The Cross and Community

A Holy Cross Academy Newsletter

Issue No. 15 | September 2026

Family Faith Reflection:

September brings us fully into the rhythm of a new school year. The excitement of the first few weeks begins to settle, routines take shape, and our days quickly fill with school work, activities, pratices, and commitments. In the midst of all the busyness, September offers us an opportunity to remember the importance of making time for God.

Faith does not have to be another item on our to-do list. Pray together on the way to school. Share something you are grateful for around the dinner table, or take a moment before bed to ask God to watch over your family, classmates, teachers, and friends. Small moments of prayer can have a lasting impact.

This month challenge your family to look for ways to be the hands and feet of Christ to others. A kind word, an invitation to someone who feels left out, helping without being asked, or simply showing patience can be powerful ways to share God's love.

"Let all that you do be done in love."
- 1 Corinthians 16:14

As we continue through this school year, may this verse guide our families and our school community. Let us strive to approach our learning, relationships, service, and everyday interactions with love, remembering that even the smallest acts can reflect Christ to those around us.

Letter From Mrs. Jenny Mahfood

We are off to a wonderful start to the school year, and I am so excited for all that this year has ahead! I have jumped right in, from getting started on our mulch project at the Early Childhood Center to diving into Gala preparation. The Legacy Gala is going to be amazing! The way this community comes together, supports one another, and shares in the mission of Holy Cross is truly something special.

I am so grateful for the warm welcome I have received from our staff, teachers, families, and students. I was even blessed with a handful of welcome cards from our 4th grade classroom, which was such a sweet surprise!

I am excited to share the mission and love of Holy Cross Academy with others because, let me tell you, you have an incredible and unique story to share. The four campus breakdown with an internal bus route is innovative and provides excellent Catholic education to so many students. And we want to share that, and extend that opportunity to many more families. I feel so fortunate to be part of this community and look forward to getting to know even more of you throughout the year.

If you have not already done so, please consider participating in the Legacy Gala. There are so many ways to get involved, and any and all support is welcomed and greatly appreciated. I can't wait to see what we accomplish together this year!

Gracias,

Jenny Mahfood Carrillo

Head of Operations and Finance

Holy Cross Happenings

Apple Week at ECEC

Students were busy shopping at The Apple Store, making pies at the sensory table, and painting their very own apple trees!

Kindergarten Fundations

Our Kindergarteners had some special teacher helpers as they reviewed their Fundations letters and sounds.

4th Grade Football Draft

Fourth Grade kicked off football season with their very own draft day! They will graph the team's wins and losses all season in math!

Middle School Volleyball Tournament

Our middle schoolers brought the competition to P.E. class with a volleyball tournament! The excitement continued as the entire campus gathered to cheer on the teams during the championship games. Congratulations to the winners!

All Academy

On September 14, students and staff from all four campuses came together to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross and our HCA community! The day began with Mass, followed by a service project where students made tie blankets for those in need. Students also enjoyed a magic show from Circus Kaput, generously funded by HCPA! Throughout the day, students connected with friends from across our campuses, created a special craft, and reflected on our school year theme of courage and what it means to live courageously through our faith. Our ECEC students celebrated by learning about the cross, visiting church, and creating cross-themed crafts. It was a wonderful day of faith, service, friendship, and fun!

Legacy Gala 2026

Volunteer

Amazon Wish List

Venmo

Faculty & Staff Corner

Q & A with Mrs. Christa Schwermer

What is your role at HCA?
3rd grade teacher
What was your dream job when you were a child?
A teacher and mom
What is one way you try to live out your faith each day?
Sharing a smile or kind word to hopefully brighten someone's day
What is your go-to comfort food?
Pizza
What is your favorite TV show to binge-watch?
Any Bravo show
What is one thing you hope every student remembers from their time at HCA?
I hope they remember the feeling of caring and kindness from the teachers and staff at each campus.
What was your favorite subject in school?
Reading

Q & A with Mrs. Ellen Akin

What is your role at HCA?
Shining Stars Teacher's Aide
What is the most rewarding part of working in education?
Seeing how much the children grow during the school year
What is one way you try to live out your faith each day?
Praying and being kind to all
What superpower would you choose and why?
Flying so I could go anywhere I wanted to
If you could have any celebrity as a co-teacher, who would it be?
Adam Sandler
What is a lesson your students have taught you?
Love without conditions
What is your go-to comfort food?
My mom's chili
What is your favorite TV show to binge-watch?
New Girl

From the Pews

St. Michael's

Oktoberfest

Friday, October 2, 2026

Authentic German food, dessert, & Oktoberfest beer!

Live German music by the Wendl band

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

To continue hosting our incomparable Oktoberfest, we need help. Be part of what has become a beloved St. Michael tradition. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available the day before and the day of the event. Help is needed decorating the festival site, wrapping sandwiches and brats in the Pit, taking food orders and more. **SERVICE HOURS AVAILABLE!**

TO VOLUNTEER

Call or text Kurt Odenwald at 314-608-6468, email Kurt at ksodenwald@sbcglobal.net, or scan the QR code and volunteer through SignUp Genius on the St. Michael website.

SEVEN HOLY FOUNDERS

ALTAR SERVER PROGRAM

- Open to SHF Parishioner students in 4th grade and older
- Training includes 1–2 training sessions followed by a short period of observing during Mass
- Servers are scheduled for weekend Masses only - Saturday 4:30 PM and Sunday Masses
- Flexible scheduling - servers may switch dates with one another
- High school students can earn service hours
- Applications due December 15

INTERESTED?

CLICK HERE TO APPLY!

MIKE PANNERI, COORDINATOR
314-605-6910
CYBERSEVE@GMAIL.COM

Ladies' Tuesday Evening Rosary: Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary

All women of the parish are invited to join the Ladies' Tuesday Evening Rosary group on **Tuesday, October 6 at 6:00 PM** inside Annunciation Church to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. We will begin by praying the Joyful Mysteries at 6:00 PM, followed by light refreshments in the gathering area.

- **All Experience Levels Welcome:** Prayer guide printouts and extra rosaries will be available.
- **Bring a Guest:** Friends, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, etc. are all welcome!
- **Weekly Gatherings:** Can't make it on October 6? You are always welcome to join us any Tuesday at 6:00 PM.

No RSVP required. We're looking forward to praying with you!

COME CELEBRATE
OCTOBER 10TH
ProvidenceFest

ProvidenceFest is right around the corner! Please join us for fun and fellowship!

Contact **providencefest.stl@gmail.com** with questions.

ProvidenceFest 2026,
Saturday, October 10 at 1:00pm
Unlimited play bracelets are available for presale at providencefest.com/store. Bracelets are $25 each through October 9, and $30 at the event. All who purchase bracelets will be required to sign a waiver when they pick them up from the registration booth.

Raffle Tickets
Raffle ticket sales are happening now after all weekend Masses, online at providencefest.com/store, and will be available at ProvidenceFest.

Providence Fest

Movie Night

Friday, October 9th
7pm-9pm
Our Lady of Providence Field

Super Mario Galaxy

Help set up for ProvidenceFest
While the kids enjoy the movie.

Concessions will be available.
Outside coolers welcome.

Holy Cross Parents Association

Hello from HCPA

It's been a busy month for the Holy Cross Parents Association!

Our youngest students and their families had the opportunity to gather, play, and connect at a special ECEC event at the end of August. It was a wonderful chance for families to build community while their children enjoyed time together.

We were also excited to support our campuses through our discretionary funding made possible from fundraising efforts like DOT Days, Uniform Resales, and Trivia Night. Each campus received $500 at the beginning of this school year to use where it is most needed. ECEC is putting its funds, along with an additional gift from HCPA, toward the mulch needed under the new swings so that they can be fully utilized by our students.

Finally, our budget also allowed us to provide the funding for Circus Kaput to be brought in as part of our All Academy Day on September 14.

How to Get Involved

A special thank you to all of the parents who expressed interest in volunteering as Room Parents and/or class party volunteers at the Primary and Intermediate campuses! We are so grateful for the many parents who are willing to share their time and talents to help make these experiences special for our students. We'll be sharing additional information with volunteers soon, so stay tuned!

There are many ways to participate in HCPA—no matter your schedule or availability! Whether you're interested in chairing an event, volunteering for an hour, helping with teacher appreciation, supporting holiday collections, or sharing a new idea, there is a place for you.

A list of volunteer opportunities can be found by clicking here. Some upcoming events still needing chairs and/or volunteers are Mom's Night Out (chairs), Trunk or Treat (volunteers), and Faculty and Staff Lunch for Parent/Teacher Conferences (chair and volunteers). Email hcpa@hca-stl.org with any questions about events, expectations, and/or new ideas.

Let's work together to make this school year an amazing one for our students and families!

HCPA

HOLY CROSS

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Mark Your Calendars

DOT (Dress Out Today) Day | Friday, October 16| All Campuses
For just $1 per DOT Day – or $6 all-in for the six DOT Days throughout the year- students may wear whatever they choose (within the guidelines of the student handbook). Payable via Venmo @holycrossacademy-stl. Please note DOT Day payment. (Please contact hcpa@hca-stl.org if you need an alternative payment method.)

Trunk or Treat | Saturday, October 17 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. for ECEC
6:00 p.m.– 7:00p.m. for K-8
| ECEC Campus
Plan to join us for some spooky fun at the annual HCPA Trunk or Treat (flyer attached). Two time slots are offered again this year: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. for ECEC families and 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. for K-8. Cost is $20 per car (billed through FACTS). You do not have to decorate your car, but no guests will be allowed to park in the neighborhood and walk in. Please note the number of children and adults in the following sign up.

Volunteers are still needed to help make this event possible. Sign up here.

Uniform Resale | Monday, November 2 | 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. | Primary Campus
The Fall Uniform Resale will take place on Monday, November 2, from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. (Note: We're experimenting with a weekday evening resale to help those families who said Sundays were difficult to make.) Uniform Resale is a great time to gear up for the next season, but also an opportunity to clear the closets of gently worn, outgrown items. Donations can be dropped off at any campus the week before the resale.

Trunk or Treat