

"For the Lord of all shows no partiality, nor does he fear greatness,
Because he himself made the great as well as the small, and he provides for all alike;
but for those in power a rigorous scrutiny impends."

St. Ann Family,

November 17, 2017

This week's all school Mass was led by our 4th grade class. They did a nice job, especially on a reading that included some tricky words and somewhat dense material. The phrase 'rigorous scrutiny' is one that popped out to me this week as an illustration for the virtue of humility. We sometimes tend to picture those who are meek or humble as passive, submissive, lowly. It's important to consider that a spirit of humility is not one of low confidence or poor self esteem but a spirit of constant examination and self improvement. Humility is not humiliation. It is an openness of heart and mind to the improvement of ourselves as individuals. It's a healthy balance between self worth and the recognition that there's something we can learn from each situation and person we encounter. When we're willing to look at ourselves with 'rigorous scrutiny', we identify the ways we can improve and be our very best.

Each afternoon the entire school pauses for a brief moment of prayer, reflection, and examination of self. We call this our daily Examen. It has its roots in Ignatian spirituality. St. Ignatius was the founder of the Jesuits and one of his main approaches to prayer was the practice of examining our lives and the habit of finding God in all things. The Examen helps us think about our successes and shortcomings and encourages us to thank God for each moment of each day. The Examen is read to the entire school over the intercom. Sometimes students lead it. Sometimes adults lead it. If your student would like to read the Examen over the intercom, they can volunteer. If you are a parent who would like to stop by and read the Examen, you can volunteer as well.

Today was the start of the Scholastic Book Fair. It's taking place in the Assembly Room off the Parish Center. Students will have opportunities to shop the Book Fair after school next week. Parents and family members are also encouraged to shop during the Talent Show on Saturday night, After Mass on Sunday, after school next week, and during Family Day on Wednesday. The Scholastic Book Fair is a great opportunity for students and teachers to add new books to their home and school libraries and to get more engaged with reading!

The St. Ann Talent Show is tomorrow night, November 18th. The doors open at 6:15pm with a pre-show chili cook-off tasting. The performance begins at 7:00pm. Come out and enjoy a bowl of chili and an evening of song and dance performed by the school community!

Please return your Economic Deprivation Survey as soon as you can. If you need a new one, contact the school office at (314) 381-0113. It's a very brief and simple form. The more responses we receive, the more money our school can be allotted for next year. We need them all submitted before Thanksgiving!

Last night was our new families wine and cheese social, hosted by the marketing committee. Special thanks go to those new family members who were in attendance and to the marketing committee who worked hard to make this event a fun and classy evening for all!

'The Rock' student newspaper recently published its second issue. We're very pleased that our students are supported and empowered through the experience of having a new idea and taking all of the steps to collaborate and communicate effectively to see that idea to fruition. Look out for the November issue of 'The Rock' around campus.

Wednesday, November 22nd, is Family Day, a St. Ann tradition held each year on the day before Thanksgiving. It's a noon dismissal day that includes an all-school Mass and activities for family members to enjoy with their students. We invite parents, grandparents, siblings, and all family members to join us for a special morning of gratitude and love. Family Day is likely our most well attended school event of the year! Last year's Family Day festivities included information about our school's adoption of Virtue Based Restorative Discipline. This year we will continue to learn about VBRD and focus on the home-to-school connection that can make this relationship based, restorative approach to problem solving a comprehensive experience for our students, staff, and families.

It's hard to believe but we're midway through November and the Advent season is not far off at all. We have two upcoming acts of community engagement and service that the school/parish aim to complete soon. The first is an act of service for the St. Vincent Home for Children, our neighbors to the northeast. This organization has been operating for as long as St. Ann and has been in the community, serving children facing significant life challenges through love, security, and therapeutic supports that enable them to improve their lives, their families, and our community. This year we aim to collect and contribute the monetary resources necessary to provide Christmas trees and decorations for every dormitory and living space occupied by the children during the Advent and Christmas season. St. Vincent Home for Children has found a generous donor who is willing to match our contribution to help make this idea work. Our goal as a school/parish community is \$1000. We'll be hosting a representative from St. Vincent soon so that our students and staff can learn more about the children they are helping and the important work St. Vincent Home does. There will be more information to follow regarding how to contribute and when the collection will occur.

The second act of service for our school and parish community during the Advent season is our annual 'Filled With Love' food bags collection and delivery to the Caritas/Ladies of Charity Food Pantry. Every family in the school will receive one brown paper grocery bag. Families are invited to fill their bag with a variety of needed items to be contributed to the Caritas food pantry. The collection will begin soon and the delivery day is scheduled for Thursday, December 7th. The traditional delivery includes a long human chain of students, staff, parents, and parishioners who form a line between the doors of our school and the delivery door at Caritas across the parking lot. It's a wonderful visual of teamwork and unity for our school &

parish, but even greater, it's a great act of service that connects us to our surrounding neighborhood in a special way. Look out for your family's food bag and instructions soon.

We'll have an extra All-School Mass on Friday, December 8th, in celebration of The Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary. This Mass will happen at 8:15AM rather than the normal 8:00AM and will be led by our Kindergarten students.

This week we began using a few minutes of our morning announcement routine to review some small and simple school rules that students seem to forget. I'm adding them to the newsletter so that families can be reminded as well and can help their students do their best to follow school rules. This week's rules included:

- No chewing gum at school -it can be a distraction and makes a mess.
- Wear a white undershirt rather than a colorful undershirt -undershirts with colors, patterns, or words can be seen through our uniform shirts.
- Students should wear proper uniform socks and should wear the same sock on both feet -the uniform policy doesn't explicitly say anything about wearing two different socks...but students should not.
- Boots and shoes with lights, wheels, or sequins/rhinestones are not allowed. -They can be dangerous or distracting (or both).
- When students arrive to school early, they should go to morning care or safety patrol, no wandering the halls -wandering unsupervised can be dangerous.

•If you still need to complete a Protecting God's Children Workshop, more sessions are available around town. The schedule can be found through this link:
http://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_list2.cfm?theOrgID=14498&theme=0

FAITH Alive in the Home Program

St. Ann Parish and School and Holy Trinity School are working to develop a pilot program to support parents of young children to grow in their awesome role as first teachers of the faith. At this time, this pilot home visitor program (similar in structure to the PAT program, but focused on faith) is ready to begin inviting families to participate. We are starting with parents of two year olds for the pilot, which will begin in late January or early February and run through May, 2018. Sr. Maureen Martin, Program Coordinator, is also looking for parents, grandparents or educators who may want information on serving as home facilitators (or visitors).

For more about this exciting faith-filled program, or to register your family be a part of the pilot, please contact Sr. Maureen at St. Ann: 314-450-4873 or email stannfaith@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendar

November 18th-Talent Show

November 22nd-Family Day

November 23rd-Thanksgiving NO SCHOOL

November 24th-NO SCHOOL

December 1st-NOON DISMISSAL-Faculty Meeting

December 3rd-First Sunday of Advent

December 7th-Filled With Love Bags Delivery

December 8th-Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary

Blessings,

Jacob Reft

Scroll Down for the Close Up Photo Guessing Game

No hints-What is this??

