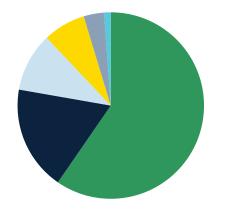
St. Nicholas School Whole School Aggregate Median Growth



*Renaissance STAR Assessment System data May 2022

2021-22 St. Nicholas School Total Income: \$4.308.192

- Tuition & Fees: \$3,566,418
- Fundraising & Annual Appeal: \$292,051
- Endowment Fund: \$77.000
- Parish Subsidy: \$65,000
- Other Income: \$294.879
- St. Nicholas / St. William 2nd Collection & Online Giving: \$12,844



2021-22 St. Nicholas School Total Expenses: \$4.308.192

- Salaries & Benefits: \$2,568,277
- Capital Reserve: \$781,738
- Facilities & Depreciation: \$438.834
- Instruction: \$317.399
- Administration: \$151,944
- Financial Aid Reserve: \$50,000

"St. Nicholas School's emphasis on executive function as displayed during assembly and mass is one of a kind! The confidence my girls felt being able to lead assembly despite being in the lower grades set a precedent for them to be fearless in public speaking."

-Katherine Kennedy Allen

Current Parent

"St. Nicholas is a great academic school. But the community is what sets this special place apart. I'm glad the traditions live on."

-Roger Quinlan Alumni Parent

"It was a godsend that we found St. Nicholas after having viewed many other schools. St Nicholas has exceeded all of our expectations on academics, community, and spiritual education. Our daughter is thriving in an intimate environment that we know is the best for her."

-Cassandra Owens

Current Parent





The Annual Appeal is strictly focused on raising funds for Tuition Assistance, The Mary O'Shea Scholarship and The Endowment Fund. These critical resources allow our school to continue to develop in the nature of what our founding leaders had intended. *We appreciate all gifts toward helping us achieve this mission.*

Tuition Assistance Program

This fund covers emergency assistance for families that experience some sort of crisis and partial assistance for families that need help with tuition. Standing together, the collective actions of our St. Nicholas Community who participated in last year's Annual Appeal together with our supportive St. Nicholas and St. William Catholic Parish were able to help 35 students receive a Catholic education from this program.

The Endowment Fund

This fund is a gift that gives forever. Our Endowment Fund has a current value of over \$1.6 million with earnings that support our operating budget. As the principal of the endowment fund is never touched, the fund generates consistent and guaranteed interest income for our school. The predictability of this income allows us to plan for the future and sustain the level of excellence for which our school is known.

The Mary O'Shea Scholarship Fund

Annual Appeal

This fund supports students who are otherwise unable to attend St. Nicholas School due to financial constraints. A gift here honors our beloved long-time librarian, Mary O'Shea, who made an extraordinary impact on our school community. When you choose to support this fund, you are choosing to give the gift of Catholic education.

Gift of Stock

When you decide to give a gift of appreciated securities directly to St. Nicholas School rather than selling them and donating the proceeds, you could be creating a dual tax advantage for yourself. The full fair market value of the stock is tax deductible in the year you give the gift (stock owned for more than one year). You pay no capital gains tax on your profit no matter how much the securities have increased in value. The value of your stocks for income tax purposes will be set by the value of the stocks on the day that your gift is made. On actively traded securities, the value is the mean or average between the highest and lowest quoted sales price on the day of your gift. www.dsj.org/ways-to-give/stock-transfers

Double Your Impact - Employee Match Programs

Many corporations match employee donations to St. Nicholas School. To find out more please contact:

Diana Szelong:

650-941-4056 x2 dianaszelong@stnicholaslah.com

You can also inquire if your company participates in this program by going to: www.doublethedonation.com/stnick



\$190,000 distributed in Tuition Assistance during the 2021-22 school year.

Average Award: \$5,400

During the pandemic, Catholic schools innovated to meet the needs of their communities when other alternatives were not responsive. St. Nicholas Catholic School itself increased its enrollment by **14% over the past 5 years.**

Annual Appeal Goal **\$150,000**

All donors' names will appear in the following year's Annual Appeal Report, The Celtic. If you wish to remain anonymous, please contact Diana Szelong: dianaszelong@stnicholaslah.com

All gifts are appreciated and tax deductible: Tax I.D. # 94-2734503

Please send checks to: Development Department St. Nicholas Catholic School 12816 El Monte Road Los Altos Hills, CA 94022-4607

Pay by credit card: stnicholaslah.com/ways-to-give



35 Students Directly Impacted by Financial Aid



Gold, Silver and Bronze Level Donors will receive a leaf with your name on it, that will be placed on our donor tree which is in the main building of our campus. *Gold and *Silver Level Donors will be honored at a St. Nicholas Donor Appreciation Reception in the Spring of 2023!

For all questions: Cheryl Caligaris: 650-941-4056 Ext 3 ccaligaris@stnicholaslah.com

Thank you for your support!

Donon Appreciation

The Annual Appeal includes all donations made during the 2021/2022 school year to Tuition Assistance, The Endowment Fund and The Mary O'Shea Scholarship Fund.

Aditva Agarwal & Shriva Gupta Adrian Agogino & Elizabeth Nunez Gilbert Ahrens Grant & Kate Allen Anonymous Hassane Azar & Nariman Flias Bruce Barsi - De La Cruz Foundation Marion & Helen Brown Shawn & Mary Bujalski William & Donna Burke Alex & Elaine Chalfin John Chen Andy Chow & Fiona So John & Kimberly Clendenin Scott & Sara Cohn John & Janet Corrigan Un Kiong & Linda Cu Mary Curry Ari & Julie Delav R.David Dicioccio & Jamie Vogel Valerie Dimmick Ellen G. Donnelly Shelby & Cynthia Douglas Tom & Kristine Dowd James & Kathleen Downey

Xiao Tao Duan & Fang He Matias & Jennifer Duarte Robert & Michelle Dykes Jim & Lori Elsasser **Employees of Claremont Unified School** District Tobias & Bianca Fischli Louis Florit & Mercedes Lam Erik & Audrey Foraker Joan Galli Martha J. Gaspich Robert & Hannah Geiger Yemi Getahun Larry & Judy Guslani Louis Halamek Kevin & Susan Hanley Lynn Hastings Thomas & Judith Hogan Kurt Hubler Dan & Janet Hutcheson Brian Johnsrud & Noelle Gonsalves David & Catherine Juran Carol Kelly Christopher Kim & Andrea Cu John & Betsy Komo

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Gerald Richard & Josephine Leo Richard & Susan Roche Dr. Aaron Rulison Saso High School Prep Sally Schroeder **Donald Scifres** Fernando & Margarida Serpa Marc & Lisa Sidel Josephine Stiene Brian & Janet Thompson Mike & Renee Thompson Andrew & Lynne Tseng Rene Vargas-Voracek & Sarah Hurlston James & Janis Walker Qiyan Wang & Ella Li Cory & Nancy Wilkening Dolores M. Wood Frank & Gema Wood Xing Xia & Ada Yan Nan Xu & Jin Xiong Rex Yang & Eun-Jeong Shin Sam Yen & Eve Farrington Lew Zaretzki & Kim Carahasen John & Angela Zucker

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Armin Nassiri & Kathy Salari

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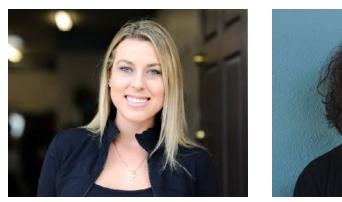
Jason & Liz O'Grady Dustin & Jaclyn Owen David & Eileen Pachkofsky Jeffrey & Kellie Riccoboni Richard & Susan Roche Alain & Barbara Samaha Lisa & Marc Sidel Joe & Diana Szelong Rene Vargas-Voracek & Sarah Hurlston Grea Vosaanian & Amie Roonev Roberta Witte Marc & Eva Zare Louis Zaretzki & Kimberly Carahasen Vaheed & Negin Zolfaghari



Capital Improvements

Investing in the Future Total Spent in the Past 5 Years: **\$1,033,689**

Renovated Two Bathrooms Buddy Benches New Gas Meter Enclosure Canopies In Main Quad and Upper Field New Carpets in all classrooms State of The Art Digital Projectors in all classrooms Safety Locks - all classrooms New Fans in all classrooms Front Entrance Stone Wall Garbage Enclosures Gym Renovation: Refurbished Floors & Sound System Six New Bottle Filling Stations Three New Interactive Large Screen Displays New Jr. High Lockers LED Lighting For All Classrooms Mary's Grotto Makeover New Benches by Lower Field New Desks & Tables in all classrooms New Roofs All Around Our Campus New Whiteboards In All The Classrooms Painted all classrooms Paint Campus Walkways New Windows: K-8th classrooms Paving Primary Side Blacktop Purchased Golf Cart Repaving Parking Lot Large Banner Holder in Parking Lot School Entrance Sign Front Entrance Landscaping



Kerry Lewis 4th, 6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Science Teacher



Sandra Scheiner-Meise Transitional Kindergarten Teacher





Lita Francisco 3rd Grade Instructional Aide/Extended Care



Grant Lucas 8th Grade Teacher

Opportunities always exist at St. Nicholas School. Send us an email if you are interested in joining our team!



Danielle Weinstein 3rd Grade Teacher





Congressional Hearing

Our Alumni Making a Difference

5th Grade Class Droject

Each year our 5th Graders participate in a simulated Congressional Hearing flexing their criticalthinking and cooperative-learning skills. This program focuses on teaching these students the philosophical foundation of American democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The Honorable Judge Manoukian presides over this hearing and asks probing questions once their arguments are completed. There is a degree of improvisation that challenges our Celtics, creating a compelling authentic learning environment.









Isabel Vargas-Hurlston

St. Nicholas Class of 2019

Isabel Vargas-Hurlston attended St. Nicholas Catholic School from Kindergarten to Eighth Grade. She is an analytical student and has always gravitated towards STEM. Now, in high school, Isabel has explored independent science research. These are some of the projects she has worked on for the AGU (American Geophysical Union Annual Meeting): For the 2020 AGU meeting: The Short-Term Effects of Carbon Dioxide on the Cellular Respiration of Ipomoea Batatas (Sweet Potato). In this project, Isabel studied the effect that higher carbon dioxide has on plants, and specifically sweet potato (a hardy and nutritious crop). She used respiration as a measure of plant reaction to increases in ambient carbon dioxide, and found that as carbon dioxide concentration increases, plants respond by emitting less carbon dioxide. Respiration is required for plants to produce energy, so this effect could change what plants are like in the future. For the 2021 AGU meeting: Designing a Compact, Efficient Photobioreactor for the Home or Commercial Production of Algal Biofuel. In this project, she wanted to demonstrate the construction of a photobioreactor for growing algae as a source of biofuel for every household. Isabel engineered and coded a controller for a light strip that could also heat the algae as needed, thus meeting two requirements at once. Afterward, she added various elements for aeration of the algae.





Isabel's Sweet potato project from the 2021 AGU Meeting Project

Where Are They



Joan Weber Loney

Class: 1973 High School: Saint Francis College: UC Santa Barbara

Joan Weber Loney graduated from UCSB with a Bachelor's Degree in Developmental Psychology and subsequently earned her Master's in Education at Wheelock College in Boston. She taught 1st and 5th grades in the Wellesley Public schools before starting a family with her husband Greg, whom she met at Saint Francis. She completed a Master's Degree in Pastoral Ministries at Santa Clara University in 2015. Presently she combines her love of working with children in education and a life-long interest in bird life by serving as the school Librarian and leading the after-school Bird Club at St. Nicholas



Stacey (Osorio) Wilson Class: 1989 High School: Saint Francis College: Cal Poly

Stacev is married to her husband Matt and they have a 9 year old son, Brody. She is an avid sports fan and enjoys spending time with family and friends. Stacey's grandparents are long-time parishioners and ICF members who helped to build the current St. Nicholas school campus. The rich history does not end there; Stacey's family who attended St. Nicholas are; Dad (Dave Osorio), Uncle (Jeff Osorio), Brother (Bryan Osorio), Son (Brody Wilson). Stacey's family who taught at St. Nicholas are: Mom (Lani Osorio), Dad (Dave Osorio), Husband (Matt Wilson). Stacey is currently in her 20th year at St. Nicholas as the 5th grade homeroom teacher, teaches jr. high math, and is the Athletic Director.



Marc & Lisa Sidel

Class: 1993 High School: Saint Francis and Bellarmine College: UCLA and Whitman

Lisa and Marc met in 1st grade while attending St. Nicholas together. They started dating in high school and married once they finished their degrees. Lisa graduated from UCLA with a bachelor degree in Business Economics and then from UCLA School of Law with a juris doctorate. She is the Associate General Counsel at SiTime Corporation. Marc graduated with a bachelors degree in Asian Studies from Whitman College. He is the Community Lead for the Anne Woicicki Foundation. Their two children are now students at Saint Nicholas and they live locally with their dog, Milo, and their two chickens.



Jeff Riccoboni

Class: 2000 High School: St. Francis College: Loyola Marymount University

Jeff grew up in Los Altos, where he loved plaving on various sports teams, and to this day is a huge fan of all of the local Bay Area Sports Teams. After High school, he attended undergrad at Lovola Marymount University and then received a DDS from University of Southern California. After graduation, Jeff followed in his father's footsteps and joined his dental practice in Mountain View. Jeff's wife, Kellie, also grew up in Los Altos, and couldn't be happier to be back raising their two sons in the Bay Area, with their oldest, Robert, attending St. Nicholas.

Von!





Riley Gallivan

Class: 2010 High School: Hong Kong International (grades 9-10) and Woodside Priory School (grades 11-12).

College: Boston University

After graduating from Boston University with a BM in Music Education, Riley spent 8 months in China and the Philippines where she worked as an English and music teacher. When she returned to the US, she decided to change paths and pursue a career in music therapy. In May 2022, Riley finished her music therapy studies at Colorado State University, and she is now completing a clinical music therapy internship at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital. Rilev is excited to be back in the Bay Area, and to support children and their families through music.

For nearly thirty five years we experienced St. Nicholas Church & School, where both of our sons attended and grew up. Nick is a Yale educated Ph.D physicist working in guantum computing at N.I.S.T. Boulder, CO and Ben graduated from George Washington University and works in education accreditation in Washington D.C."

-Paul Frattini Ph N Alumni Parent



SAVE THE DATE



Celebrating 70 Years

St.Nicholas School 70th Anniversary Platinum Auction Gala

> SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2023 CROWNE PLAZA PALO ALTO

St. Nicholas Catholic School

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SAVE THE DATE 2023!

Grandparents Day	Tingð	70th Anniversary Auction Gala.	Class of 2019 Class Reunion	70th Anniversary Carnival	Father Daughter Dance
FEB	FEB	MAR	MAY	MAY	JUNE
3	4	25	5	13	3