

## **SBA Drama Director and Stage Manager Fr. Dominic, OSB arranged for a series of fun and educational activities for the Stage Rats!**

Every year Saint Bede students attend the Illinois High School Theatre Festival in January, but last year it was cancelled due to Covid. This year the festival was still on as of late December, but got cancelled at the last minute because of the surge in infection rates. Not to be defeated by this setback, SBA drama director and stage manager Fr. Dominic arranged for a series of fun and educational activities for the Stage Rats over the three days they would have been at Fest (January 6, 7, 8).

Thursday night they ordered pizza and watched a classic video of *Cinderella*, which is our spring musical. "We were still watching the end credits," Fr. Dominic reports, "when one of my senior Rats commented that every scene in that production had a staircase in it somewhere. That led to a discussion of levels, sight lights, entrances and exits, and the next thing I knew we were drawing a preliminary set design on the white board of my classroom!"

Friday evening Fr. Dominic led our students in a workshop he had intended to offer at Fest, and they spent a few hours creating colorful Mardi Gras masks decorated with acrylic paint, feathers and jewels. "I had already assembled the supplies," he said, "so I figured we might as well make the most of them." The Perino Science served as a perfect space for their creativity, having an ample number of tables with built-in electrical plugs for glue guns. "Mask making was the perfect way to start our makeshift theatre festival weekend, and allowed us to do something creative with no pressure to make anything specific." Stated Petra Mitchell

Saturday, the SBA stage manager offered a "Maker's Day" on the gym stage, where students could use the scene shop tools and materials to work on any craft or building project they chose. Some girls decided to learn how to make beaded bracelets and necklaces on waxed linen cord, while others chose woodworking projects. Senior Stephen Shaw designed and built a custom walnut stand for his gaming headphones, while his younger brother Michael began renovating an old table to use for his weekly Dungeons and Dragons group, assisted by his classmate Petra Mitchell. "It was unfortunate that we could not go to Theater Fest this year but Father Dom gave us the opportunity to grow our skills in creating beautiful gallery masks and even helping us create our own projects in the workshop." Stated Michael. Senior Thomas Harris worked with alumnus Alec Boehm on building a new equipment table for the scene shop.