

# St. Mary's Catholic School Offers Open House for Families

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - According to Principal Mary Rivera, St. Mary's Catholic School is uniquely focused on faith, family and education.

From 9–11 a.m. on Saturday, March 16, 2024, the school will host an open house for potential families where you can tour the classrooms, meet with faculty and staff and register for the 2024–2025 school year. With an impressive academic curriculum and several athletic and extracurricular programs, they hope many families will stop by the open house to learn more about the school, what they offer and approach.

“They’re our kids,” Rivera said. “The second that they walk into our hallways, they become like an extension of our family. I would treat this person’s child no differently than I would treat my own. Our goal is not just that they get these top test scores, that they place — I mean, we love those things, don’t get me wrong. But what we are preparing them for when they leave our hallways has to be at the top of everything. Are we putting people into this world, this dynamic world that is ever-changing, prepared not only with the skill sets they need, but also, do they feel loved? Do they feel confident? We are not going to let our students go into this world and get kicked around. They know that we’re their family even long after they graduate.”

Rivera explained that St. Mary’s is different from other schools. They make a point to be involved with their students, and everyone — including teachers and priests — often join in the fun, from kickball and Junior Olympiad to band practice and art class.

As a teacher, Sister Antonia experiences this firsthand. She noted that faculty members go above and beyond to engage with students. No matter what a student’s religious background is, they know they have support as they learn and grow in their relationship with God.

“At St. Mary’s, kids can be kids. And we just love them through whatever happens, every single day, all day,” Sister Antonia said. “We are known as sisters and priests to give our lives to God and the Church. But I have seen all these faculty members literally give their lives for St. Mary’s, and that is amazing to me.”

With faith as one of St. Mary’s three pillars, Rivera and Sister Antonia agree that it’s important to put this faith into action through service. They encourage students and families to complete service hours at the school and throughout the Riverbend. For them, it’s about raising kids who are able to thrive in the community in addition to succeeding at school.

“It has to be more than them taking tests and them passing a religion test and being told what their faith is,” Rivera explained. “What good is that if we don’t put it into action? That has to happen.”

You can learn more about St. Mary’s faith, family and education approach at the open house on March 16, which will be held in Suddes Hall at 536 E. Third Street in Alton. Parents can take a tour of the building and find out more about the school while kids enjoy activities and refreshments. For more information, email [kroberts@smsalton.com](mailto:kroberts@smsalton.com) or visit the [official St. Mary’s website at StMarysAlton.com/school](http://StMarysAlton.com/school).

“We’re going to be there just to share the good news and everything that’s going on at St. Mary’s,” Rivera added. “We’re going to give everybody these personalized tours to let them know and let them ask questions, because that’s the thing, we want this to be personal. It is personal to us, and I know as a parent coming in it is personal to them, and we want them to be able to go through and ask the questions that make them feel comfortable sending their kids to St. Mary’s...We’re just really excited to share with everybody what we’re doing at St. Mary’s.”

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

March 16th  
9-11 a.m.

Suddes Hall  
536 E. Third St.  
Alton, IL

**Come Join Us:  
Faith, Family, and Education**

- Light Refreshments
- Classroom Tours
- Meet Faculty/Staff
- Register for the '24-'25 School Year

Contact Katie Roberts with any questions.  
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