



St. Joseph School, Fullerton

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Monthly Newsletter

December, 2010 and January, 2011

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

*May the Lord give strength to His people,
May the Lord bless His people with peace.*

Psalms 29:11

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

This is the time of year when we go to bed with our heads swirling with things that need to be done and problems to be solved. If you are like me, you lay awake scheming about ways to save money and time then worrying that you don't offend anyone in the process. I can't stop thinking about what happened yesterday and planning how to be incredibly effective and efficient tomorrow. Sleep becomes elusive as even the rhythmic chant of decades of *Hail Mary Full of Grace* doesn't do the trick.

Fr. Kevin opened the Advent Season with a sermon in which he reminded us how important it is to slow down. He said if you feel like you are going at 110% then shift to about 80%. Take time for prayer and just put it all in God's hand.

As we are being pulled in many directions throughout the day, ask God to keep you on course to do what is truly important. Know that he will listen to you and counsel you when you need to verbally unwind or when you need advice.

Going about the business of preparing for the holidays can take its toll on your children as well. Please try to help them maintain balance by allowing enough time for school work, relaxation and prayer. Remember that that joy increases not because of the presents that are placed in their arms, but instead because of the gifts we hand to them that they cannot repay us for – time, treasured moments, lessons of how to be givers as well as receivers, and stories about past generations.

I wish you the happiest and most intimate Christmas ever. Enjoy your children and others in your families (whatever they may be like!!). May God bless you in this joyful season.

Peace, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
Mrs. Phyllis Karko

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

- 2 Advent Prayer Service follows 8:15 Liturgy
4 Lunch with Santa 11:00 Parish Center, 8th Gr. High School Admission Testing #1
8 Immaculate Conception Liturgy 8:15
10 Santa's Secret Shop
11 8th Gr. High School Admission Testing #2
13 Reconciliation gr. 3-5 at 10:45, gr.6-8 at 1:00
14 Band Concert & Play 1PM for school, 7 PM family & friends, Market Day Delivery
17 Pre-K Show, Parish Center
21 Classroom Christmas Parties, Noon Dismissal (No Pre K AM or PM)
School Closed Until January 3
28 HASA Ice Skating Party @ Ice World

January

- 3 Classes resume for all grades
5 8th grade Composite Pictures; HASA Hot Spot Parking Lot Raffle sale begins
6 Blessing for the New Year 8:15 Liturgy, Hot Lunch packets distributed
10-21 Midterm Exams –Grades 4-8
17 School Closed – Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday
18 Market Day Delivery
20 Hot Lunch Packet orders and money due
26 HASA Ledo Pizza Night
28 Noon Dismissal – Professional Activities, HASA at Chick-Fil-A fundraiser lunch
Jan 30-Feb 4 Catholic Schools Week
30 1:15 Open House & Band Concert
31 Biography Day – Grade 6

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Advent Services

On Thursday, Dec. 2nd, students will participate in the Advent Prayer Service prepared by Grade 1, immediately following the 8:15 Mass. Individual grades are also schedule to attend parish Daily Mass. On December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, all students will attend the Parish 8:15 Mass. Then on Monday, December 13th, children in grades 3 to 8 will also participate in the sacrament of Reconciliation. We invite you to join us for any and all liturgies.

Lunch with Santa

Our children can't wait for our 6th annual HASA *Lunch with Santa* held on Saturday, Dec. 4th in the Parish Center. St. Joe school children and CCD students are invited to a pizza or

hot dog lunch, games, crafts, face painting and visit with Santa. As of this writing, tickets are still available through the school but going fast. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

Middle School Play

Our older children are getting excited because this is the year for the bi-annual Middle School Play. This year's production has a '60's theme and will include music and dance for the first time. Auditions will be held on Thursday, December 9th and on Wednesday December 15th. More details are included on the parent permission slip that went home with the children. We hope your Middle school child will join in on the fun.

Santa's Secret Shop

No peeking!!! Our HASA is again sponsoring Santa's Secret Workshop for our children to purchase gifts for their loved ones on Friday Dec. 10th. The youngest children will be assisted with their shopping by their 'Buddies' in the older grades. You can help you child by preparing the lists and giving us some hints of who they need to buy for.

Christmas Performances

Mark your calendar for December 14th so you won't miss out on our annual Christmas Concert and Christmas Play. Our award winning School Band will perform twice - once at 1:00 for students and once at 7:00 for families and friends. Our Fourth Grade will present their annual Christmas Play following both concerts. This year performances will not disappoint.

Blessing of the School

To begin the new calendar year with God's blessing, our parish priests and deacon will bless our school after the 8:15 Mass on Thursday, January 6th. The celebrant and our 4th grade 'Three Kings', and student body will process from church to school as blessings are placed over the front door. This is a beautiful tradition that reminds us that God will protect us in a special way.

Ledo Pizza Night

Our HASA will again sponsor a night at Ledo Pizza on Campbell Blvd on Wednesday, January 26th.. This is a family dinner out event that promises to be a fun evening for all. Come early. Word is it gets very crowded as families don't want to leave.

Catholic School Week

Catholic Schools Week is a national celebration that calls attention to the wonderful education offered in our Catholic Schools. Beginning on Sunday, January 30th, we will host our *Open House* in the school from 1:15 to 2:45. Prospective and current parents are invited to tour

the building, speak with staff and listen to our school band. Our Book Fair will also be open for anyone to purchase books and materials. Pre-registration for new students opens that day. Please invite your families and friends to come and see what a quality school we have here.

The festivities continue on Monday, January 31st with our 6th grade students dressing up and performing as a famous character from history in *Biography Day*. Tuesday, February 1st is Teacher Appreciation Day. In the past our HASA has treated the teachers to lunch and classes have prepared something special for their teachers. Visiting Day, a chance to see our students in action, is on Wednesday on Feb 2nd. To celebrate Our Lord, CSW Mass and the Catholic Challenge will be held on Feb 3rd and Student Appreciation Day (with noon dismissal) is on Friday, Feb 4th. (HASA Bowling is scheduled at noon that day.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Schedule

School **dismisses at noon on Tuesday, Dec. 21st** and **resumes on Monday January, 3rd**. We wish you a Merry and Miraculous Christmas and a Happy and Holy New Year.

Students in Grades 4 to 8 take various **mid term exams** during the weeks of January 10th and January 21st. Exams are generally 'worth' the same as two chapter tests but the content is cumulative from the beginning of the year. Please check with the children for their exact schedule and make every attempt to be present. Other classes and homework continue during exams weeks.

School is **closed on January 17th** for the Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday. School **dismisses at noon on Friday, January 28th** for teachers' professional activities following student dismissal.

Heads –up! Day off for Students

The Archdiocese has announced that elementary **schools will be closed to students on Tuesday, Feb. 22nd**. All administrative personnel will attend a Leadership Conference and all teachers will have Professional Activities at their campus. A letter with complete details is included at the end of this newsletter. Please mark you calendars and hopefully you will be able to use the four day weekend productively.

Christmas Project

Our Student Activities Committee is holding a collection during for the Maryland Pregnancy Center from Monday, November 29th through Monday, December 6th. Each homeroom is asked to donate a specific item that can be used in the care of babies. We hope that you help your child understand the importance for giving to those in need, perhaps by comparing

it to the needs of the infant Jesus. While the lists are specific, any other donations will be appreciated.

Inclement Weather

I want to remind you to listen to the weather reports each evening and turn on WBAL Radio (1090 AM) or WBAL TV (Channel 21) or call our school phone (410) 256-8026 to find out about late openings early dismissals or closings. Generally, we follow the decision made by Baltimore County Public Schools but there are occasions when our schedules conflict and we need to announce separately. We have not used the *Alert Now* Immediate Notification System from a remote location. I will attempt to send email to families as an additional reminder if we are late or close in the morning but the system has not been tested so please continue to listen to WBAL (NBC) or call the school if you are in doubt.

Absences

Please remember to call our school nurse each day that your child is absent. Whether it is an illness, doctor's appointment, or injury we need to know why your child is not in school. Call the office before 9:00 to report all other absences and to request homework.

CLASS NEWS

2A Reads for Others

Mrs. James' Second graders surpassed their reading goal of 200 books on November 30. Scholastic Book Club's *Reading Is Giving* program donates 1,000,000 books to kids in need. We are proud to be able to help others who are less fortunate.

Social Awareness Committee Activities

The Social Awareness Committee has organized several activities for the Christmas season.

The first and largest is a Christmas collection for the Baltimore Pregnancy Center. How grateful Mary and Joseph were for acts of kindness shown to their baby on that first Christmas. Your gift to this agency is a great way to celebrate the birth of Christ. Your child received a wish list before Thanksgiving. Items will be collected until Monday December 6th. All donations are appreciated.

Next, Santa Helpers will soon be transforming our halls. Student elves from grades 4-8 are working hard and submitting their ideas for adding some Christmas cheer to our hallway

doors. Eight designs will be chosen and those interior decorators will be assigned a door to transform into a Christmas Wonderland. Be on the lookout for these doors as you walk through our halls. (Separate flyer sent home)

Finally, on December 21st, our last day of school before Christmas holidays begins, students will be allowed to accessorize their regular uniform. Students may choose to wear Christmas ties, socks, hair accessories, hats, etc.

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE SOCIAL AWARENESS COMMITTEE OF ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL!

Nomination of Mrs. Loraditch

8th Grader William Villamayor wrote an essay in which he proudly nominated his Math teacher, Mrs. Kathleen Loraditch, to the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth, Sarah D. Barder Fellowship of outstanding educators. In his essay he wrote “She focused on my strengths, encouraged me to take a challenge, and not be afraid to take risks.....She is a teacher, friend and mentor worthy to be honored by her students and peers”

We wish Mrs. Loraditch the best and thank Will for his efforts to recognize his teacher.

Character Development through Animal Appreciation

On November 17th students in K,1st,3rd,5th and 8th grade attended presentations by Ann Gearhart and her dog, Spirit, on behalf of the Snyder Foundation for Animals. In anticipation of her talks, Mrs. Vernick met with all classes who would be attending. K, 1st and 3rd graders learned ways that they can help the environment along with a song celebrating the earth. Older students wrote cinquain poems about animals which were presented to Ann on the day of her visit.

Classes learned deep appreciation of the creatures in God’s creations. Ann Gearhart’s insights to nature touched the hearts of these children in a special way.

CONGRATULATIONS

Vocations Essay/Picture Contest

In an attempt to teach our parishioner more about religious vocations, Fr. Roque Lim invited our children to write or draw about a living person who was like a saint to them. Their selections were judged by a diverse group of parishioners and monetary prizes were awarded to the winners in each category during Vocation Night on Saturday November 6th.

Congratulations to the following first graders who received acknowledgement for their drawings:

- 3rd place - Corrine Quaerna - Grade 1A
- 2nd Place - Allyson Mananghaya - Grade 1A
- 1st Place - Jan Iringan - Grade 1A

Congratulations to the following Intermediate grade students who received acknowledgement for their creative writing:

- 3rd Place – Carley Laue - Grade 3B
- 2nd Place = Patrick Hurdle - Grade 4B
- 1st Place – Hailey Fink - Grade 5B

Congratulations to the following Middle School Students who were acknowledged for their very well written essays:

- 3rd Place – Mellisa Hedding - Grade 6A
- 2nd Place – Anthony Laue Grade - 7A
- 1st Place – William Villamayor - Grade 8A

Cross Country Results from Mrs. Goldbeck

On Monday, November 15th, Archbishop Curley High School hosted their annual ‘Curley Classic Cross Country Run’. Students from area Catholic Schools competed in various age groups, running on the hills and valleys around Curley’s campus. St. Joseph had 14 runners who participated, all of whom completed the run as assigned to their age group. In addition, 8 students medaled in their respective events as follows:

Boys 4th and Under

- 3rd Place – Sam Stitz (2nd grade)
- 8th Place – Owen Laue (4th grade)

Boys 5th & 6th

- 2nd Place – Zachary Urbanski (6th grade)
- 4th Place – Ben Stitz (5th grade)
- 6th Place – Thad Pedzich (5th grade)
- 7th Place – Tyler Sosnowski (6th grade)

Girls 6th, 7th, & 8th

- 2nd Place – Madison Pedzich (8th grade)
- 5th Place – Adria Pirozzi (6th grade)

Congratulations to all our runners for a job well done.

Keep Christ in Christmas Contest

The Fr. Burggraff Council Knights of Columbus sponsored a poster contest for children in grades 1-3, grades 4-6 and grades 7-8. The theme was to create a Christmas card that showed how we keep Christ in Christmas. In our school, 360 children created posters for submission. The Knights voted on the winner of each grade category and two of the three grade levels were won by only one vote. According to Mr. Michael Furst, Grand Knight, this shows the high quality of the children's work. The winners are:

Grades 1 – 3 Julia Haley (3B)
Grades 4 – 6 Hannah Laue (6B)
Grades 7 – 8 Alexis Coballes (7A)

Other finalists will receive a participation certificate as follows:

Marielle Smith (1B)
Carla Golubev (3B)
Nicole Flegel (6B)
Crystal Dong (8B)
Noelle Acaso (8B)

THANKS TO...

.....The Dads of the newly formed Fathers' Club and especially Kris Kurcoba who organized a campus clean up on Saturday, November 20th. The crew of about 10 fathers showed up to spruce up our playground by raking the mulch and weeding. Then they worked on other areas of the school grounds as they raked leaves, pulled weeds, and picked up trash. The teachers were very impressed with the improvement. Thanks for all your hard work, gentleman!!

...Mrs. Loraditch and the students in the National Junior Honor Society who organized a very successful canned food drive for the Little Sisters of the Poor. Thanks, also, to our families who went above and beyond in some cases to bring in lots of food for the sisters. Mrs. Loraditch attributes the overwhelming response to the weekly HASA Newsletter reminders. The Little Sisters were very appreciative of your generosity as they continue in their ministry to serve the elderly in need.

...The teachers, staff, and students for surprising me, once again, on Principal's Appreciation Day. I was showered with poems, cards, posters, plants, and well wishes of gratitude. I can't remember the last time so many children stopped by just to say 'hello and thank you'. It was a day to be remembered.

FROM THE SCHOOL CONSULTANT

I hope you all enjoyed your Thanksgiving holiday whether at home or afar with family and friends!

For those of you unable to attend the November HASA Meeting, I invited Sue Finkelstein, who is a consultant in development and behavior, to speak on the topic of Social Skills Development in Children. Sue presented the various “social skill dance steps” that the child must learn in order to successfully progress through each stage of development. The term “social dyssemia” was introduced which means difficulty in using and understanding non-verbal signals. Examples of this are children who are unable to read facial/body cues from peers and then respond inappropriately. She presented the ten essential social skills that a child must learn in order to be successful socially – greeting others, listening and responding, giving compliments, sharing and cooperating, joining ongoing activities, comprehending social space and appropriate touching, managing anger etc. The idea that a child must “crack the code” of his/her peer group in order to be accepted socially was useful in understanding the difficulties some children face who do not possess the skills needed to master this task.

Sue also discussed age appropriate expectations for play dates and how thoughtful planning can insure a more successful experience for the children involved. Parents also have “dance steps” to learn in order to know when to intervene to assist their child with peer issues and when it is best to allow the child to work things out on his/her own.

If you feel your child would benefit from involvement in a social skills group, Sue runs groups throughout the school year and can be reached at 410-486-6001. In addition, Loyola Clinical Services provides social skills groups for children as well. You can contact them at 410-617-1200. I can help facilitate any referrals for groups and as you know, I run social skills groups at school as needed. Please do not hesitate to discuss any concerns you may have regarding your child’s peer relations and together we can develop a plan to address his/her specific needs.

Another event worth mentioning was Ann Gearhart’s visit to our school. She taught our students about respect for the creatures of God’s world through her dog, Spirit. (See ‘Class News’ above). Ann will be returning in the spring to offer her presentations to the rest of the school and we are looking forward to her return! I would like to thank everyone for the generous outpouring of donations for the Baltimore County Animal Shelter. Ann was so touched and left in her car “packed to the gills” with all the wonderful supplies you provided.

Finally, as the holiday season is upon us and we all set our sights on giving the perfect gift to those care about, I would ask that you pay attention to the “verbal gifts” that you give to others. Comments such as “you mean so much to me”, “thanks for helping, you did a great job” – gifts of validation and appreciation require no gift wrapping and can be given freely anytime of day or night. Spread them generously to your children and other loved ones and enjoy a wonderful holiday season!

My best,

Gail Vernick, LCSW-C

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION NEWS

Recent happenings and reminders can be found in the Constant Contact emails that are sent out every Friday. Make sure you keep the HASA aware of any changes to your email address.

Upcoming events include:

Saturday, December 4th – Lunch with Santa 11 -2pm in the Parish Center

Friday, December 10th – Santa’s Secret Shop per schedule – Parish Center

Tuesday, December 28th – Family Ice Skating at Ice World

Wednesday, January 5th - Hot Spot Raffle Flyers go home

Thursday, January 6th – Hot Lunch Packets distributed

Wednesday, January 12th – Market Day Orders Due

Tuesday, January 18th – Market Day Delivered

Thursday, January 20th – Hot Lunch Packets due

Wednesday, January 26th – Ledo Pizza Night
Hot Spot Raffle Chances due

Friday, January 28th – Chick-Fil-A for Lunch after Noon Dismissal

FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE

Fall has arrived and school has been well under way, along with that, the colds and viruses have arrived also! Please use your best judgment in assessing whether your child needs to remain home due to symptoms of illness. Be considerate by not exposing other students to illnesses that are preventable. And don't forget to get your child immunized against the flu!

Review proper 'cover your cough' technique with your child:

- Cover your mouth & nose with a tissue when coughing/sneezing
- Cough into your upper sleeve, not your hand
- Wash your hands with soap and water, or, clean with an alcohol based hand sanitizer

A reminder regarding when your child is absent, a parent ***must*** call the School Nurse ***each day*** that the student is absent for medical reasons. A student must also present a ***note*** to the homeroom teacher upon returning to school after an absence. The note must contain the student's name, reason for absence, date or dates of absence, and a signature of the parent. If your child is seen by a physician, please obtain a note and send it in when your child returns. If records indicate a pattern of extended/numerous absences the homeroom teacher or nurse will contact the parent.

Office of the Superintendent

December 1, 2010

Dear Parents:

Greetings to you and your family during this Advent Season!

I am writing to share with you information about a new Archdiocesan leadership initiative. In response to a recommendation by the Blue Ribbon Committee, the Department of Catholic Schools, Loyola University, Mount St. Mary College and College of Notre Dame have collaborated on the development of a new Leadership Institute.

The Leadership Institute will offer principals and assistant principals with the best in professional development. The first in a series of seminars will be hosted on Tuesday, February 22nd. Dr. Todd Whittaker, Professor of Educational Leadership, Administration and Advancement and author of several books including *“What Great Principals Do Differently”* will be our keynote speaker.

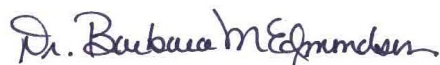
All Archdiocese principals and assistant principals will participate in the Leadership Institute. The presence of administration at the Institute will require all schools to remain closed for students, creating an extended President’s Day holiday weekend. However, this will be a professional work day for faculty and staff with schools closed for students only. Schools will be exempt from making up this day of instruction for students. Be assured that this is the only session which will cause a change in the school year calendar. Future sessions will be announced this spring, so that these professional development days can be included in the school’s 2011- 2012 calendar.

We are most excited about this new venture and ask for your prayers and support as we move forward with our efforts to build stronger and dynamic schools. As always, we are grateful for your commitment to Catholic education and the partnership that we share with you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, barbara.edmondson@archbalt.org.

Thank you.

Blessings in Christ,



Dr. Barbara McGraw Edmondson
Interim Superintendent
Department of Catholic Schools

Department of Catholic Schools

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