

## *MEDIA RELEASE*

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June 3, 2016

*FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:*  
Molly Griffin, Director of Communications  
St. Mary Catholic Schools  
920.722.7796 ext 803  
[mgriffin@smcatholicschools.org](mailto:mgriffin@smcatholicschools.org)

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

### **SMCS FACULTY AND STAFF AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

**NEENAH/MENASHA:** The following individuals received special recognition at the annual year-end prayer service for St. Mary Catholic Schools faculty and staff that was held at the Jane Bergstrom Fine Arts Education Center on June 2, 2016. The recipients of these three annually-bestowed awards were each nominated by several parents, students and/or peers. Then, an administrative committee reviewed and prayerfully considered the nominating essays and chose the finalists. A list of the comments from their supporters was given every person who was nominated for an award.

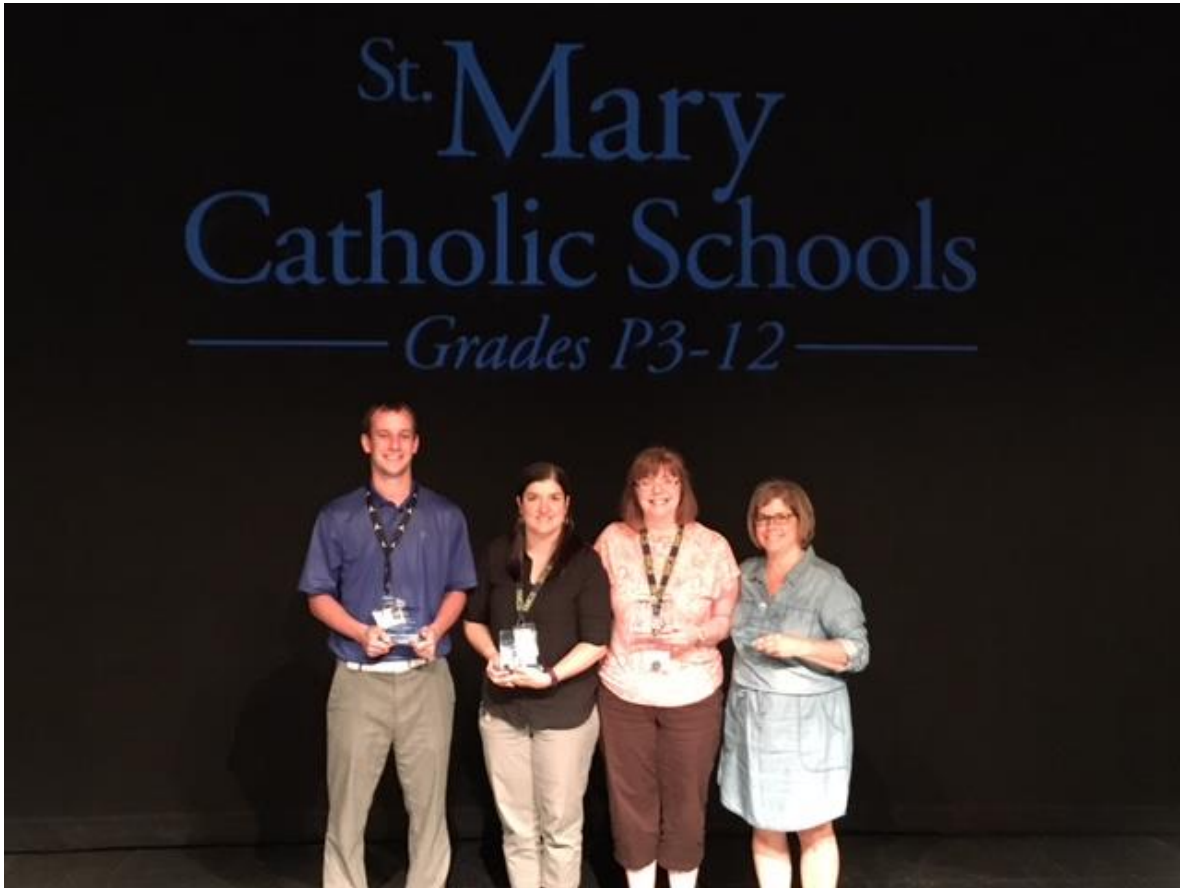
The St. Frances Xavier **Positive Influence Award** was presented to **Jason Tursky**. Tursky is the student & administrative services coordinator at St. Mary Catholic High School. He is recognized as a team player with a never-fading smile who promotes school spirit, attends student events ranging from athletics to academics to fine arts, and is the go-to person at the school. He is universally recognized as being reliable, helpful, compassionate and kind.

The St. John Baptist de la Salle **Outstanding Teacher Award** was presented to St. Mary Catholic Middle School math teacher **Ellen Bailey**. Noted for spending countless hours to help students be successful, Bailey works with students before and after school and during her lunch hour and prep periods. She is dedicated to creating a positive learning environment that encourages participation and includes a touch of fun, such as making up silly songs to reinforce concepts. She sets high expectations and is tireless in her commitment to every student's success.

The **TCCES Spirit Award** was given to SMCS teacher and parent **Jeanne Griffith**. A preschool teacher at St. Mary Elementary in Menasha, Griffith goes above and beyond to create innovative and fun lessons that keep her students fully engaged. She is a true advocate for Catholic education and the school system and can be found attending sporting events and performances at all levels. Mrs. Griffith's strong faith is an example and inspiration to her peers, students and friends.

New this year, the **St. Isidore of Seville Award for Promising Innovation** was given to **Pamela Barnhill**. As the band instructor at the middle and high school, Barnhill has already had a significant positive impact, though just completing her first year with the school system. A dedicated director, musician and educator, Barnhill is known for having big ideas and for putting the work into making them happen. She inspires her students to succeed and push for higher goals.

**St. Mary Catholic Schools** (SMCS) includes St. Mary Catholic High School and the new St. Mary Catholic Middle School in the Town of Menasha and St. Mary Elementary Schools (St. Margaret Mary and St. Gabriel in Neenah, and St. Mary in Menasha). SMCS is dedicated to the individual development of each student in grades Pre3-12, by providing the highest quality education focused on faith, academics and service in a rapidly changing world.



**Jason Tursky, Pamela Barnhill, Ellen Bailey and Jeanne Griffith**

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