



Important Notes from Mrs. Luzzo May 9, 2025

Don't forget to ROAR!

Happy Friday and happy Easter, HTCS families. Thank you to the PTO and so many families for your generosity towards the HTCS faculty and staff this week showing appreciation for the work we do. We are all so grateful for your kindness. Please see below for important information about the upcoming final weeks of the 24-25 school year.

ESTF Grants - All SC families who have received tuition assistance and/or a scholarship for the 25-26 school year who have not already done so MUST apply for the ESTF grant. Starting May 12, 2025, there will be a week of priority applications for children of active duty military residing in South Carolina. On May 19, at 8:00 AM, applications will open for everyone and be distributed on a first come first serve basis. [Click here to apply](#). There are 10,000 scholarships available for the 2025-26 school year. For more information, click the link: [What to Know About 2025-26 ESTF Applications - SC School Choice](#)

MAP Testing - Spring MAP testing ends next week. Teachers will send home information about your student's results as soon as they have the information to share. I will share the overall school results as soon as we have analyzed the data.

5th Grade Students Attending Seton in the Fall - Please see the OLSS Church bulletin for information about potential grant opportunities. If students need letters of recommendation, they should ask the appropriate HTCS faculty or staff member directly and in advance of the due date.

Final Mass of the School Year - Our last Mass will be at **9 AM** on **Wednesday, 5/21**. At this Mass, our 5th graders will receive a special blessing and altar servers who are fully trained will receive their white belts. As always, all are welcome to join us.

Sneakers for St. Jude - Although Lent is over, our collecting new and gently used sneakers for St. Jude is not. Feel free to drop your donations in the box located in the front office between now and the end of the school year. Please note... we can only accept *athletic shoes* (running, gym/training, basketball, rubber cleats, hiking shoes, casual sneakers).

EOY Ceremony - Our annual end of year ceremony will take place in the mpr at **8:30 AM** on **Friday, 5/23**. The front office will close promptly at **8:30 AM** so that all faculty and staff may attend the ceremony. All are invited and students will be dismissed immediately afterwards (approximately 9:30 AM).

Summer Camps - Please see attached for information about two summer camp options. Note, we are not affiliated with these camps. we're just passing on the information.

School Website - As always, please refer to the school website for all the information you could ever need regarding the calendar, school events, clubs, sports, etc. [Holy Trinity Catholic School | North Myrtle Beach, SC](#).

Catholic Faith Formation - Why Do Catholics Have a Pope? Fr. Mike Schmitz Explains - April 25, 2025 Ascension Team - Many people, even Catholics, are confused about the pope. Some ask, "Why do we need a pope at all? Isn't it just a man-made position?" But as Fr. Mike Schmitz puts it, *"The papacy wasn't invented by the Church—it was instituted by Jesus himself."* In this article, Fr. Mike unpacks the biblical and historical foundations of the papacy, showing that the pope is not just a Catholic tradition but a central part of Christ's plan for his Church.

The Pope Reunites the Kingdom of God - Fr. Mike begins by tracing the roots of the papacy back to ancient Israel. He walks us through the formation of the twelve tribes of Israel, the rise of King David, and the eventual division of the kingdom. But the key moment comes when Jesus enters history not just to save individuals but to re-establish the Kingdom of God. *"Jesus came to save us, yes, but not just individually. He came to reconstitute the Kingdom."* This kingdom would not be abstract—it would have real structure, leaders, and authority, just like the Davidic Kingdom of old.

Twelve Tribes, Twelve Apostles - Fr. Mike points out that Jesus begins his ministry in the north of Israel, in the very region where the ten lost tribes had disappeared. There, He calls the twelve Apostles—deliberately echoing the twelve tribes of Israel. *"Jesus is very clearly reconstituting the twelve tribes of Israel. He's here to establish a new kingdom."* In this new kingdom, Jesus is the King, but he also appoints leaders with real authority. One Apostle stands out among them: Peter.

Peter: The First Pope - In Matthew 16, Jesus asks his disciples who they think he is. Peter replies, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Jesus responds with a monumental declaration: *"You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church... I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven."* Fr. Mike emphasizes the gravity of this moment: *"This isn't just a nickname. Jesus is giving Peter a role—the role of Prime Minister in his Kingdom."* He compares this to the Old Testament office of the al-habbayit (prime minister), especially as described in Isaiah 22, where the key of David is given to a royal steward. *"When Jesus gives*

Peter the keys, every Jewish disciple there would've known exactly what that meant. Peter was being made the Prime Minister."

The Pope Has Real Authority - Jesus tells Peter that *"whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."* This is not symbolic. It's real authority. As Fr. Mike explains: *"The pope isn't just a figurehead. He has authority because Jesus gave it to him. It's part of the Kingdom structure."*

The Pope Is a Sign of Unity - Why do we call the pope "Holy Father?" The word *pope* comes from the Italian *papa*, meaning *father*. In the Old Testament, the prime minister is even described as a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. *"We call him the Holy Father because that's what he is—a spiritual father to the whole Church."* Far from being divisive, the pope is meant to unite us: *"The role of the pope is meant to be a peg in a sure spot. It's a sign of unity for all Christians."* Unfortunately, not all Christians see it that way today, but Fr. Mike invites everyone—Catholic or not—to reconsider: *"This was meant to be a sign of unity. So what's your relationship with the pope? Maybe it's time to take another look."*

The Pope's Role Was Not a Man-Made Office - For anyone who has thought the papacy was a medieval invention, Fr. Mike challenges that assumption: *"This isn't some man-made position. It was part of Jesus' plan from the beginning—to found a Church, to give it structure, and to place Peter at the head."* The Church is not just a spiritual idea—it's a tangible body with leadership, responsibility, and mission.

Does the Pope Have to Be Perfect? - No, the pope isn't perfect. Peter wasn't either. But that's not the point. *"Jesus didn't choose perfect men. He chose leaders who would guide His Church with the authority He gave them."* The role of the pope remains what it always was: a visible sign of unity and a spiritual father for God's family on earth. So whether you're Catholic, curious, or skeptical, Fr. Mike's message is clear: *"Maybe the pope is meant to be a sign of unity for you too."* [Why Do Catholics Have a Pope? Fr. Mike Schmitz Explains – Ascension](#)

MISSION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School, a ministry of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, offers to early childhood and elementary school students of diverse ethnic, economic, and religious backgrounds a superior academic program based on Gospel values. Within a family atmosphere, the school strives to develop the spiritual, academic, personal, creative, and physical growth of each student.*

VISION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School students will be fully prepared to transition to middle school possessing critical thinking skills, an ability to work independently as well as collaboratively, and an awareness of what it means to actively live the Gospel values.*