

"By your perseverance you will secure your lives."

St. Ann Family,

December 2nd, 2017

Last week was an abbreviated week with our Family Day celebration, Thanksgiving holiday, and subsequent break from school. A lot has happened since the last newsletter went out on November 17th! The Talent Show and chili cook-off took place on Saturday the 18th. Special thanks go to Mrs. Harrington, Mrs. Rallo, the Klohr family, the Kirchgessner family, Mrs. Hendrick, and so many others who helped to make it a fun night for all. We also held the Scholastic book fair in the assembly room from the 17th through Family Day. Appreciation goes to Ms. Valenti and all those volunteers who worked hard to work the register and helped raise money for our school. We raised \$500 more than last year.

Family Day was another nice celebration. I did some asking around and came to realize that Family Day has been happening in some form for over 25 years. This year we celebrated Mass with all of our parents, grandparents, and siblings in attendance. We had a whole school activity and then had fun in each classroom with different activities. It's so great to get such a nice turnout from families, especially in the middle of a school/work day.

This week's All-School Mass was led by our 6th grade class. They did a nice job, especially those readers who shared with us an extra long story from the prophet Daniel. The Gospel was a lesson from Jesus about the need for perseverance, even when everything seems to be working against us. Perseverance is likely a nice virtue for us to be thinking about as students work to persevere through the final days of the semester and get all of their work completed.

This morning our 2nd grade class made their First Reconciliation. It was a nice prayer service and a very peaceful and supportive way for our young students to participate for the first time in confession and forgiveness of sins with their families and teacher by their side. Mrs. Deffenbaugh has been working very hard for the past 6 weeks teaching the students about the theology, process, and practice of this sacrament. The students were very prepared! Students from other classrooms will have opportunities for Reconciliation during the Advent season as well.

This week we will have two All-School Masses; one celebrated on Wednesday morning, led by 1st grade, and one led on Friday by Kindergarten. On Wednesday we will celebrate the Feast Day of St Nicholas. I've heard rumors that St. Nicholas might actually be making a visit to St. Ann as well to visit students in their classrooms.

On Friday we will celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of The Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary's conception in her mother's womb without the stain of Original Sin: An essential part of God's plan for the mother of his Son was that she be conceived free from Original Sin. "Through the centuries the Church became ever more aware that Mary, "full of

grace” through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception” (CCC, no. 491). This is a special day for the entire Church but for our St. Ann community, it is a celebration of our namesake’s most important accomplishment: conception of her daughter, Mary, without Original Sin.

Advent will begin tomorrow. We’ve got a number of special activities planned for the next several weeks. In between our celebrations of St. Nicholas (Wednesday) and the Immaculate Conception (Friday) we will be taking part in an awesome St. Ann tradition, the ‘Filled with Love’ food bag delivery to the Ladies of Charity food pantry next to our campus. At this point every family should have received their food bag and corresponding list of items that can be contributed to our collection. Join us on Thursday morning at 9:00AM for the human chain delivery of over one hundred bags of food and household items across our campus to our neighbors. Many hands will make light work. Like last year, we’re expecting another cold morning for our work. Be sure your student comes to school with the necessary coat, hat, and even gloves so they’re prepared to work hard for their community, even in the cold weather.

Next Tuesday morning 8th grade is heading up a two part collection for the St. Vincent Home for Children and their Christmas tree project. Students are to wear their typical uniform bottoms but for a contribution of \$1 they are invited to add a silly, ugly, or festive Christmas sweater and Christmas themed accessories to their outfit. The 8th grade will be selling donuts for \$1 as well. All the money collected will go to helping provide Christmas trees to the children at served by The St. Vincent Home.

I already emailed our 6th-8th grade parents about the end of the 2nd quarter but it’s important that every family/student knows that there are now 12.5 days of school left in the quarter before we go home for Christmas break. I’ve started conference with students one at a time to review their grades with them and determine areas for improvement, assignments that might need to be turned in late or improved and resubmitted. Like many parents, I simply use Educonnect and Google Classroom to put together a gameplan for students who need to make improvements. As I said to many students this week, it’s not poor work that brings down grades, it’s when we turn in nothing at all. Take time to browse Educonnect with your student and collaborate with their teacher to determine ways to get late or missing work submitted properly. As always, if you can’t remember your Educonnect login information, email me and I will get it to as soon as I can.

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.

December 12th is The Feast of Our Lady Of Guadalupe. We'll be sending our 8th grade class to St. Cecelia in south St. Louis for another Faith In Action Mass. This is the second of four Masses in which the 8th grade will participate. Our 3rd-5th graders will celebrate with a tasting of some special hot chocolate.

•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.

Tuition payments and morning care & aftercare current status is being communicated to each family. Statements are being emailed. If this is not how you want to receive your statements please contact Eileen at 314-385-5090 ext. 852. With the end of the 2nd quarter coming to an end on December 20th, be sure to pay your balance or contact Eileen. We will be withholding report cards this time around and Educonnect will be disabled.

Mark Your Calendar

December 2nd-First Reconciliation-2nd grade

December 3rd-First Sunday of Advent

December 6th-Feast of St. Nicholas

December 7th-Filled With Love Bags Delivery 9:00AM

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

December 12th-Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe-Faith in Action Mass-8th grade

December 20th-Noon Dismissal-Final day of 2nd quarter

Blessings,
Jacob Reft

Scroll Down for the Close Up Photo Guessing Game

Who is this??

