



Meet Our St. Patrick Faculty:

At St. Patrick School, we are blessed to have some of the best teachers and support staff in the region working with our students each and every day. Many of our faculty attended local Catholic schools themselves. Several have received Masters Degrees. All are licensed. Without their enthusiasm and dedication, we could not provide the quality education that we are known for.



Mrs. Mary Vitulli: Principal

Mrs. Mary Vitulli was raised in New York, but has made Illinois her home for over 38 years. Mrs. Vitulli is a graduate of Colgate University where she received her B.A. in History and Secondary Education. She went on to attend SUNY of Cortland as an elementary education major and more recently the American School of Education where she received a Masters in Leadership and Administration. Mrs. Vitulli has had a diverse career in education, coming to St. Patrick School most recently from St. James School in Highwood where she was a teacher, assistant principal and principal for 23 years. Mrs. Vitulli is married with three grown children and five beautiful grandchildren.



Mrs. Becki Chorazy: Learning Resource Teacher

Mrs. Chorazy began teaching in 1999 after graduating from Monmouth College with degrees in Elementary Education and Special Education. She got her Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Concordia University in 2016. Her career thus far has spanned a wide range of ages and grades and has included several years working as an assistant principal. Mrs. Chorazy has been with St. Patrick School since 2011. Currently Mrs. Chorazy serves as our learning resource teacher.



Mary Richter: Reading Specialist

Mrs. Richter graduated from Sacred Heart of Mary in Rolling Meadows, IL. She received her A.S. degree from Harper College, then continued on to receive her B.S.Ed. degree from Eastern Illinois University. Mrs. Richter studied in Athens, Greece, and has traveled extensively. She earned her M.A. degree in reading from Roosevelt University in Chicago and trained as a reading specialist for grades K-12. Mrs. Richter is married with 3 children who all graduated from St. Patrick School. She loves reading, baking, and traveling. At St. Patrick School, she is the Reading Specialist for our students in grades K-8.



Miss Bridget McKinnon— Behavior Specialist

Miss McKinnon is a graduate of St. Patrick School (2009), Carmel Catholic High School (2013). And went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Communicative Sciences and Disorders (Speech Pathology) from Saint Mary's College in 2017. In the fall of 2017, Miss McKinnon came back to St. Patrick as a staff member in 2017. She completed her master's degree in Applied Behavior Analysis with an emphasis in Autism from Ball State University in 2020. This year Miss Bridget will be the Behavior Specialist on the Resource Team.



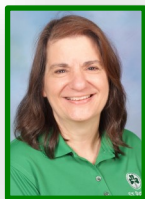
Mrs. Melissa Ehram: Social Worker

Mrs. Ehram graduated from Our Lady of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, MI. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Science degree from Central Michigan University. Mrs. Ehram received her Masters in Social Work from Wayne State University in Detroit, MI focusing on Youth, Family - Child Welfare and Delinquency. She specializes in Substance Abuse, Residential Treatment, Domestic Violence and Court Advocacy. Mrs. Ehram is the Social Worker for our school. She is available to all of our students as needed for assistance with any of the problems that can arise for our young learners.



Mrs. Linda Schlueter: Preschool Director & Teacher

Mrs. Schlueter has been teaching in the St. Patrick preschool for 17 years. She has also taught at the Gurnee Park District Preschool for 3 years. Along with teaching responsibilities, Mrs. Schlueter is also the director of the entire preschool program.. She has a BS/ Biochemistry degree from the University of IL at Chicago and worked at Abbott Labs for 10 years.. She received her BS/Early Childhood Education degree from Kendall College. Mrs. Schlueter loves spending time with her husband and daughter.

**Mrs. Julie Johnson: Preschool Teacher**

Mrs. Julie Johnson is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education. She has been an Early Childhood teacher for twenty years. She began her teaching career at Most Blessed Trinity Academy (formally Immaculate Conception School) in Waukegan, where she taught First Grade and Pre-Kindergarten. She has been a PreK teacher at St. Patrick School for twelve years and is a certified Catechist. Mrs. Johnson loves spending time with her husband and two sons.

**Mrs. Becky Sponseller: Preschool Teacher**

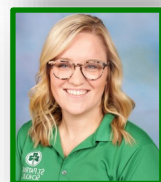
Mrs. Sponseller graduated from Augustana College in Rock Island, IL in 2006 with a B.A. in Elementary Education and a minor in Geography. She began her teaching career at Holy Family Catholic Academy in Inverness, IL, teaching third grade. She taught there for nine years before leaving to start her family. Mrs. Sponseller has one son, who is a kindergartener at St. Pat's. This is Mrs. Sponseller's first year teaching at St. Patrick School. She co-teaches with Mrs. Linda Schlueter in the 3-day 4 year old program. She loves to read, make crafts and enjoys doing anything outside. She and her family love to hike, swim, boat, and waterski.

**Ms. Linda Esser: Kindergarten**

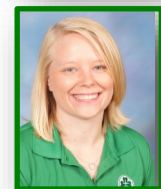
Ms. Esser is a graduate of Carmel Catholic High School. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and English Literature from Mundelein College. Ms. Esser received her Masters of Arts in Early Childhood Education from Indiana University. Before coming to St. Patrick School, Ms. Esser was a teacher at St. Peter School in Antioch. This is her 8th year at SPS and her 35th year teaching in the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools. She is a certified Catechist. Ms. Esser loves teaching and enjoys gourmet cooking, working in her yard and gardening.

**Miss Bridget Swanson: Kindergarten**

Miss Swanson graduated from Carmel Catholic High School. She went on to receive her Bachelor's Degree from Saint Mary's College in South Bend, Indiana, where she majored in Elementary Education and minored in Early Childhood Education. Miss Swanson enjoys watching Notre Dame football, running, and reading in her spare time.

**Mrs. Jacqueline Cyphers: Grade 1**

Mrs. Cyphers graduated from Zion-Benton High School. She went on to receive her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois. Her focus was history, reading, writing and science. In her spare time, Mrs. Cyphers enjoys watching University of Illinois football and decorating wedding cakes. This is Mrs. Cyphers 9th year at St. Patrick School.

**Ms. Kara Jones: Grade 1**

Ms. Jones is in her first year at St. Patrick School coming to us with 2 years of experience in public schools. However new, she has always been a part of the community and parish. She graduated from St. Patrick School and Lakes Community High School. She went on to receive a B.A. in Early Childhood Education, with an ESL and SPED endorsements from Roosevelt University. She could not be happier with this 'full circle moment' of teaching at the school which she first became a part of as a 3rd grader. She has a 2-year German Shepherd, Brooks, who is a huge part of her classroom!

**Mrs. Christine Sulla: Grade 2**

Mrs. Sulla is a graduate of Elmhurst College with a B.A. in Elementary Education and Psychology. This is her 15th year teaching second grade at St. Patrick School. Prior to staying home with my children, I also taught first grade for four years. Teaching is what fills my days with joy, however family is what fills my heart with happiness and love. A few activities that I enjoy when I am not in the classroom are spending time with my family, walking in the woods, doing yoga, gardening, and cooking.

**Mrs. Janice Rial Grade 2**

Mrs. Rial is a graduate of Lewis University with a BA in Elementary Education. She has taught for 20 years in 1st and 2nd grades at St Paul School- Joliet, St. Joseph School- Round Lake and Prince of Peace School- Lake Villa. Mrs. Rial is married and has 4 children, one which is a student at St. Pat's. She enjoys spending time with family, Disney, playing board games and relaxing. She is excited to join the St. Patrick School community.

**Miss Nora McKinnon: Grade 3**

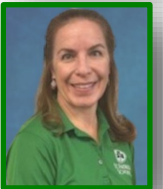
Miss McKinnon graduated from the University of Dayton in 2022 with a B.S. in Early Childhood Education. She graduated from St. Patrick's in 2014 and then Carmel Catholic High School in 2018. She is excited to continue to grow in her faith while teaching it to her students. She is also excited to be teaching the students about the sacrament of Holy Communion, which they will make this year! When she is not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends, playing/coaching volleyball, photography, and journaling. She also oversees the yearbook committee.

**Mrs. Andrea Uko: Grade 3**

Mrs. Uko received her Bachelor's Degree from Loyola University and her Master's Degree from Dominican University. Mrs. Uko has been a teacher for 18 years at St. Patrick School primarily in 3rd grade. She is married with three children. She loves traveling with her family and playing with my two Miniature Schnauzers. One of the reasons I Mrs. Uko loves teaching so much is learning something new from her students each and every day.

**Mrs. Colleen Stachowiak: Grade 4 Homeroom/ Grade 4-5 Math**

Mrs. Stachowiak has lived in Gurnee for 8 years. She graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in math and education and has completed some mathematics graduate work at the University of Akron. She taught middle and high school math for 6.5 years before staying home to raise her family. She has four kids, three are currently students at St. Patrick School. One attends Carmel Catholic H S.

**Mrs. Lisa Weideman: Grade 4 Homeroom/ Grade 4 ELA / Grade 4 Social Studies**

Lisa Weideman will be entering her 14th year of teaching elementary school, including seven years as a Reading Resource Teacher. She graduated from Cornell University with a degree in Human Development and earned her Master's Degree in Education from Claremont Graduate University. She is married and has three children. Her two sons attend Carmel Catholic High School, and her daughter attends St. Patrick School. Additional to her deep love of teaching, Mrs. Weideman enjoys playing volleyball, paddleboarding, traveling, and breadmaking.

**Ms. Elyse Levine: Grade 5 Homeroom / Grade 5 Social Studies, Grade 4-5 Science**

Ms. Levine graduated from the University of IL Chicago with a B.A in public administration and Masters Degree in teaching from National Louis University. This is Ms. Levine's second year at St. Patrick. Over the past 15+ years, she has taught in both the public and private school systems, most recently at Most Blessed Trinity Academy in Waukegan. Although, she has taught in all core subject areas the vast majority of her teaching experience has been in the fields of elementary/middle school science and social studies. She is the proud mother of two adult children and the grandmother of two.

**Mrs. Lauren Smith: Grade 5 Homeroom / Grade 5 Religion, Grade 5 ELA**

Mrs. Lauren Smith has been teaching for 11 years and is excited for her 12th year at St. Patrick. She has taught 3rd Grade, 6th-8th Grade Language Arts, was a Reading Interventionist and Teacher Aide. She graduated from DePaul University with an Elementary Education degree and a Language Arts and Art endorsement. Mrs. Smith also taught in Las Vegas for 5 years where she received her ESL endorsement from University of Nevada. She has several master credits from National Louis University with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction. Mrs. Smith has two children that also attend St. Patrick.

**Mrs. Colleen Case: Grade 4 Religion**

Mrs. Case has a B. A. in Elementary Education and a Master's in Educational Technology. She taught second grade for twenty-five years in Catholic schools before joining St. Patrick School in 2023 to assist in our intermediate grades. This year, Mrs. Case will be teaching 4th grade Religion and continuing to assist for the intermediate team. Colleen, her husband, and their two daughters enjoy cooking, traveling, and scuba diving as a family.

**Ms. Brittany Abraham: Grade 4 Homeroom / Grade 4 ELA, Grade 4-5 Social Studies**

Ms. Abraham went to University of Wisconsin Parkside where she received a B.A. in Elementary Education with a minor in English. She taught preschool for a year and a half before teaching at St. Patrick. Teaching fourth and fifth grade is truly my passion. She also enjoys reading, writing, hiking and being outside.

**Mrs. Christine Bawcum Middle School History**

Mrs. Bawcum earned her Bachelor of Science in Education at Northern Illinois University. She then attended Thomas Jefferson School of law, working as an attorney for 13 years before returning to the field of education. Mrs. Bawcum taught 4th grade in District 60 before spending some time at home with her 4 children. She lives in Wadsworth with her husband and 4 children, who attend St. Patrick School.

**Mrs. Katie Miller: Grades 7-8 Math**

Mrs. Miller graduated from LaPorte High School in LaPorte, Indiana. She went on to receive her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Jr. High Mathematics from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. She continued her education in Illinois by becoming a certified catechist and mathematics certified. Mrs. Miller teaches 7th and 8th grade math, pre-algebra, and algebra 1. She has two beautiful daughters and loves going hiking with them, her dog, and husband.

**Mrs. Mary Ann Wilson: Grade 6 Math**

I am the oldest of seven children. I grew up on the southwest side of Chicago, St. Bede the Venerable Parish and then went to Queen of Peace High School and earned my B.A. in Education at St. Xavier University. I have taught all subjects including Jr. High math over my many years in the classroom, mostly at Prince of Peace in Lake Villa. In the fall of 2023, I was a long-term substitute at St. Patrick School teaching 6th-8th grade social studies. This year I will teach 6th grade math. I am married to my husband Mike. I have four children, Mike, Joe, Tim and Kate and two grandchildren, Dougie and Annie.

**Mr. Nick Huffman: Grade 6-7 ELA**

Mr. Huffman graduated from Illinois State University with a History/ Social Sciences Educational Degree. He furthered his education and received a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instructional Design from Saint Xavier University. He has 14 years of teaching experience, 13 years at St. Patrick School. Throughout his time at St. Pat's, Mr. Huffman has primarily taught 6-8th grade ELA. He has also taught intermediate STEM classes and has been our Athletic Director. He is married with 2 children. He enjoys boating, playing/ watching sports and helping on his family's farm.

**Ms. Jessica Rigwood: Middle School Science**

Ms. Rigwood graduated from Vernon Hills High School. She went on to receive her Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Secondary Education from Carroll University. She is Science certified in Biology, Environmental Science, and Earth and Space Science. She also received a broad field science license. Ms. Rigwood is working towards obtaining her catechist certification. She enjoys reading, puzzles, and spending time with her family.

**Mrs. Lucy McKinnon: Middle School Religion**

Mrs. McKinnon graduated from Schlarman Academy in Danville, Illinois. She went on to receive her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Eastern Illinois University. Mrs. McKinnon is a Liturgical Coordinator and the St. Patrick School Student Council Advisor. Mrs. McKinnon enjoys baking and spending time with her family. Mrs. McKinnon teaches 6th through 8th Grades with a focus on Religion.



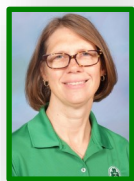
No image available

Ms. Rosa Angelica Rivadeneira: Grades 6-8 Spanish Teacher

Ms. Rivadeneira, an Ecuadorian linguist with over 17 years of experience, holds a Bachelor in Education, a Master in Teaching Spanish as a Second Language, and a Master in Spanish Teaching for Teachers. She has worked with the Peace Corps and various governments to bridge language barriers. Ms. Rivadeneira is married and a mother to a bilingual son. She enjoys hiking, producing audio-visuals, and learning how to code.

**Mrs. Jenise Floyd: Physical Education**

Mrs. Floyd is a graduate of Carmel High School in Mundelein, Illinois. She went on to receive her BSE in Physical Education from Truman State University. Mrs. Floyd is an American Heart Association certified CPR instructor as well as a certified catechist. Mrs. Floyd teaches Physical Education to our children in grades 2 - 8 as well as Health to the students in Grades 6 - 8. Mrs. Floyd is also the leader of our St. Patrick School Fishing Club.

**Mrs. Karen Rojas: Primary Physical Education**

Mrs. Rojas graduated from Loyola University with a B.S. in biology. This is Mrs. Rojas' second year teaching physical education to Preschool, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade. She has been substitute teaching all grade levels at St. Patrick since 2017. Mrs. Rojas loves to spend time outside gardening and playing sports with her family and her dog. On the weekend, you will most likely find her cheering on her daughters at a soccer game or cross country meet. Two of Mrs. Rojas' daughters have graduated from St. Patrick School and her third daughter is in seventh grade.

**Mrs. Dora Trygar: Music**

Mrs. Trygar is a graduate of Carmel High School in Mundelein, Illinois. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Education at Mundelein College, majoring in Voice Performance. Mrs. Trygar is also fluent in Spanish and often tutors this subject. Mrs. Trygar's love for music shines as she teaches our younger students the basics of this art through vocals as well as reading music.

**Mrs. Barbara Urbanik: Art**

Barbara Urbanik received my Bachelor's of Fine Art from Northern Illinois University. My emphasis was in fiber and fabric design, with a minor in textiles. I have previously taught at park districts and my home studio. I also have participated in various art shows on the North Shore. enjoy working with many mediums, including; charcoal, pastels, graphite, acrylics, stain glass, mosaics, and weaving.

**Mrs. Sheri Jones : Librarian / Idea Lab.**

Mrs. Jones has been working at St. Patrick School since 2006. She spent 7 years as a teacher aide in 1st grade and has since worked in 2nd grade, preschool, 4/5th grades. Most recently she has been running our library, including organizing our newest favorite fundraiser, Read-a-thon and our annual book fair. Mrs. Jones also teaches our STEAM program for grades 1-5 in our IDEA Lab. Her passions outside of St. Patrick School are her family, love of books and being a loyal fan of the Chicago Blackhawks. She has been happily married since August 1990 and has 3 children who are all graduates of St. Pat's.

**Mrs. Ann Orchard:: Technology Coordinator**

Mrs. Ann Orchard has been a member of the St. Patrick School family for almost 24 years, first as a parent, and then as a member of the staff. Mrs. Orchard has held several positions at St. Pat's. Previously, she has served as a teacher aide in both our Primary and Junior High Units, as well as in the role of librarian/computer teacher for Grades K-5. Currently, Mrs. Orchard serves as the Technology Coordinator. She runs our 1:1 Chromebook program and maintains our digital programs in grades K-8. This year she will also teach robotics. Mrs. Orchard has been married for 34 years, and loves spending time with her husband, her 2 sons, and her 3 dogs.



Preschool Aides

Kindergarten Aides



Primary Aides

Intermediate Aides



Jr. High Aides



Office Staff



Maintenance Team