

Our Lady of the Valley Catholic School

Eagle Eyes

Helpful answers to frequently asked questions not covered in the Student Handbook



Revised July 2020

- Christian Catering
 - This is the company that handles our school lunches. Here is a [link](#) to our school cafeteria landing page. Here you can find information on the upcoming menu and place orders.
- Milk Tickets
 - Milk and juice are available every day. Prepaid milk tickets (30 punches) are purchased from OLV (turn in to school office) and students are notified when the milk card has been used and that a new card needs to be purchased. The school does participate in the Federal Free Special Milk program for eligible families. The cost of a milk card is: \$15.00 and checks can be made out to OLV Milk.
- Ice Cream Cards
 - Additional cards can be purchased for ice cream, chips, and other snack style items. Ice cream cards cost: \$15.00 and checks can be made out to Christian Catering. Please keep milk ticket and ice cream card purchases separate as the funds to two different entities.
- Money Related Topics
 - In an effort to move towards Diocesan compliance, if students bring in cash for Sharing and Caring (see below), fundraisers, bake sales, non-uniform days, etc. please send money in an envelope marked with the student's name and the purpose of the funds. This helps us greatly should the envelope be misplaced.
- RenWeb
 - This is our school management software. It allows for communication between home and school, and allows for parents to view grades in real time. It is critical that up to date contact information is on file in your RenWeb account, both email addresses and cell phone numbers. While email is the main mode of communication, text alerts are sent in emergency situations such as school closures, or to alert you to an important email. (This was used frequently during the COVID-19 situation in the spring of 2020.)
 - Please see Appendix One for more information on accessing RenWeb.
 - The platform is free to access via the web, but there is an app available for a small charge.
- Science Olympiad
 - Open to students in grades 5-8, this after school activity exposes students to fields in STEM areas. Students compete in a variety of events challenging and exposing the participants to science areas usually covered in high school and beyond. Practices are held after school, usually on Wednesdays. As competitions approach, additional practices are held, occasionally on weekends. The team usually participates in at least one invitational tournament in December, and the regional competition in February. The state meet, if the team qualifies, is held in

the spring. This is a competitive team, and coaches push students harder than what is seen in the classroom. When committing to this event, please be cognizant of other time commitments. It is an incredibly rewarding experience for participants.

- Exploratory
 - On Friday afternoons, students in grades 5-8 have the opportunity to sign up for an elective-style class called exploratory. These classes offer the student an opportunity to investigate a topic that might be outside the norm of an academic day. Middle school and specials teachers offer exploratory classes. Students learn about the year's offerings the first Friday of the school year. Most exploratory classes are on a first come, first serve basis and have no pre-requisites. However, the Science Olympiad exploratory does require that students are on the Science Olympiad team. (One may not be in S.O. exploratory and not participate on the after school team.)
- OLV Drama & Play participation
 - The OLV Drama department is very unique in its ability to produce high-quality drama productions at the elementary level. Students in grades first through eighth may audition for roles in the fall and spring plays. There is no pre-requisite to participate, but please know that practices are after school up to four days a week. The week of production can produce some late evenings on school nights, especially later in the week the night of dress rehearsal. When committing to this event, please be cognizant of other time commitments.
- PTO involvement
 - Eagle Flight
 - The first of three fundraisers for the school is Eagle Flight. This usually occurs in the fall. Students solicit pledges for laps that they will run around the field. Teachers routinely establish class incentives to help motivate students to participate. These can range from non-uniform days, to extra recess, to a class movie. Individual prizes are also able to be earned. It is a day the students look forward to each year. A themed t-shirt is also given to each student, and they wear them on the day of the event. This is a major opportunity for parent involvement. We always need help for this event.
 - B.A.L.L.
 - The B.A.L.L. (Building A Lasting Legacy) is the school's largest fundraiser of the year. Usually held in the early spring, the event is for adults and combines a live and silent auction, dinner, music, and revelry for a wonderful time in the name of supporting our school. This event is a major undertaking, and requires an entire committee dedicated to many facets of the planning of the event. Each homeroom participates by

creating a themed basket that can be bid on during the silent auction. Your homeroom mom will coordinate the theme of the basket and will solicit participation. If you have any interest in participating, please let the PTO know right away. There are many ways to get involved not all tasks have the same time commitment, but all are necessary to have a successful event.

- Used uniform sales
 - The PTO sponsors a consignment-style used uniform sale. Multiple sales are held throughout the year, with the first being in late July before school begins. Purchases can also be made by making an appointment with the sale coordinator.
 - For further information on uniforms, please refer to pages 33-36 in the school handbook.
- SCRIP Program
 - The SCRIP program is the third school fundraiser. To participate, families purchase gift cards to stores where they make everyday purchases. These vendors then donate a portion of the sale of the gift card back to OLV. For example, instead of paying cash for your Starbucks, purchase a gift card from the school. You get dollar for dollar gift card value. Cards can be purchased from the front desk. Please note, in order for us to balance our costs, we must have at least \$1,000 in orders before we can submit an order to SCRIPT. We ask each family to purchase \$3,800 in gift cards over the course of the school year. Families can opt out of participation if they choose, with a \$225.00 opt out fee.
- PE Challenges
 - Starting in fifth grade, students participate in three PE challenges throughout the school year. In these events, the class is divided into teams and a more formal game is played over a longer period than just the PE class. Outside referees are usually brought in, and other students are invited to come and watch and cheer on their peers. Parent volunteers are needed to assist in these events. Check the school calendar for dates of the challenges, as well as which sport will be contested. These are conducted during school hours only.
- Book covers
 - Covers for textbooks are strongly encouraged to help protect hard back textbooks and help the school save money. Covers are commonly called “book socks” and are easily purchased on line or at local retailers in school supplies or back to school areas. Brown paper bags are also exceptionally good in protecting books. Please do not use contact paper on hard back books.
 - For consumable books, contact paper is a great way to help preserve the life of the book.
- Toy Bowl

- An athletic association of Birmingham metro Catholic schools. Students participate in Volleyball (fall) starting in grade 3. Basketball is a winter sport starting in kindergarten. Cheerleading is also offered in the winter. Participation is also open to students in our PSR program. Teams usually practice once or twice a week, with games on the weekend either at OLV or one of the other metro schools. There is an end of season tournament for older age groups. Toy Bowl is a separate entity of the school, and falls under the authority of the parish. The athletic director for OLV is Kristie Ford.
- Soccer
 - Soccer is sponsored by OLV Church, and teams participate in the BUSA community league here in Birmingham. Soccer is a separate entity from the school, and more information is available by contacting James Hull; his email is on the linked page below. You can also get more information from the school website, by following [this link](#).
- Catholic Schools' field day
 - This is a diocesan sponsored event held annually in the spring at John Carroll Catholic High School. Students in grades 5-8 are invited to participate in a variety of track and field events. The PE Coach coordinates practices for the event in the months leading up to the event.
- Altar Serving at OLV
 - Altar servers are coordinated by Deacon Robert Long at the church. Information on the ministry can be found [here](#).
- Class Masses
 - All are welcome to attend our weekly school masses offered in the Church at 8:15 on Friday mornings. Additionally, students will attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation at 8:15. These Masses are open to the public.
- Sharing and Caring
 - This is a monthly food drive for the Oak Mountain Mission that is organized by the second grade. There is usually a theme surrounding the event. Be on the lookout for communication from a homeroom mom or teacher about the theme. Participation is optional. There are times where participation will earn a non-uniform day.
- Modes of Communication
 - The main form of communication from the school to the families is via email. It is critical that up-to-date emails are always on file in RenWeb, as this program is our emailing feature. We also send via email weekly announcements and a monthly newsletter. Communication from teachers may come in weekly email as well, especially from elementary teachers.
- Specific for the 2020-2021 school year- related to COVID-19

- Please refer to the COVID-19 Protocol document for all things related to this particular topic.