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<http://www.stfrancisparish.net/school.html>

September 13, 2011

Dear St. Francis Families:

Our school and community are sharing a loss this week as we deal with the death of a very special 1st grader, Michael Wise. So that we might help the students through this difficult time, I wanted to inform you about what occurred and what we are doing at school.

Michael died on Saturday afternoon from injuries he suffered when his go-kart collided with a motorcycle at Circleville Raceway Park. Our school staff joins the Wise family and friends in sadness over this tremendous loss. Michael will always be remembered for his beautiful smile that could light up a room.

Staff members met on Sunday evening with counselors and a representative from the Diocese of Columbus. Today the staff allowed the children time to process this incident. Fr. Bob and I met with the classes, answered their questions and prayed with them. The teachers were prepared to listen empathetically, and help students think of ways to make positive contributions of time or gifts to the family or school in Michael's name. The counselors were available to talk with children and staff as needed. Further opportunities for questions and support will occur in the days ahead.

In visiting the classes I was impressed with how well prepared so many of our students already were, and that is to your credit. The following recommendations will hopefully help you as you talk through this loss at home.

- Listen to, and support, all questions and feelings. Don't feel that you have all the answers. Share your feelings in a calm, caring manner. Be honest and factual.
- Everyone's response to grief is different. Respect your child's response and give them freedom to be authentic. Sometimes responses are delayed.

Viewing hours will be from 3:00-6:00pm on Wednesday, September 14th at Reed-Egan Funeral Home, with vigil prayer at 6:00pm. Funeral services will be held on Thursday, September 15th at 10:30am here at St. Francis Church. **Students may be excused to attend the funeral with their parents if requested.** Students who were members of the Children's Choir last year are invited to sing at the funeral. There will be a practice tomorrow in the church from 2:45-3:45pm. Please return the bottom portion of this letter by tomorrow if your child will be singing with the choir or by Wednesday if you will pick your child up Thursday morning to attend the funeral.

All of us are so sorry this has happened but I have confidence in you as a loving and caring community. With God's divine guidance we can work together to support the family and help our children deal with this loss.

Thank you,
Mrs. Mary T. Walsh, Principal

Please return this portion no later than Wednesday, 9/15, so that we can prepare for the upcoming events.

_____ I will be picking my child up on Thursday morning to attend the funeral.

_____ We will not be able to attend the funeral on Thursday.

_____ My child was part of the Children's Choir last year. S/he will attend practice on Tuesday after school.

Child's Name/Class

Parent Printed Name

Parent Signature