



**GWYNEDD-MERCY  
ACADEMY**  
*Elementary*

# Mercy Monthly

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## Welcome to a new year at GMA!!

As the 2009-2010 school year gets off to a start, we look forward to the many ways in which Gwynedd-Mercy Academy may continue its commitment to excellence as a Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School. Our Back to School Nights, on September 16th and 23rd, will give parents a



*You must be cheerful and happy,  
animating all around you.*

**Catherine McAuley**

**Letter dated February, 1838**

chance to meet our faculty as well as see for themselves the many learning resources available to their children. Our Family Liturgy will be celebrated on Sunday, September 20th at 10:00 am, providing us the opportunity to gather together and worship as a school community. On September 24th, we will honor our heritage by marking Mercy Day and use the faithful enthusiasm of our students to collect their *Pennies for Peru*, helping change many lives for the better.

**Book Day**, Wednesday, September 9th, from 10:00 am to noon, is the time for all GMA families to officially start the 2009-2010 school year. Homeroom lists will be posted in the front corridor and at each homeroom door. Each student should report to his or her homeroom to meet the student's homeroom teacher and to pick up the following items:

- ◆ Mercy Memo envelope—beginning on Book Day, communication throughout the year will be sent home with the youngest child in the family *every other* Wednesday via the Mercy Memo envelope. Parents are asked to read the information, respond if requested to do so, sign and return the Mercy Memo envelope to the youngest child's homeroom teacher on Thursday.
- ◆ Required stationery, textbooks and workbooks.

Families are also invited to visit the *Mercy Mart* where many new and favorite GMA Bookstore items will be available for sale. The 8th grade will also be selling rolls of clear contact paper, book sox (cloth book covers) and GMA folders.

### Important Reminders:

- ◆ Parents may visit [www.gmaelem.org/backtoschool](http://www.gmaelem.org/backtoschool) for any updates that may occur prior to the opening of school, including sports calendars and menus.
- ◆ All school clothing, including shoes and sneakers, must be labeled with students' names.
- ◆ Students wear summer uniforms beginning on Thursday, September 10th. Gym uniforms, purchased from Flynn and O'Hara, must be worn during gym classes.
- ◆ The school day runs from 8:15 am—3:20 pm. All are expected to be on time each day. Parents must come to the main office to sign in students arriving after 8:15 am.
- ◆ Lunch will be served for grades 1-8 beginning on Monday, September 8th.
- ◆ Snacks will be sold during the morning breaks for grades 1-8 beginning September 8th.

## Parent Communications Survey Results

Last June, a survey was sent out to parents to determine how we could improve our school communications and plan our advertising placements. We greatly appreciate your input and were pleased at the number of parents who responded. The survey responses have generated some changes in our communications and several are listed below:

- ◆ 90% of respondents preferred the virtual emailed Mercy Memos or liked the virtual Mercy Memo but wouldn't want to have it all the time. *Therefore this year, we will have paper Mercy Memos every other week, alternating with an emailed, web-based version.*
- ◆ 81% of parents preferred emails about fundraisers and Parents Organization sponsored activities over paper flyers.
- ◆ 56% of parents felt very informed and 39% of parents, somewhat informed, about GMA. Only 3% felt they were not very informed. *We will provide additional detail on the website about school events and activities.*
- ◆ We received many helpful, positive and constructive comments. The area noted as most needing improvement was consistent use of RenWeb by the faculty. *A stronger emphasis will be made in ensuring that all faculty use RenWeb on a consistent basis and have class assignments, homework and lesson plans updated in a timely manner.*
- ◆ Equal preference for information on school events was placed on the School Handbook/Calendar, website and Mercy Memos. *We will continue to use the website to provide the most current information on calendar items and activities and will make sure that data from all sources is reliable and easily available.*

