

October 1, 2015

Mr. and Mrs. John D. Smith
123 Main Street
Chicago, IL 60610

Dear Mary and John,

Welcome to another outstanding school year at St. Mary School. We are proud to Chair the Annual Fund this year. A heartfelt thanks goes to Bob and Mary Brown (last year's chairs) for all their hard work to further the cause of the Annual Fund. We are equally happy in welcoming Jack Ranas and Anne Cutler as our co-chairs for this year's Annual Fund. Based upon their previous involvement with St. Mary activities, we know they will be a tremendous asset to the Annual Fund.

For many of you, who do read these Annual Fund letters (hope it is most of you), and have responded with your generosity, we thank you. For those who have not responded, we want to remind you that the Annual Fund and the Auction are critical to supporting the educational programs of St. Mary School. Together they represent over 15% of the schools operating budget. **Without these two fund raising activities St. Mary would be forced to further raise tuition.**

We are asking every family this year to consider making St. Mary their **“charity of first choice.”** Of course, your contributions to the Annual Fund are tax deductible, but more importantly, it directly benefits your child. We know you would be hard pressed to find a more worthy charity. The most important reason to donate is our excellent teachers. Since 80% of the schools' operating budget is made up of teacher compensation, 80% of your gift goes directly to teacher support. You see the dedication and commitment they offer, and we are asking you to offer a similar commitment to them by making a contribution to the Annual Fund.

Annually our request is for parents to make up the difference between the cost of education and tuition. This year that gap is \$1,200 per child. Last year's participation rate was 63%. This year we are aiming for a participation rate of 100%. An increase in the participation rate is critical, it will allow St. Mary School to tap into other potential funding sources outside our community. **Regardless of your giving level it is imperative that all families participate in the Annual Fund.**

Lastly, we have included the enclosed “Most Frequently Asked Questions About the Annual Fund.” It should answer all your questions, but if not, feel free to call us.

Your commitment is important to the ongoing success of St. Mary School. On behalf of the teachers and staff, we want to thank you for your continued support of the Annual Fund.

Sincerely,

Jim O'Brien and Lynn Joyce

Jack Ranas and Anne Cutler