

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Mary Catholic Schools faculty and staff award recipients announced

Four annual awards given in recognition to staff for leadership, service, innovation and faith

NEENAH, Wis. (June 3, 2021) – St. Mary Catholic Schools (SMCS) recognized faculty and staff for their leadership, service, innovation and faith at the annual year-end service for SMCS faculty and staff on June 3 at Zephyrs Field.

SMCS bestowed four annual SMCS awards – the St. John Baptist de la Salle Outstanding Teacher Award, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Award for Positive Influence, St. Anne Award for SMCS Spirit and St. Isidore of Seville Award for Promising Innovation – in addition to recognizing retirees and years of service.

Award recipients were each nominated by several SMCS parents, students and/or peers. An administrative committee reviewed and prayerfully considered the nominating essays and chose the honorees.

The **St. John Baptist de la Salle Outstanding Teacher Award** was given to **Emily Langlois**, a first grade teacher at St. Gabriel Elementary. This award recognizes excellence in teaching, with a focus on creativity, rapport with students, positive attitude and high-quality instruction. It is presented to a current SMCS teacher who continually inspires and academically challenges students.

“Emily is a very helpful, resourceful, and inspiring teacher. She's a wonderful role model for her students and uses engaging, creative, and teaching strategies. She's always willing to collaborate with colleagues and share her time & talents,” nominations, in part, for her award said. “Emily does an amazing job with students who may need something a little extra in their day! She knows her students’ strengths and areas for growth and uses those to benefit the entire class.”

The **St. Frances Xavier Cabrini Award for Positive Influence** was awarded to **Rachel Pociask**, a seventh grade religion and social studies teacher at St. Mary Catholic Middle School (SMCMS). This award is given to a current SMCS staff member who makes an exceptional difference in the lives of students and their families, going above and beyond to make sure that students feel school is a haven for learning and growing.

“Rachel has an incredible way of connecting with her students and providing a safe and positive environment for learning. She incorporates a variety of fun, hands-on projects into her curriculum to keep students engaged and get them excited about learning,” nominations for her award, in part, said. “Rachel demonstrates dedication to her students by her involvement in activities outside of the classroom as well. She has been a part of many middle school musicals and has also helped plan the 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. She is a gentle and effective teacher, seeking equality in the classroom and getting her students to work to their very best. She also models her Catholic faith and is willing to share that with her students.”

The **St. Anne Award for SMCS Spirit** was given to **Matthew Schoultz**, St. Mary Catholic High School (SMCHS) athletic and activities director. This award is presented to a current SMCS staff member who consistently represents all SMCS schools in a positive and enthusiastic manner. The honoree inspires others by actively engaging co-workers, students and families to support the SMCS mission and vision, and is committed to the concept of a preschool-grade12 Catholic school system in our community.

“Among the many SMCS faculty and staff who contribute to the development of our youth, Matt Schoultz has distinguished himself as someone who not only embraces SMCS’s mission and vision but is tireless as SMCS athletic and activities director and enthusiastically supports sports and other student activities in all levels of SMCS,” the nominations, in part, said. “Matt has brought prayerfulness back to SMCS Athletics. He is kind, caring, intelligent and very generous with his time. Matt’s energy and enthusiasm is infectious, and he is among the most effective and positive representatives of SMCS. He has improved every aspect of SMCS’s organized athletics and has improved accessibility and opportunity for all students regardless of their skills or pedigree.”

The **St. Isidore of Seville Award for Promising Innovation** was awarded to Lisa **Kmichik**, reading specialist at St. Mary Elementary. This award is presented to a current SMCS staff member who has been with SMCS for five years or fewer and who shows distinction in innovation. It recognizes an engaged employee who fully uses the resources provided by SMCS, seeks mentors within our community and freely shares time, talent and ideas with other SMCS employees and students to support SMCS values and strategic goals.

“Lisa brings with her an expertise in curriculum and has the ability to make adaptations to make all students successful. Lisa works within a variety of classrooms and knows what resources are available and is able to share to best meet the needs of all students,” the nominations, in part, said. “Her dedication to assessment and communication with classroom teachers as well as parents’ is second to none. Lisa has built great connections with her students and families. She has been instrumental in making a reading buddy program successful. Lisa is creative in finding resources for all students to find success. You will not find an employee that is more innovative in reaching all students and helping to build student success for all learners.”

More details about these annual awards and a list of past SMCS award recipients may be viewed at www.smcatholicschools.org/awards.

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St. Mary Catholic Schools ([SMCS](http://www.smcatholicschools.org)) serves more than 900 students in grades preschool-12 at five campuses – St. Mary Catholic High School and St. Mary Catholic Middle School in the Village of Fox Crossing, Wisconsin, and St. Mary Catholic Elementary Schools (St. Gabriel and St. Margaret Mary in Neenah, Wisconsin, and St. Mary in Menasha, Wisconsin). SMCS is dedicated to preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ in our Catholic tradition.