ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS

CAMPUS COMMUNICATOR

ST. JOHN PAUL II LITURGICAL CENTER * ST. MARY'S PREPARATORY * POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH



SEPTEMBER 2025



"By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established." ~ Proverbs 24:3-4



What an historic and deeply moving moment at the new altar in the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II when the Most Reverend Edward J. Weisenburger, Archbishop of Detroit (center) was joined at the altar by (left to right) Fr. Bernard Witek (our Polish priest and director of the St. John Paul II Liturgical Center), Deacon Daniel Whalen (St. Mary's Prep Class of 2018; priestly ordination Spring 2026), Bishop Robert Fisher, and Deacon Michael Stach. The amazing improvements to the Shrine Chapel, including relics of St. Faustina and St. Maximillian Kolbe – are centerpieces of our Divine Mercy story. Read more on page 14.

PREP NEWS

HELLO TO OUR ST. MARY'S FAMILY:

As we begin Academic Year 2025-26, our students and staff have "re-populated" campus, and their energy is nothing short of outstanding. Our dedicated faculty and staff celebrated The Solemnity of The Assumption (a Roman Catholic Holy Day of Obligation) together as one at the Shrine Chapel to begin the year in prayer on Friday, August 15, 2025. Freshmen Orientation for our incoming 9th graders followed on Monday, August 18 as the Class of 2029 participated in and attended their first "official" day as Eaglets.

A presentation from our administration, deans and alumni teachers on staff provided these new students with a history of our campus, including our founding in 1885 as a Roman Catholic Center of Faith Formation for Americans of Polish ancestry and heritage. History Teacher Mark Carroll (P'08), Admissions Associate Dominic Zerki (P'09), Theology Instructor Marcus Sheena (P'13) and English Teacher Nick Gischia (P'16) shared heartfelt and poignant testimonials of their time well-spent as OLSM students and how their time at St. Mary's – in particular at Chapel for all-school Masses – formed them into the men they are today.

In addition, our Moms & Dads Club, under the leadership of new president, Jamie Stewart, hosted a Breakfast and Meet and Greet for new parents that was well-attended, productive and a welcome to our campus family. A special thank you to our upperclassmen and women who served as tour guides for our new students as they begin the brotherhood and sisterhood within our Boys and Girls Divisions.

Fall sports have commenced, and we invite all our Eaglet faithful to come out and support our student-athletes and coaches in what is sure to be another great year.

> Yours in Education, LEN KARSCHNIA



LOOKING AHEAD

It's always exciting to look ahead, but I can't help to reflect on the most recent class of 2025 and their incredible accomplishments. They have set a high bar for future eaglets individually and collectively.

We have students who were accepted into 7-year dental, 5-year MBA, and many other professional programs. Students are studying trades with both local unions and community colleges. While we have eaglets accepted at schools such as NYU, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Boston College, and the University of Florida, our Michigan colleges and universities remain the first choice for many of our students. The University of Michigan, Michigan State University, the University of Detroit-Mercy, and Wayne State University were popular choices.



This fall we will welcome numerous admissions representatives to campus for informational meetings and onsite admission interviews, where students are directly admitted and awarded scholarships on the spot. Our students will be prepared; we hosted two weeks of college application workshops in June and August for our senior students. Our faculty have also visited college campuses to make connections, research programs, and put feet on the ground.

Wishing everyone a great beginning to the school year!

Ann Bartus

MA, Certified Educational Planner Senior Academic Dean/College Counselor

OLSM STUDENTS' SUMMER TOUR IN ENGLAND & FRANCE

French teacher Ashley Yenor led Prep students and parent chaperones on a one-week summer tour of England and France! Here is a snapshot of student reflections and some of the many photos they shared of their memorable journey.

"... If you can go on this kind of trip, I would 100 percent recommend it; I would say it was one of the best weeks of my life . . . The itinerary included three individual stops: London, Caen/Normandy, and *Versailles/Paris. We spent three days in London, where we were able* to see world-famous monuments, such as Big Ben, Parliament, and St Paul's Cathedral. We even got to see the musical Six in the theater. The next stop was Normandy, where we got to see, and learn about, two of the beaches included in the D-Day invasion, Sword Beach and Omaha Beach. This stop also included a trip to the beautiful and historic American Cemetery. The last stop of our trip was the Palace of Versailles and Paris. Before getting to Paris, we stopped in Versailles where we toured the palace, including The Hall of Mirrors, the room where The Treaty of Versailles was signed. We also got to tour the beautiful gardens just outside the palace! When we arrived in Paris, we immediately went to see Notre Dame Cathedral. The following days, we saw the Arc de Triomphe, Louvre Museum, and the interior of Notre Dame. The final monument we saw during our trip was my favorite, the Eiffel Tower. We were able to go straight to



the top of it and see the whole city behind a stunning sunset. However, the best part was seeing it sparkle at night; that is a sight I will never forget. Although the sightseeing was great, I'd say the best part of the trip is the people you get to spend every day with. I barely knew the seven other students I went with – I didn't even know most of their names – but by day two, we had all become good friends. Though I may never see some of them again, I will always remember those eight days when we all became inseparable and shared some of the greatest sights the world has to offer. So please, if you get an opportunity to go on this trip, take it and don't look back. You will not regret it." Patterson Doyle, 2025 Valedictorian



"The 2025

St. Mary's Europe trip was, to put it

lightly, one of the best trips of my life. From seeing Stonehenge to being face-to-face with the Eiffel Tower, the trip not only allowed me to utilize my knowledge of the French language and history but also led me to learn things about myself, meet new people, and experience parts of the world I had only ever talked about. Apart from saying 'bonjour' and 'merci', I was immersed in French culture for the second half of the trip, and it felt like an active French class. I was constantly learning things, big and small, adding onto what I already knew about French culture . . . Our long walks and multiple metro rides throughout each day led us to many new places, including Notre Dame, Arc de Triomphe, a macaron cooking class, several shops, and the Borough Market in London. Not to mention, the several restaurants we

ate at, including the famous and high-end Le Train Bleu and Les Deux Magots, where we ordered the famous French hot chocolate. Our visits to the Chateaux of Versailles and the American World War II Memorial in Normandy were unforgettable. On our last night, knowing we had to wake up at five the next morning to get to our flight, we stayed up to watch the Eiffel Tower sparkle . . ." OLIVIA STEVENS, Class of 2026

For Charlie Moran ('26), this was his third trip with Mrs. Yenor! "Each trip for the past three years has had a different itinerary and has been a different experience. I traveled to England, France, Spain, and Italy over the past three years. We spent the most time in France, which helped me use my language and culture skills in real-life situations. From visiting the world-famous castles and

cathedrals, to trying new cuisine, every day on tour was a new learning experience that I will always cherish. I am grateful to my parents and teachers for allowing me to experience these life-changing tours. I collected puzzles from each city and town; these are wonderful souvenirs!"

CHARLIE MORAN, Class of 2026

This was Trevor Ulmer's second time touring to France with Mrs. Yenor. Trevor ('25) came as a freshman, and again as a recent graduate! This time, he came with his brother, Connor ('27). "I loved exploring new places and trying all the food!" TREVOR ULMER, Class of 2025

MESSAGE FROM ATHLETIC DIRECTOR JERMAINE GONZALES

Our athletics here at the Prep is strong! We are excited to launch fall sports, kicking off with Boys Division football, soccer, and cross country while our Girls Division has volleyball, golf, cheerleading, and cross country. OLSM sports has a rich history of fostering brotherhood and now sisterhood and we are confident in our faculty and staff to bring out not only a spirit of competition, but sportsmanship all rooted in our faith. In football we have adopted a "Team Over Me" mentality that I believe is representative and transcends to our entire athletics community, as it is our St. Mary's culture to prioritize community and service over self. I'm honored to be in my 4th season as the Athletic Director and Head Varsity Football Coach and excited that I now share this tradition with two of my boys, Jabin (P'27) and Caleb (P'29). OLSM #1 in Michigan!



2025 METRO DETROIT FOOTBALL OFFICIALS CLINIC (MDFOC) BRINGS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES TO CAMPUS

On July 26, the Orchard Lake Schools, along with Community Partnership & Student Engagement Director Tracie Robinson, welcomed 125 officials and 40 coaches and clinicians from across the U.S. to campus to help aspiring referees – from high school juniors through adults – learn 7 Man High School Mechanics to break into officiating. "Students can get into the athletic world, learn valuable skills, and build careers in officiating from industry leaders in the NFL, B1G, MAC, SWAC, MVFC, ACC, OAC, GLIAC, and MHSAA," said Robinson. "The collaboration between MDFOC and OLSM has been fantastic!"

Attendees spent valuable time in the Burkacki Academic Center classrooms. "Each referee position had its own classroom, designed for more personal instruction of no more than 25 students per classroom," added Robinson. "They were treated to food truck catering at lunch followed by 7v7 training on the main and practice football fields comprised of several high school football teams, including OLSM, U of D Jesuit, Our Lady of the Lakes, Henry Ford, Harper Woods, Voyageur, Oak Park, and River Rouge."

"Officiating is more than just calling the game — it's about leadership, integrity, and dedication. The path will challenge you, testing your resolve and your character. But with every challenge comes growth and respect. By committing yourself fully, you become a vital part of a sport that unites millions and inspires countless others. I encourage you to embrace this responsibility with confidence and pride. The field is ready for you. Step forward and make your mark." Shawn Smith, NFL Official, MDOFC

"I still remember my first game on the field—the adrenaline, the excitement, and yes, the nerves. But what I found was much more than just calling plays. Being a football referee means you're at the heart of the game, making sure every snap is fair, every play is safe, and the spirit of football shines through.

Football moves fast, decisions come quick, and the pressure can be intense. But with every game, you grow stronger, sharper, and more confident. You become a leader on the gridiron, respected by players and coaches alike, and a guardian of the game's integrity. If you love football, want to develop your leadership and decision-making skills, and want to give back to the sport that brings us all together, then stepping into officiating is the right move. The whistle is in your hands. Take that step. We're out here, ready to teach you the rules of the game."

GAYLON WILLIAMS, MDFOC Experienced Football Trainer



"Making it to the Big Ten as a female referee showed me that with passion and perseverance, anything is possible. Believe in yourself, push through the challenges, and lead the way for other women to follow."

NICOLE RANDOLPH, Big Ten Female Football Referee

Orchard Lake St. Mary's and MDFOC will host a Spring Introduction to Referee Clinic for interested juniors and seniors. For more information on amazing careers in officiating, how to break into the business, and more, email Tracie Robinson at trobinson@stmarysprep.com



MESSAGE FROM MOMS & DADS CLUB PRESIDENT, JAMIE STEWART

Dear Parents, Faculty, and Alumni,

Greetings & salutations. On behalf of the Orchard Lake St. Mary's Moms & Dads Club, we are thrilled to welcome you to a new school year! Whether you're a returning family or joining our school community for the first time, we are so very pleased and honored to have you with us.

I see our journey together at Orchard Lake St. Mary's as defined by the immortal words of our patron, Saint John Paul II: "Duc in Altum!", "Cast out into the deep." These are the words of Christ to Peter, a call to leave the shallows and trust in the abundance that lies in deeper waters. It is a challenge to move beyond the familiar, to face the unknown with courage, and to act with a faith that can yield astonishing results.

This call is the very heartbeat of our mission, inviting us to remember our past with gratitude, live our present with enthusiasm, and look to our future with confidence.

Building on a legacy of 140 years, we are now the guardians that are called upon to honor the rich tapestry woven by dedicated faculty, passionate families, and faith-filled students who have made OLSM a cherished institution of learning and development. This history is not a static monument, but a living foundation of excellence and belonging that we build upon every day.

That spirit resonates in our classrooms, where intellectual curiosity is sparked and students are challenged not only to learn but to think critically and defend their beliefs with reason and grace. It is alive in our athletic fields, where teamwork, discipline, and character are forged. It is present in our acts of service and in the quiet moments in our chapel, where we are reminded that faith is not just a subject to be studied, but a life to be lived.

Everything we do, every lesson taught, every game played, every prayer shared, is aimed at one sacred purpose: preparing our students for their own "Duc in Altum" moment. As parents, we are partners in this great work of forming resilient leaders and compassionate citizens, empowering them with the knowledge and moral clarity to navigate the world. Our ultimate promise and most sacred duty are to equip these young men and women with the courage to confidently cast their own nets, ready to lead lives of purpose and make a profound impact. With the past to guide us, the present to inspire us, and a future that awaits us, we must embrace our mission together.

Your role in this is an essential one. I strongly encourage you to attend our events, volunteer when you can, and share your ideas freely and openly. All it takes is showing up. Being present. Being dedicated. Your involvement is what will make the difference in our children's lives, so join with us when we issue the call. You won't have cause to regret it.

May God's blessing be upon us as we cast out into the deep, knowing that a future guided by faith and joy will be more bountiful than we can ever imagine. Godspeed to one and all, and as ever my warmest regards.

Jamie Stewart





2025 SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

\$5,000 "MINGLE ALL THE WAY" SPONSOR

Bring the magic to life! From Santa's train ride to twinkling traditions!

\$2,000 "DASHER & DANCER" REINDEER SPONSOR

Help guide Santa's sleigh with a gate full of festive flair and prancing reindeer chee!

\$2,000 "NATIVITY NIGHT" CAMELS SPONSOR

Transport guests straight to Bethlehem! Sponsor the gate where majestic camels steal the scene.

\$1,500 "STARRY STABLE" DONKEY SPONSOR

Bring the nativity to life with a gentle friend kids adore and memories that last a lifetime.

\$1000 "WINTER WONDERLAND BITES" FOOD SPONSOR

Warm hearts and bellies, your sponsorship makes every bite a taste of holiday joy.

\$300 "TWINKLE & GLOW" SPONSOR

Make spirits bright! Your support lights up the heart of the event and every smiling face beneath the tree.

\$500 "SANTA'S MAGICAL MOMENTS" SPONSOR

Help create the magic! Sponsor the gateway to meet the man in red and make Christmas wishes come true.

\$1500 "TINSEL TUNES" ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR

Keep the festive beat going! Your support puts the "fa la la" on stage for all to enjoy.

\$500 "SANTA'S WORKSHOP" KID'S FOOD DECORATING SPONSOR

Where frosting flies and sprinkles sparkle! Sponsor the sweetest hands-on fun of the night!

\$500 "MAGICAL MOMENTS" PHOTOGRAPHY SPONSOR

Make memories last! Help capture every joyful grin and holiday hug with Santa.

\$250 "REINDEER REFRESHMENTS" DRINK SPONSOR

Warm hearts one cup at a time. Sponsor the hot cocoa that keeps everyone cozy and merry.

\$250 "SANTA'S SWEETS" DESSERTS SPONSOR

Satisfy sweet cravings with treats that twinkle! Your support brings sugar and smiles to the season!

\$100 "LITTLE ELVES" LUNCH SPONSOR

Fuel our fantastic student elves! A small gift that makes a big difference for big-hearted helpers!

To secure a sponsorship, contact Lisa Gray at (248) 392-9974. For wreath information, contact Robin Goddard at (248) 410-9109.

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ST. JOHN PAUL II LITURGICAL CENTER UPDATE

On September 14, we celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross and this year it falls on Sunday. Since the liturgical calendar feasts of the Lord have precedence over the Sundays in Ordinary Time, this Feast will replace the Sunday liturgy.

The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross has its roots in the discovery in 320 AD of the True Cross, of Calvary, and of the tomb of Christ by St. Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, which Romans buried under the second-century Temple of Aphrodite; 2) the dedication on September 13, 335, of the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher, built on the site of Mount Calvary. The Eastern Churches, Catholics and Orthodox, celebrate the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on the September anniversary of the basilica's dedication.

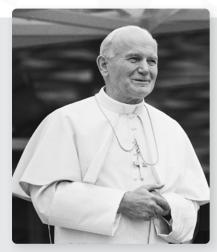
St. John Paul II on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross in his homily delivered in 1984, in Halifax, Canada, made the following reflection on the Cross:

IN THE WORDS OF ST. JOHN PAUL II

Why are the Cross and the Crucified One the doorway to eternal life? Because in him - Christ crucified - is manifested to the full the love of God for the world, for man.

In the same conversation with Nicodemus Christ says: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved" (Io. 3, 16-17).

The salvific lifting up of the Son of God on the Cross has its eternal source in love. This is the love of the Father that sends the Son; he gives his Son for the salvation of the world. And at the same time, it is the love of the Son who does not "judge" the world but gives himself for the love of the Father and for the salvation of the world. Giving himself to the Father through the Sacrifice of the Cross, he gives himself at the same time to the world: to each person and to the whole of humanity.



The Cross contains in itself the mystery of salvation, because, in the Cross, Love is lifted up. This is the lifting up of Love to the supreme point in the history of the world: in the Cross Love is lifted up and the Cross is at the same time lifted up through Love. And from the height of the Cross, love comes down to us. Yes: "The Cross is the most profound condescension of God to man... The Cross is like a touch of eternal love upon the most painful wounds of man's existence" (Ioannis Pauli PP. II, Dives in Misericordia, 8).

Fr. Bernard Witek Director, St. John Paul II Liturgical Center

ZAPRASZAMY

You are invited to join us for Polish 1st Sunday!

A special Mass at the Orchard Lake Schools to pray for Polonia

Sunday, Oct 5th • 1:00 PM

- Polish Dinner after the Mass in the Dining Hall Cost: \$20
- Please RSVP to the dinner by Wednesday, October 1st.
- For more information, call (248) 602-7579 or bernardwitek@yahoo.com.



SHRINE OF ST. JOHN PAUL II: JUBILEE YEAR PILGRIMAGE SITE

Did you know that the Archdiocese of Detroit has designated our Shrine Chapel at Orchard Lake one of 12 Detroit-area pilgrimage sites ahead of the Jubilee 2025; a place for pilgrims to visit and receive a plenary indulgence?

The Church celebrates ordinary jubilees every 25 years. In December 2024, the late Pope Francis ushered in the Holy Year 2025 by opening the Holy Doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome for a year of grace, forgiveness and renewal — centered on the theme, "Pilgrims of Hope."

In 1470, Pope Paul II established the practice of celebrating jubilees every 25 years, instead of 50, to allow more people to experience a Holy Year within their lifetimes.





The "Ever Forward" Strategic Plan has been approved, and the Orchard Lake Schools has initiated a new path. We are moving on to the second phase of the Master Plan for campus. "Ever Forward" charts a path forward for the OLS and its three major operational divisions.

That path goes in the direction Fr. Dąbrowski envisioned – it leads toward OLS providing the best possible organizational structures and activities to enable the spiritual formation and educational growth of the people OLS serves.

For more information, visit www.orchardlakeschools.com/Ever-Forward

THE ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS

joyfully celebrates a special Sunday Mass commemorating

THE FEAST OF

St. John Paul II

Saturday, October 18



FEAST DAY CELEBRATIONS ON SATURDAY, OCT 18

Holy Mass
WITH BISHOP WALTER HURLEY
& Filarets Choir

5:00 PM

Polish Dinner after Mass
Campus Dining Hall
Cost \$20
Please RSVP by Oct 14

Pizza is available for children under 16 for \$5

To RSVP, call (248) 602-7579 or email bernardwitek@yahoo.com

FILARETS CHOIR CELEBRATES 90th ANNIVERSARY

The year 2025 marks the 90th Anniversary of the Filarets Choir, and to celebrate this monumental anniversary a Commemorative Ball is planned for October 4, 2025, at the American Polish Cultural Center to which you are cordially invited!

The Club Filarets has gained a reputation as a well-regarded advocate for Polish culture. The 90th Anniversary of the choir is evidence of their unwavering dedication in promoting Polish culture through song.

The Club Filarets was organized in 1935 by three students, Józef Krawulski, Emily Dolega-Pulaszewska, and Casimir Skowronski as a part of the Polish National Alliance. At one time, the Club Filarets was the largest chorus in the country, and its function was to produce Polish plays and concerts as well as supporting an orchestra and sport teams. Today the group concentrates on preserving and promoting Polish song and serving the Polish Community.

In 1953, the Filarets Chorus joined the Polish Singers Alliance of America, a nationwide organization with similar goals which organizes conventions every three years, where the Filarets take active part. In 1959 and again in 1962, the Filarets won first place. In 1976, Mr. Budweil, a longtime director, formed a men's chorus for the convention in Buffalo, NewYork, where their powerful voices won first place, and again at the 1992 and 1995 conventions in Manhattan, NY.

The Filarets were recipients of many awards over the 90 years. We invite you to see these proudly displayed at the American Polish Cultural Center. The latest recognition the Filarets Choir received was a Certificate of Appreciation for their 90th Anniversary from the President of Poland, Mr. Andrzej Duda, conveyed by the Consul General of Poland in Chicago, Mrs. Bernadetta Pałka-Maciejewska. The award was given to Zdzislaw Foryś, the Filarets Choir President. Mr. Foryś has served as president for the past six years.

The Filarets perform at all the patriotic events and occasions, and church holidays. The list is long and impressive. The Filarets perform regularly at Polish masses at the Orchard Lake Schools.

Please join us for a very special celebration! For more information, please call (586)-823-5299 or write to: filaretsmichigan@gmail.com.



MASS & ALTAR DEDICATION MARK CULMINATION OF ST. FAUSTINA & DIVINE MERCY ALTAR PROJECT

On August 10, 2025, at 11:00 AM, the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II witnessed a historic and deeply moving celebration during the Mass & Altar Dedication. This solemn liturgy marked the culmination of the St. Faustina & Divine Mercy Altar Project Fundraiser — a vision brought to life through the profound

generosity of benefactors who helped raise over \$130,000. More than just a physical structure, the newly dedicated altar stands as a powerful symbol of the Divine Mercy story in its fullness, offering the faithful a sanctuary of prayer, reflection, and devotion centered on the message entrusted to St. Faustina.



The Mass was celebrated by the Most Reverend Edward J. Weisenburger, Archbishop of Detroit, whose presence underscored the spiritual and communal significance of the occasion. He was joined at the altar by (photo left

to right) Fr. Bernard Witek, Deacon Daniel Whalen (a proud 2018 alumnus of St. Mary's Prep who will be ordained to the priesthood in the spring of 2026), Bishop Robert Fisher, and Deacon Michael Stach. Together, they led the congregation in a liturgy of thanksgiving and consecration, blessing the new altar as a sacred place of encounter with God's mercy.

The day served not only as the fulfillment of a remarkable campaign but also as a spiritual milestone for the Shrine and its community, now anchored more deeply than ever in the heart of Divine Mercy. To learn more about the Altar Project, visit: https://www.orchardlakeschools.com/shrine-altar-project-1

REMEMBERING THE HUMILITY OF ANOTHER POLISH SAINT

The newly dedicated St. Faustina and Divine Mercy altar has another unique significance. During the stay of the Polish bishops at Orchard Lake at the time of the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia (1976), I was unable to join Cardinal Karol Wojtyła and the Polish bishops in concelebrating the morning community Mass. As Principal, there was an issue I had to deal with that morning. So, in the afternoon at about 2:00 PM, I went to celebrate a private Mass at that same side altar, the one closest to the organ console. When it came time for the offertory, as I unveiled the chalice and prepared to put the water and wine in it, there stood Cardinal Wojtyła, offering the water and wine to me. Then he washed my hands. I thought, at the time, what a humble act of service that was. Apparently, he had come in to pray privately in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament – a cardinal, who would become pope, and then a saint! Now I look upon it as one of the greatest moments of my priesthood.

Msgr Tom Skindeleski (P '63, C '67) Last Priest-Principal of St. Mary's Prep



Please visit and enjoy the NEW

WALKING ROSARY AND REFLECTION AREA

in the Marian Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at St. Mary's Preparatory.

WE ARE ASKING FOR DONATIONS TO HELP DEFRAY THE COST OF THIS ADDITION TO THE GROTTO.

YOU CAN DONATE BY:

- 1) Purchasing a brick paver. Order forms are available at the gate or online at the link www.orchardlakeschools.com/ways-to-give
- 2) Leave a donation in the donation box at the Grotto inside the candle area.
- 3) Mail a check (payable to The Mary Project) to:

The Mary Project 3535 Commerce Road Orchard Lake, MI 48324

For naming opportunities, please contact Maureen Gross at themaryproject@myyahoo.com.

All donations are tax deductible. EIN: 82-5453994

PROPERTY.

POLISH INSTITUTE UPDATE



POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH COLLECTIONS UPDATE

Welcome back! A new school year has started, fresh with promise. Since 1909 – 116 years ago – the Orchard Lake campus has echoed with the sounds of faculty and students returning to school and the daily rhythms and routines that are part of the lifeblood of the Orchard Lake Schools. The Polish Institute of Culture & Research collects and preserves the stories of the people and places that make us who we are. We have 140 years of photographs. Many of them are formal pictures of classes, serious professors, and students hard at work. But some show the sheer joy that was always a part of our history – student snowball fights or swimming in the lake . . . comedic clothes . . . even pranks. Why ride a pony to a football game? Why not? It reminds us that while our goals may be serious, we pursue them with a smile and a prayer.

Over the past several months, Polish Institute staff have made major progress in developing our collections. Although inventories may seem boring, they are the lifeblood of making our collections available for students, the Orchard Lake Community, and our constant stream of visitors. They let us know exactly what we have and where to find it! We've recently included 35 archival collections, including materials related to the Polish Air Force in World War II, survivors of Nazi and Soviet concentration camps, and leaders of the Polish community.

We also recently inventoried:

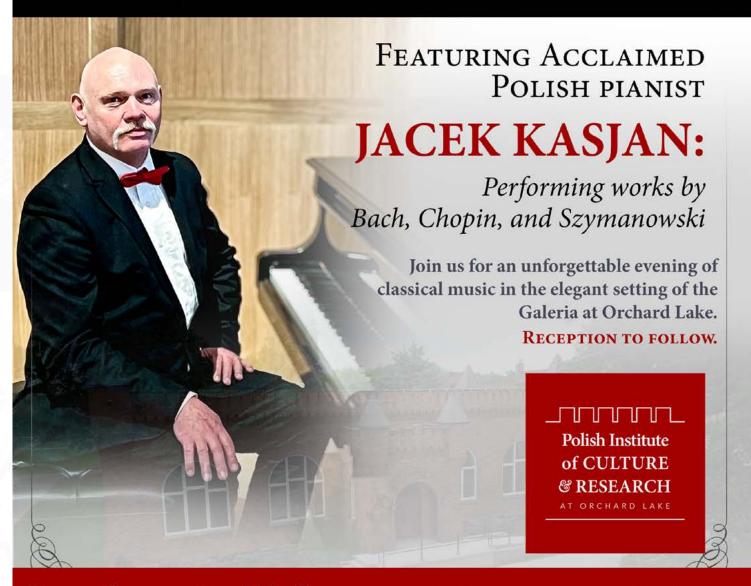
- Polish wycianki (paper cutting art), 300 pieces
- Dissertations and theses published by OL Seminarians and students, 430 titles
- Published play scripts for professional and amateur theater (from the 1830s to the 1970s), over 900 titles
- Rare books dating from the 1600s to the 1800s, 400 titles
- Chapbooks, pamphlets, and small publications (from 1850 to 2005), 2200 titles
- In the next several months, we plan to put these inventories online for the public to browse and to help researchers here and in Europe.

Dr. John Radzilowski

Director, Polish Institute of Culture & Research at Orchard Lake

THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF CULTURE & RESEARCH proudly presents:

"Three B Flat" PIANO CONCERT



DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM • TICKETS: \$20 (includes concert, reception, and exhibit access)

PURCHASE ONLINE: VISIT WWW.PICROL.ORG

EVENT INFO & TICKETS: WWW.PICROL.ORG/CALENDAR | INFO@PICROL.ORG | (248) 836-1284

SAT, SEPT 13 • CONCERT AT 7:00 PM

THE GALERIA, ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS

SEPTEMBER AT ORCHARD LAKE: A SEASON OF NEW BEGINNINGS

September has arrived, and with it a special kind of excitement. Students are returning to campus – our halls and walkways once again filled with the energy of learning, laughter, and tradition. The crispness in the air, the sound of doors opening to classrooms, and the rhythm of community life returning all remind us that Orchard Lake is more than a place – it is a story still being written. Generations before us began their September in the same way, and each year adds a new chapter.



As the Polish Institute of Culture & Research at Orchard Lake, we are proud to be stewards of Polish culture. Our work in the archives, the Galeria, the remembrance of holidays, and the events we host is deeply tied to the mission of the Orchard Lake Schools: faith, education, culture, and Polish heritage. Father Józef Dąbrowski envisioned this in 1885 when he insisted there must be Polish schools in America so that culture, language, and faith would endure. That vision echoes in every lesson taught, every holiday remembered, and every note of music that fills our halls.

Just last month, on August 23, we had the joy of participating in the Polish Day Parade in Warren. The streets were alive with music, color, and the thrill of floats celebrating heritage and pride. We were especially honored to join hands with our Italian friends in highlighting the remarkable history of Queen Bona – Italian Princess and Polish Queen – whose life is a symbol of cultural partnership and shared legacy. Moments like these remind us how deeply our stories are interwoven with others, and how joyfully we continue to share them. This September, we open our cultural season in the Galeria:

- Opening Concert with Jacek Kasjan September 13, 7:00 PM. The piano keys will stir memory and emotion as we welcome this gifted artist into our cultural jewel. Tickets are \$20 and available at www.picrol.org.
- 29th Friends of Polish Art Fine Arts Competition. For nearly three decades, this competition has given artists young and seasoned alike a canvas to share their vision. It is an open call to all artists of every medium. Submissions are due by September 2, and each year we are amazed at the creativity and imagination revealed. On October 5, from 2–5 PM, the Galeria will open its doors for a free reception, when winners will be announced and awards presented at 3 PM. The exhibition will remain on view from October 5–29, allowing visitors to walk among works that speak to heritage, identity, and artistry. Full details are available at www.picrol.org.

This month also carries days of national and spiritual remembrance. September 1 marks the anniversary of the outbreak of World War II, a day that calls us to prayer and reflection for all who gave their lives. September 8, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, invites us to entrust the new school year to her care and intercession. September is a time of beginnings, but also of remembering – of holding close the mission entrusted to us and celebrating the life that blooms each autumn on this historic campus. *Razem budujemy przyszłość* – together, we build the future.

ANIA BIECIUK
Associate Director for Polonia Affairs
Polish Institute of Culture & Research



VISIT THE POLISH INSTITUTE ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

We invite you to explore our social media pages for more photos and news. (Online readers can click below)

FACEBOOK: Polish Institute of Culture & Research at Orchard Lake INSTAGRAM: @picrOrchardLake

AUTHOR ANIA FINK VISITS CAMPUS

We had the great pleasure of welcoming Ania Fink, author of 56 Churches, to the Galeria at Orchard Lake in August. This remarkable bilingual guide-catalog documents the 56 Catholic churches founded by and for the Polish community in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Written in both Polish and English, it traces the journey of Polish immigrants who helped shape the city's religious and cultural landscape. With historical context, detailed maps, and rich visuals, the book honors the enduring legacy of faith, identity, and community.

During her visit, Fink toured our current exhibit, "Biography, Art, History: Polish-American Memories of Great Men and Women," which celebrates the lives and legacies of figures such as



Nicolas Copernicus, St. John Paul II, Józef Piłsudski, Kazimierz Pułaski, Tadeusz Kościuszko, and others who have shaped both Polish and American identity. She also spent time in the Shrine Chapel, an especially moving and reflective part of her visit. Ania Bieciuk, Associate Director for Polonia Affairs, and Elijah Majeski, Galeria Manager, were honored to welcome Fink and her husband to the Galeria and share in this meaningful cultural exchange. You can explore and purchase her book here: https://a.co/d/6c0RSU2

The Galeria is open for private tours by appointment. To schedule your visit, email info@picrol.org or call 248-836-1284. We'd be delighted to welcome you.

CELEBRATING THE POLISH DAY PARADE

At the end of August, the Polish Day Parade in Warren filled the streets with music, color, and the spirit of Polonia. Leading the way as Grand Marshal was Macomb County Prosecutor Peter Lucido, with the symbolic appearance of Queen Bona highlighting the historic ties between Polish and Italian heritage – celebrated together with our Italian friends.

Marching proudly were the Adam Mickiewicz Polish Language School, the Polish Scouting Organization, the Polish American Congress, the American Polish Cultural Center, the Polish American Federal Credit Union, the Filarets Choir, and many others who represent the heart of metro Detroit's Polish community. The sounds of song, the waving of flags, and the joy of families created an atmosphere of pride and unity. We at the Polish Institute of Culture & Research



29th Friends of Polish Art FINE ARTS COMPETITION

In partnership with the Polish Institute of Culture & Research



Image: detail of painting by Richard Kubinski

Open call to artitsts of all media Submission deadline is September 2, 2025 go to: tinyurl.com/FPA-Competition-Submission

Opening Reception 2-5 pm on October 5, 2025

at the Galeria 3535 Commerce Road, Orchard Lake, MI Awards to be presented at 3:00pm

Exhibition on view October 5-24, 2025

send questions to Elijah Majewski, Galeria Manager emajewski@picrol.org







Wishing You a Great 2025-2026 School Year!

St. Mary's Students, Teachers & Staff

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL





ŻYCZYMY UDANEGO ROKU SZKOLNEGO 2025-2026!

Drodzy Uczniowie, Nauczyciele i Rodzice

Witamy w Nowym Roku Szkolnym



POLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS



ORCHARD LAKE SCHOOLS

CHANCELLOR'S SENATE



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11th • 6:00 PM PINE LAKE COUNTRY CLUB

3300 Pine Lake Road • West Bloomfield Township, MI 48324

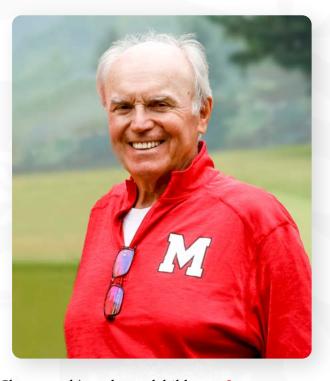
B ALUMNI NEWS

WELCOME, KEN SMERECKI, SR., NEW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

We caught up with Ken while he was promoting the 8th Annual Alumni & Friends Golf Outing – which takes place September 15th at Oakhurst Golf & Country Club – to chat about his new role at Alumni Association President and find out more about what he's excited to share with our campus community!

I'm honored to be your Alumni Association President! I graduated from St. Mary's Prep in 1963 but never thought I'd be in this position. I attended association meetings, eventually became the Vice President, and have always wanted to do anything I can to help build the Alumni Association here at Orchard Lake! I am the first of three generations of Smerecki's currently active within the campus community – my sons, alumni Ken Smerecki Jr. (P'91) and John Smerecki (P'96),





daughter-

in-law Nicole (Cheer coach), and grandchildren – Sydney Smerecki (P'27) and Joe Smerecki ('28) who currently attend the Prep!

I truly believe we have the best alumni association! There is a lot of opportunity to interact with fellow alumni, incredible cooperation within alumni classes, camaraderie and friendship, all of which guide, inspire and build our legacy. I'm looking forward to college campus visits to our alumni, building more alumni association meeting participation, and am open to new ideas!

Come join me and fellow alumni at the following upcoming events!

Monday, September 15: 8th Annual Alumni & Friends Golf Outing (see details inside this issue) Monday, September 22: Alumni Assocation meeting @ 6:30 PM in the Galeria Friday, October 10, 17, 24: Football Fridays Alumni Tent (Field-side food, fun & festivities; see details in this issue)

FIND THE CAMPUS COMMUNICATOR ONLINE AT:

www.orchardlakeschools.com/campus-communicator

AND IN OUR ON-CAMPUS NEWS BOXES FOUND IN THE:

SMAC Lobby • Campus Bookstore • Prep Office Dining Hall Lobby • Shrine Chapel

ST. MARY'S ALUMNI, FAMILY & FRIENDS

Sth Annual & Friends **GOLF OUTING**



Play 18 holes on one of Michigan's premier championship golf courses!



\$250

Scan QR code to register

PER **GOLFER**

For more information please contact Stephanie Gonzales sgonzales@orchardlakeschools.com

CHECK IN . 10:00 AM

BUFFET LUNCH • 10:30 AM

SHOTGUN START • 12:30 PM

DINNER RECEPTION • 5:00 PM

50/50 RAFFLE • PRIZES

Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive & More!

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Call (248) 392-9974 or Igray@orchardlakeschools.com

MONDAY, SEPT 15th

OAKHURST GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB 7000 Oakhurst Lane • Clarkston

2025-2026 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS*

*The current month includes OLSM varsity home athletic events; for away games and all other monthly athletics information, refer to the OLSM Athletics website at http://www.olsmsports.com/

SEPTEMBER 2025

- 1 NO SCHOOL Labor Day Weekend Anniversary of Outbreak of WWII (in Poland)
- 2 Classes Resume
- 3 Varsity Volleyball vs. Bishop Foley @ 7 PM
- **4 Girls Varsity Golf** vs. Gabriel Richards
- 5 Girls Varsity Golf @ Farmington Invitational
- **6 Cross Country** @ Bret Clemens Bath Invitational TBD
- **7** POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- 8 FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
- 9 Girls Varsity Golf vs. Notre Dame Prep Varsity Soccer vs. Bloomfield Hills @ 7 PM
- 12 Cross Country @ MSU Auto Owners Insur. Invitational Girls Varsity Golf @ Oakland Co. Div. 2 Tournament
- **13** Three B Flat Piano Concert @ Galeria @ 7 PM (ticketed event)
- 15 Alumni & Friends Golf Outing at Oakhurst Golf & Country Club
- **16 Varsity Soccer** vs. Macomb Lutheran North @ 7 PM
- 17 Girls Varsity Golf vs. Divine Child
- **19 Cross Country** @ Mott Fall Classic @ Hens Hathaway Park
- **22 Girls Varsity Golf** vs. Jackson Lumen Christi
- 23 Varsity Soccer vs. Toledo Catholic Centeral @ 6
- **24 Girls Varsity Golf** vs. Notre Dame Prep **Volleyball** vs. Macomb Lutheran North @ 7 PM
- 27 Crew Tri-Meet @ Orchard Lake Cross Country @ Legends Invitational
- **29 Girls Varsity Golf** @ CHSL Championship

OCTBOBER 2025

- 2 ½-Day (All Students)
 OLSM Academic Open House
- **5** POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch

- **5-24 29**th **Friends of Polish Art Fine Arts Competition** Juried Exhibition (Opening Reception October 5)
 - 10 BBQ & Corn Roast Tailgate & Chili Cookoff 5-7:00 PM @ Dining Hall Tent Homecoming Football vs. Toledo Central Catholic @ 7:00 PM
 - **11 Huron Henley** @ Kensington Metro Park, Milford

Homecoming Dance

- **12 Ring Day Masses** @ 10:00 AM & 1:00 PM
- 17 End of 1st Marking Period
- **23** NO SCHOOL (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- 24 NO SCHOOL
- **25** Blake Haxton Regatta @ Columbus, OH

NOVEMBER 2025

- 1 ALL SAINTS DAY
- 2 ALL SOULS DAY POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- 9 OLSM Athletic & Extracurricular Open House
- **11** POLISH INDEPENDENCE DAY
- 23 Christmas Tree Lighting & Market @ Trzcinski Quad, Old Gym & BAC 4-8:00 PM
- **26-28** Thanksgiving Recess
 - **27** THANKSGIVING DAY

DECEMBER 2025

- 4 Advent by Candlelight @ Old Gym
- **6 Wigilia** @ Dining Hall ST. NICOLAS DAY
- 7 POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- **11 Chancellor's Senate Recognition Dinner** @ Pine Lake Golf & Country Club
- 12 End of 2nd Marking Period Girls Division Winter Formal
- 15-18 Midterm Exams
- **19-1/4 NO SCHOOL** (Christmas/New Year Recess)
 - 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

JANUARY 2026

- 1 Happy New Year
- 4 POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- 5 Classes Resume
- **6** FEAST OF EPIPHANY
- **TBD** Father & Son Luncheon
 - 19 NO SCHOOL (MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY)
 - 27 Fr. Józef Dąbrowski's Birthday

FEBRUARY 2026

- **TBD** Alumni Scholarship Awards Dinner @ Galeria
 - 1 POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
 - 14 ST. VALENTINE'S DAY PATRONAL FEAST OF SS. CYRIL & METHODIUS
- **16-22** NO SCHOOL (Winter Break)
 - 17 PACZKI DAY
 - **18** ASH WEDNESDAY (Lenten Season Begins)
 - 23 Classes Resume

MARCH 2026

- **TBD** Mother/Son Event
 - 1 POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
 - 2 PULASKI DAY
 - 13 End of 3rd Marking Period
 - 17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY

- **19** Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 20 NO SCHOOL
- **21** (**Tentative**) **Ambassadors Ball** @ Orchard Lake Country Club

APRIL 2026

- **1-12** NO SCHOOL (Easter Break)
 - 5 EASTER SUNDAY POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
 - 13 Classes Resume
 - **30** Senior Prom

MAY 2026

- 3 POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- **4-7 Final Exams** (Seniors)
- 15 Graduation Breakfast & Lunch @ Old Gym NO SCHOOL (Grades 9-11) End of 4th Marking Period
- 17 Graduation Day
- **18-21** Final Exams (Gr. 9-11) Last Day of School
 - 25 MEMORIAL DAY

JUNE 2026

- **7** POLISH 1st SUNDAY 1:00 PM Mass & Lunch
- **11** Founder's Day @ Trzcinski Quad & Old Gym

Jun-Aug Summer Camps

MONTHLY ENROLLMENTS

Throughout the year, donors to the Orchard Lake Schools enroll their loved ones in the "Friends of the Orchard Lake Schools".

Prayers are offered at every mass at the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. John Paul II for those names enrolled.

These names are those that have been added from the month of July.

FARAJ JARJIS BASHI ISSAM JARJIS CHRISTOPHER MACCIOCHE JADWIGA BOROWICZ KAYREN KIMSEY TALA YOUSIF MUKHTAR TED CAFFERTY JACQUELINE KOLOWSKI JACK RAWLINGS

BOB CULLINAN, JR JADZIA "JACKIE" KOLOWSKI JOSEPH R. REITMAN

THERESA MARY FUSCO REV. DR. CZESLAW KRYSA TIM SHAHADY
MARGARET (PEGGY) HAMILTON ODESSA LAW SISTER PAT TAUBE



FIELD-SIDE FOOD, FUN & FESTIVITIES FOR ALUMNI!



"FOOTBALL FRIDAYS" ALUMNITENT

Join your fellow Eaglet alumni in the designated field-side tent for pregame food as well as the perfect seat to watch the BIG GAME!

AVAILABLE TO ALUMNI ON THE FOLLOWING GAMES:

Oct. 10th • OLSM vs. Toledo Central Cath. • HOMECOMING

Oct. 17th • OLSM vs. Br. Rice

Oct. 24th • OLSM vs. River Rouge

Contact Alumni Relations Officer Robert Mazur at (248) 830-9711 or rmazur@orchardlakeschools.com

On Homecomina niaht, a special Football Fridays will start at the BBQ & Corn Roast Talgate area outside the Dining Hall. Come pregame with

your fellow alums and enjoy the big Chili Cookoff, Corn Roast, BBQ and more at this HOCO pregame tailgate tradition!

COME SEE US BEFORE THE GAME, WE'RE FAMILY!





After many years of thoughtful footsteps, the pathways of the Marian Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes at Orchard Lake St. Mary's have given way to age and are in need of repair. The Mary Project needs your help to sustain this prayerful space.

We are soliciting your support to repave the walkways and paths, starting with the walkway from the Grotto towards the lake. It will be paved with custom bricks to make it much more attractive and durable than poured concrete, and we are asking that you donate one or more of the bricks.

You may individualize a brick for you, or your family, honor a loved one or create an in-memoriam message. The donated bricks will become a part of the Grotto, paving the way for generations of visitors. As a friend of the Grotto and Orchard Lake Schools, please take advantage of this exceptional opportunity to have your commemorative brick(s) become a permanent part of this prayerful space.

Construction of Phase 2 will begin in early November. Sales for Phase 3 (continuing towards the lake) begin September 15, 2024. There is plenty of space for additional commemorative bricks. Bricks purchased for Phase 3 are \$150 each and will be installed in November 2025.

The bricks are 4" x 8" x 2 1/4" and are engraved using state-of-the-art laser technology. Every brick engraving is guaranteed for life!

All donations are tax deductible. EIN: 82-5453994

ALL ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

PLEASE PROOF READ CAREFULLY! \$20.00 FOR CHANGES MADE AFTER ORDER IS PLACED

\$150 - 4x8 Brick	Ente	er yo	ur te	ext: 3	line	s of t	text,	20 cł	narad	cters	per l	ine (inclu	ıding	ı spa	ces a	nd p	unct	uatio	on)
LINE 1 LINE 2																				
LINE 3																				

Address:		
City:	Sta	nte:
Zip:	Phone:	

MAIL FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

The Mary Project 3535 Commerce Road Orchard Lake, MI 48324

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

The Mary Project

If you have any questions, please contact: Maureen Gross themaryproject@myyahoo.com

SEPTEMBER 2025





SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Fr. WITEK • POLISH*	Seminary Chapel
Fr. Whitaker • Latin	St. John Paul II Shrine
Fr. WITEK • ENGLISH	St. John Paul II Shrine
Fr. WITEK • POLISH* POLISH 1st SUNDAY	St. John Paul II Shrine
	FR. WITEK • POLISH* FR. WHITAKER • LATIN FR. WITEK • ENGLISH FR. WITEK • POLISH* POLISH 1st Sunday

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

9:00 AM	Fr. Witek • Polish*	Seminary Chapel
9:00 AM	Fr. McDonell • Latin	St. John Paul II Shrine
11:00 AM	Fr. WITEK • ENGLISH	St. John Paul II Shrine
	CULIDAY CERTELIANED AA	

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

9:00 AM	Fr. WITEK • POLISH*	Seminary Chapel
9:00 AM	Fr. McDonell • Latin	St. John Paul II Shrine
11:00 AM	Fr. WITEK • ENGLISH	St. John Paul II Shrine

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

9:00 AM	FR. WITEK • POLISH*	Seminary Chapel
9:00 AM	Fr. McDonell • Latin	St. John Paul II Shrine
11:00 AM	Fr. WITEK • ENGLISH	St. John Paul II Shrine

^{*} Feed for the Live stream of the Polish Masses: www.facebook.com/olsnews

DAILY MASSES

MONDAYS-FRIDAYS	7:00 pm • In English	St. John Paul II Shrine
SATURDAYS	9:00 AM • IN ENGLISH	St. John Paul II Shrine

SHRINE OPEN HOURS

SUNDAY-SATURDAY 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM St. John Paul II Shrine

CONFESSIONS

MONDAYS-FRIDAYS 6:00 PM - 6:55 PM St. John Paul II Shrine **SATURDAYS** 8:00 AM - 8:55 AM St. John Paul II Shrine

LOOKING FOR IMPACTFUL CAMPUS DEDICATION OR NAMING OPPORTUNITIES THAT LEAVE A LASTING CAMPUS IMPRESSION FOR GENERATIONS TO ENJOY?



Contact: CHRIS CZARNIK CCZARNIK@ORCHARDLAKESCHOOLS.COM

