

Frequently Asked Questions About the St. John's Scrip Program (SJSP) Benefiting the Martin P. Harris Scholarship Fund (updated August 2009)

This FAQ sheet is designed to answer your questions about the program.

1. What is Scrip?

"Scrip" is negotiable prepaid gift cards and gift certificates that are used just like cash. Many stores in our community where you already shop regularly issue these gift cards and certificates. You can use scrip to purchase everyday expenses like food, clothing, gas and other essentials, and with every purchase, you earn revenue for the Martin P. Harris Scholarship Fund! Our school is able to buy these gift cards and certificates at a negotiated discount and resell them to you at full face value. The discount is from two to fifteen percent or more. Scrip is popular because families don't have to sell anything. St. John's families produce revenue by making regular household purchases they would make anyway. Groceries, clothing, toys, gifts, even gasoline can be purchased with scrip.

2. Where can I use Scrip?

There are currently over 100 restaurants, grocery stores, drug stores, gas stations and retail stores in the tri-county area where you can use scrip! There are over 500 nationally known retailers that offer scrip that we can order.

3. Is it easy to use?

Scrip is very easy to use. Use scrip just like cash; you can use manufacturers' coupons and buy things on sale. There is no difference between scrip and cash when you go shopping, except that you are using gift cards or certificates for that particular store. Depending on the merchant, you can even use your scrip to do catalog or online shopping.

4. What is the catch?

Your participation does not cost you anything! For example, you buy \$400 worth of gift cards for Food Lion for one month's worth of groceries. St. John's previously bought the gift cards for \$380, so Food Lion has, in essence, given us \$20 in profit! So you buy \$400 in Food Lion gift cards, it costs you \$400 and you receive \$400 worth of goods for the gift cards. The \$20 profit is contributed to the Msgr. Harris Scholarship fund and is awarded to you in the form of a tuition credit scholarship (*see item 10*). NO SERVICE CHARGE, NO EXTRA FEES, NO KIDDING!

5. Is there a minimum amount of Scrip that I must buy?

No. Even if you spend just \$50 per week in groceries, that adds up to \$2,600 for a year. Everyday expenses like gas, food and clothing can add up to thousands of dollars each year. During the program year which is July 1 through June 30, you may purchase as often as you'd like, as much as you'd like, and from as many participating stores as you'd like.

7. Can family and friends purchase Scrip?

Absolutely! You are strongly encouraged to have family members, friends and co-workers buy scrip as well – just make sure they use your tuition account number when they purchase. Remember, the more scrip you buy during the program year, the more revenue is generated for the Martin P. Harris Scholarship Fund, the more you can earn in scholarship award.

8. What type of Scrip do you offer?

We offer in-stock and special order scrip. We keep the most popular, local scrip (grocery, gas and selected retail) in stock for everyday purchase. All other retailers can be special ordered from our supplier, Great Lakes Scrip Center (GLSC) which has over 500 national retailers that participate in the scrip program! Many of your favorite, nationally known retailers participate. You can see a listing of all participating retailers and find out usage information regarding the gift cards and certificates they offer on the Great Lakes Scrip Center website at www.glscrip.com. If you don't have internet access, contact the Scrip Coordinator and you will be sent a list of retailers and the denominations and percentages they offer.

9. How do I order Scrip? When will I receive it?

For in-stock scrip - We offer local grocery, gas and some selected retail scrip that we keep *in stock* for daily purchase. You can purchase *in-stock* scrip three ways:

- (1) During the school year, you can order it Monday through Friday through school. Pre-printed order envelopes are available in the school office. Complete the order envelope and include a check made out to St. John's. Send the order envelope and check to school with your child. Orders are filled and returned home with your child the same day. You will receive a new envelope for your next order.
- (2) Scrip may be purchased after each of the four weekend Masses from the volunteer scrip sellers located in the lobby of the Msgr. Harris Center.
- (3) You may stop by the rectory Monday through Friday during business hours and purchase scrip as well. During the summer months, you can purchase scrip by using options (2) or (3).

Special Order Scrip – Great Lakes Scrip Center (GLSC) is where we order all of our other retailer scrip. You can order this specialty retailer scrip from our ShopWithScrip website. ShopWithScrip lets scrip-using families place their GLSC orders online anytime day or night. Please see the ShopWith Scrip information flyer in this scrip packet. The Scrip Coordinator places all orders every Tuesday and receives the scrip by noon on Thursdays. Scrip is sent home on Thursday of the same week it was ordered. When you submit your order, you can indicate which of two ways you wish to receive your scrip: It can be sent home with your child or you can pick it up from the school office Thursday at dismissal time (only parent or legal guardian may pick up). Special order scrip can also be ordered during the summer months.

10. When and how are tuition credit scholarships awarded?

Participation in the SJSP is voluntary. Participating families make their scrip purchases from July 1 through June 30. Scholarship awards are determined after June 30, the end of the Scrip program year (a small percentage of the revenue generated from SJSP pays for expenses for operating the program [shipping, software subscription fee, printing & copying costs]). Families are then notified of their scholarship awards which are applied toward tuition for the upcoming school year in August. If you use PayPlanner, your monthly payment amount is adjusted accordingly. If you pay up front, your total tuition payment is adjusted accordingly.

11. How do I get started using the program?

If you are a registered school family, you will have a tuition account number issued to you from the parish finance office. If you don't know your tuition account number, contact the parish office. When you place an order for in-stock scrip or special order scrip, use your tuition account number on your order form or order envelope. Please note that you should make a separate order/payment for grocery/gas scrip and a separate order/payment for GLSC scrip. Your information will be entered into the database of the Scrip Management software program. All of your scrip purchases will be entered and tracked and a running total of revenue generated for the program is calculated.

12. Who do I contact for more information or to volunteer in the program?

You can call Annette Morgan, the Scrip Program Coordinator, for more information at 301-373-5379 (home) or by email from the school website. Parents volunteer as scrip sellers for weekend masses or for school sales during the school year. If you are reliable, dependable and detail-oriented and want to put in your time to help fulfill your parent volunteer hours – please contact Annette.