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. 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 40 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. She completed her master's degree in Applied Behavior Analysis with an emphasis in Autism from Ball State University in 2020. Miss Bridget is the Behavior Specialist on the Resource Team.



Mrs. Melissa Ehrsam: Social Worker
Mrs. Ehrsam 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. Ehrsam 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. Ehrsam 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 19 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 22 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 14 years and is a certified Catechist. Mrs. Johnson loves spending time with her husband and two sons.



Mrs. Becky Sponseller: Preschool Teacher

Mrs. Sonseller 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 5th grader at St. Pat's. She loves to read, make crafts and enjoys doing anything outside. She and her family love to hike, swim, boat, and waterski.

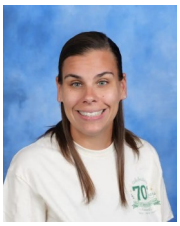


Ms. Linda Esser: Kindergarten

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 10th year at SPS and her 37th 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. Megan Avila: Grade 1
Mrs. Avila is in her second-year teaching first grade at St. Patrick School and her 13th year in education. She graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Mathematics. She is a firm believer in the value of Catholic education and feels blessed to be part of the St. Patrick School community. She is also a proud mom of three children who attend St. Patrick School. She expresses that being a part of this wonderful community as both a teacher and a parent makes my work especially meaningful!



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. 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.



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 17th year teaching second grade at St. Patrick School. Prior to staying home with her children, she also taught first grade for four years. Teaching is what fills her days with joy, however family is what fills her heart with happiness and love. A few activities that she enjoys when she is not in the classroom is 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. She enjoys spending time with family, Disney, playing board games and relaxing. She is enjoys being a member of 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. 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 and is our Athletic Director.



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 for20 years at St. Patrick School primarily in 3rd grade. She is married with three children. She loves traveling with her family. One of the reasons 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 10 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 16th year of teaching 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 children attend Carmel Catholic High School. Her daughter graduated from St. Patrick School. Additional to her deep love of teaching, Mrs. Weideman enjoys playing volleyball, paddleboarding, traveling, and breadmaking.



Mr. Peter Wilson: Grade 5 Homeroom / Grade 5 ELA / Grade 5 Social Studies
Mr. Wilson has been a teacher in Catholic schools throughout the archdiocese for 21 years. He received his BA at Northeastern Illinois University, and two years ago got his master's degree at Concordia University in Curriculum Development. On a personal note, Mr. Wilson grew up on the northwest side of Chicago, where he attended Catholic schools. In his free time, he enjoys reading, playing the guitar and watching baseball. (Go Cubs!) He is married and has three children: Andrew,17; Ally, 14 and Jack,8.



Mrs. Christina Egmer: Grade 5 Homeroom / Grade 4/5 Science / Grade 5 Religion
Mrs. Egmer earned her undergraduate degree from Trinity International University and is currently pursuing her master's degree through the American College of Education, which she will complete in May 2027. She has been teaching 5th grade for the past four years, including the past three years at another Catholic school. Prior to that, she worked in District 41 and District 34. She currently teaches 4th and 5th grade Science and 5th grade Religion at St. Patrick's. Mrs. Egmer and her husband have two daughters, Ella and Lyla, and three dogs. Outside of the classroom, she coaches high school cheerleading at a local school and enjoys spending time with family and friends and cheering on her daughters at their sporting events.



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 the intermediate team. Colleen, her husband, and their two daughters enjoy cooking, traveling, and scuba diving as a family.



Ms. Brittany Abraham: Grade 6 Homeroom / Grade 6/7 ELA,
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. She taught 4th and 5th grade ELA at St. Patrick School before moving to the Jr. High 3 years ago. She also enjoys reading, writing, hiking and being outside.



Mrs. Christine Bawcum Grade 6 Homeroom / Grades 6-8 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: Grade 7 Homeroom / 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
She is the oldest of seven children. She 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. She taught all subjects including Jr. High math over many years in the classroom, mostly at Prince of Peace in Lake Villa. In the fall of 2023, she was a long-term substitute at St. Patrick School teaching 6th-8th grade social studies. She has taught 6th grade math at St. Pat's for the best 3 years. She is married and have four children, Mike, Joe, Tim and Kate and two grandchildren, Dougie and Annie.



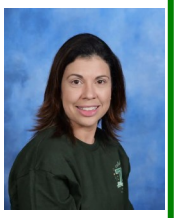
Mrs. Lauren Smith: Grade 7 Homeroom / Grade 7/8 ELA
Mrs. Lauren Smith has been teaching for 13 years. She has taught 3rd Grade, 6th-8th Grade Language Arts, was a Reading Interventionist and Teacher Aide. She graduated from DePaul University with an Elementary Education degree and a Language Arts and 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.



Ms. Jessica Rigwood: Grade 8 Homeroom / Grades 6-8 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: Grade 8 Homeroom / Grades 6-8 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. Suhey Romano: Grades 6-8 Spanish Teacher
Mrs. Romano comes to St. Patrick School with over 25 years of experience working with children and families. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education with a specialization in Special Education from the Central University of Venezuela. She is certified to teach in the State of Illinois and is also a certified Early Childhood Parent Educator, specializing in children from birth to age three. Additionally, she holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and Marketing. As the Spanish Program Coordinator at Learn Spanish, she brings her educational experience and passion for language learning together to create engaging, inclusive, and hands-on experiences that help students develop their Spanish language skills, broaden their cultural awareness, and build meaningful connections through learning.



Mrs. Jamie Deehr: Grades 2-8 Physical Education
Mrs. Deehr grew up in Chicago. She attended Southern Methodist University in Dallas Texas where she studied business. She then attended Le Cordon Bleu college in Chicago, where she earned a degree in Applied Science in Culinary Arts. She currently is studying at Western Governors University, pursuing a degree in Elementary Educational Studies. She has worked in special education and early childhood classrooms before coming to St. Patrick as a P.E. teacher. Mrs. Deehr is married and has three wonderful kids: Jackson (26), Colton (16), and Ellison, who is almost one! Outside of school, she enjoys cooking, baking, sports, cheering on her kids, and spending time with family and friends.



Mrs. Karen Rojas: Primary Physical Education
Mrs. Rojas graduated from Loyola University with a B.S. in biology. This is Mrs. Rojas' 4th year teaching physical education at St. Patrick School. 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. All three of Mrs. Rojas' daughters have graduated from St. Patrick School.



Ms. Gabriella Sorrentino: Music
Ms. Sorrentino, is in her second year at St. Patrick as our PK - 8th Music Teacher, Choir Director, and Drama Club Coordinator! She attended St. Patrick School (Class of 2017) and Carmel Catholic High School (Class of 2021). She went on to attend North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, where she earned her bachelor's degrees in Music and Musical Theater. Her family has been involved with St. Patrick Church events throughout the years, so it is especially exciting for her to come back home and be part of the St. Patrick community! Outside of school, she enjoys performing, spending time with her pets, and discovering new thrift stores and coffee shops.



Mrs. Barbara Urbanik: Art
Barbara Urbanik received my Bachelor's of Fine Art from Northern Illinois University. Her emphasis was in fiber and fabric design, with a minor in textiles. She previously taught at park districts and at her home studio. She has participated in various art shows on the North Shore. She enjoys working with many mediums, including; charcoal, pastels, graphite, acrylics, stain glass, mosaics, and weaving. This is her 4th year at St. Pat's.



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 STEM 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.



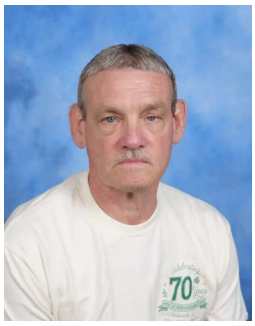
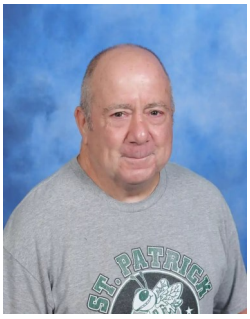
Mrs. Ann Orchard:: Technology Coordinator
Mrs. Ann Orchard has been a member of the St. Patrick School family for almost 26 years, first as a parent, and then as a member of the staff. Mrs. Orchard has held several positions at St. Pat's. Previously, she has served as a teacher aide in both our Primary 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 36 years, and loves spending time with her husband, her 2 sons, and her 3 dogs.

Office Staff





Maintenance Staff

Teacher Assistances






Preschool and Kindergarten







Grades 1-5





Junior High