

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Holy Spirit Families,

March is full month here at Holy Spirit School (not that the other months are in any way empty.) Last month was a whirlwind with the basketball tournament, Valentines Day, Catholic Schools Week. Thanks to everyone who attended the Open Houses. Parents, alumni, teachers, current students gave hours to the preparations, displays and talks during these evenings and mornings. The development committee scheduled plenty of advertising and outreach during the weeks. The electric sign on Columbia Turnpike was a special treat – thank you, Debbie Young. The comments and feedback we received were complimentary regarding the presentations at each of these events.

Now we all turn our attention to Lent and the preparation for the Easter celebration. The children truly get a fine faith formation experience during this time and learn to reflect and pray. In today's world, having the ability to examine yourself and assess how closely you are following the message of Our Lord is a valuable life skill that strengthens character and the spirit. We will be focusing on this type of personal growth for the children and us all during these weeks. We thank Tracy Delmerico for the beautiful bulletin board in the hallway at this time.

March contains the sports banquet and the staff/coaches vs. students basketball game sponsored by the student council. The drama club is working ever more intently on the Alice in Wonderland performance to be presented in April. This musical is lots of fun for all of the children ,and we hope for a big turnout

during show week. For St. Patrick's Day we will wear green and hear Mr. Insull play the bagpipes for us at 2 PM.

Finally, you will be returning your registration packets for the 2010-2011 school year in March. We have registered already a full kindergarten with a waiting list. This is great news! The school board, Father O'Brien and I have worked to keep the tuition increase in a moderate range. We want all of our families to return not only to assure the enrollment we need to keep our programs and staff, but also to keep our school community together. It is a close knit group of families, and what you have here is very special for us all. We will also offer incentives in the form of tuition rebates to families who bring us other families to join the school. Always be an advocate for Holy Spirit School. During Open House, most of the families who came to consider registering arrived on the personal recommendation of someone in our present school family. Thank you for all you do to make our excellent school known to others. We also thank all of those who spoke in parishes on behalf of Holy Spirit School during Catholic Schools Week. Father O'Brien and the parish also raised about \$1200 in a special collection for tuition subsidy in our school. We are very grateful.

As always, thank you for all you do for our school. Think Spring.

Roger Rooney
Principal

FUTURE CITY Team Heads to Washington, D.C. for Nationals

Our Future City Team went to Washington, DC to compete in the National Finals from February 13 -17,

2010. One winning team from each region of the country advanced to compete at the Nationals. This year more than 1,100 schools competed with 33,000 middle school students participating in the program.

As we unpacked our model, we discovered that it been completely disassembled during its flight to Washington. What ensued was a giant effort on the part of our mentor, Bob Murphy and the entire team to re-assemble the model. We had 3 hours in which to do this and we used the entire time. After a brief lunch, and for the next 3 hours, the team was constantly questioned by twenty-one different judges. There were 38 other teams in the competition. The next day the team presented their speech and again answered questions. After that, we had a special invitation from Congressman Scott Murphy to visit the Capitol. This was a fascinating, exciting adventure for both students and parents. We learned about the history of the capitol and the important part it plays in our government.

Later, it was fun time in the hotel pool or playing games at the Zone. The students met other middle-school kids from all over the country. This was an experience of a life-time and I am sure they will never forget it.

Special thanks to all the people who contributed money so that the rest of the team could come to Washington, since only the three presenters were paid for by the Future City contest. This includes the PSA, The Holy Spirit Parish, Sister Jane Herb, Roger Rooney and many engineering firms, courtesy of Gary Wolfe.

Our Future City Team was also honored locally at the Engineers'

Convention at the Marriot Hotel on February 26, 2010. They presented their model and were given special recognition at the Engineers' Luncheon. I am very proud of our team!! They worked very hard and learned valuable lessons.

OPERATION RICE BOWL BEGINS

The Second grade will be collecting money for Operation Rice Bowl throughout the Lenten season. Please take the rice bowl home and return it to school by April 7th. (You may return it to school anytime before April 7th.) Please help us have another great year! Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS

Thank you for your outstanding support throughout the Tools For Schools Program! We earned a total of 67,444 tape value points which will be redeemed within the next few weeks. For the fourth year, we are again one of the 100 top schools participating in the program. We won a GBC ShredMaster Departmental Shredder, which will be very useful in the main office at school!

Please be sure to look for information about supporting Holy Spirit School through this wonderful free program in September. We have been able to get countless educational items for free through this program for the last seven years! Thank you again for your help!

SUMMER PROGRAM NEWS

Summer Program Brochures are AVAILABLE! Spaces fill up fast! Contact Ms. Dawn or Ms. Patti for information. Camp is held from **June 28th-August 6th, Monday – Friday**

from 8:00-4:00 with Before and After care. Full time or part time days are available.

ILLNESS AND HOMEWORK

If your child is sick and will not be attending school, please call the office before 9:00 A.M. All class work and homework requests MUST BE MADE before 9:00 A.M. and can be picked up after 2:35 P.M.

CALENDAR CHANGE

Due to the emergency snow closings that we had over the past few months – school **will be in session** on the following day:

Wednesday, March 31st

ATHLETIC BANQUET DATE

The Athletic Banquet has been postponed. The new date is still to be determined. We will let you know as soon as the date is selected.

CLASSROOM NEWS

Day Care Three Year Old's News

The Three's had a lovely month of February. We learned all about Valentine's Day and hearts. We made many decorations for our classroom Valentine's Day ice cream party. We had a fantastic time celebrating and telling our friends and families how much we care about them. We would like to thank all of the parents for making our party super special! We could not have had such a great time without you!

We spent the end of February learning how to take good care of our bodies. We discussed going to the doctor and not spreading germs. We

talked about going to the dentist and brushing our teeth, and eating healthy food and exercising. We also learned about the letters N, O, and P, the number 7, and the color pink.

The Three's are excited for spring to arrive in the month of March. We will learn about spring weather, St. Patrick's Day, and Easter! We will also spend time exploring the jungle, and getting to know jungle animals. We will learn about the letters Q, R, and S, the number 8, and the color yellow.

Happy Birthday to:

Cadence M. – March 11th

Morgan D. – March 15th

Day Care 4 Year Old's News

Our Valentine's Day brunch was delicious! The children were very excited about exchanging valentines! The children met their fifth grade reading buddies for the first time in February.

In March we will celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday. We will hold a beach party and enjoy Dr. Seuss books with our reading buddies. We will talk about our favorite authors/books and share them at reading time. We will share facts about Spring and the Easter season. Lucky the leprechaun will probably surprise us with a visit for St. Patrick's Day. We will learn about the letters U, V, W, X, and the numbers 11-20.

Happy Birthday to:

Sophia C. – February 1st

Patrick D. – February 9th

Kyle B. – February 9th

Aiden D. – February 11th

Jaheam V. – February 15th

Nicole A. – February 28th

Payton J. – March 11th

Nursery News

Nursery school made a hand puppet of a ground hog. We also cut out clouds and glued a sun onto it. We sang about the ground hop and his shadow.

We worked on puzzle pieces to make a Valentine for our families because we love them to pieces. We made finger puppets out of hearts and had a great party. We played color and shape BINGO.

Happy Birthday to:

Madelyn R. – March 20th

Henry C. – March 29th

Pre-K News

Pre-K read about a very lazy ladybug, and we made our own big, red ladybug. We used all our muscles to cut out a capital letter **L**. With a head, a tail, and 4 legs you get a lizard.

We talked about the groundhog and his shadow. We used flashlights to make shadows. We cut a groundhog puppet with sun and clouds, and we voted for no more winter.

Pre-K read Liar, Liar Pants on Fire and discussed George Washington and how it is always best to tell the truth. He was also our first president and he is on the dollar bill.

We also read about Abraham Lincoln. He wore a neat hat. We made our own hat. He was a very tall and very kind man, and he loved to read. He's on money too!

Gung Hoy Fat Choi! Happy New Year in Chinese. On Chinese New Year the children get a lucky red envelope with a coin in it. We cut out our own envelopes and chose a coin to put in it. (The coin had Abraham Lincoln on it.)

We worked very hard to make Valentines for our family because we love them so much.

Happy Birthday to:

Liza H. – March 23rd

Kiara C. – March 29th

Kindergarten News

February has been a busy and fun filled month. We celebrated the 100th Day of School. The children enjoyed counting to 100 by 1's, 5's and 10's. The class participated in many 100th day activities such as building with 100 cube links, wooden cubes, and tiles. Seeing how many designs we could make using pattern blocks and foam shapes. The class made a special snack called Hiyaku, which is 100 in Japanese. February has also been the month of red hearts and Valentines. The time of year when we let others know how much we care for them by being kind and thoughtful.

After the winter recess the class learned about the great presidents whose birthdays we just celebrated, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. The class is learning about the special time of year called Lent, a time when God asks us to change and grow as friends of Jesus.

We are looking forward to March and the ocean blue and the antics of the leprechauns.

Grade 1 News

We have been learning so many new things in first grade! In math we will be continuing our unit on place value. This is exciting as we have been working on place value during calendar since the first day of school!

In reading everyone is working so hard on becoming an independent reader! In reading our next unit will focus on the people and things we value most in our lives. In science we will be learning about habitats including the forest, wetlands, oceans, and deserts. We will also be learning about the ways animals survive in these habitats. At the end of this unit we will be creating habitat projects. Information about this project will go home as we get closer to the end of the unit.

During the Lenten season first grade has been working on doing good deeds for others. During this time please keep those that are less fortunate in mind and try to be generous with your contributions when filling your rice bowls!

Last month we enjoyed participating in the 100th day of school activities. We also enjoyed our wonderful Valentine's Day party put on by our great room parents. Thank you room parents for your hard work!

Happy Birthday to:

Peter B. – March 4th

Eli T. – March 7th

Taylor C. – March 8th

Tommy Y. – March 24th

Grade 2 News

Congratulations to all second graders who have recently celebrated their First Reconciliation. We are continuing to prepare for our celebration of First Eucharist. The second graders are doing a terrific job participating in Mass and understanding what is happening throughout the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Keep up the good work second grade!

In preparation for the Lenten season, the second grade sent rice bowls home with each child before February vacation. Please keep those that are less fortunate in mind throughout the Lenten season, and try to be generous with your contributions. The second graders are responsible for collecting and counting the money from the rice bowls at Holy Spirit School. Three of the second graders will be joining Bishop Hubbard for lunch in April to present him with our school's contribution. The rice bowls can be returned to second grade anytime before March 29th. Thank you for your generosity!

Happy Birthday to:
Erin P. – March 29th

Grade 3 News

During Lent grade 3 has been concentrating on praying more often and doing good deeds without being asked. We thought it would be a good idea to do more instead of giving up thins. We will be working on learning the Stations of the Cross, prepare for Reconciliation, and filling our Rice Bowls.

Academically, we will still be spending time in Outer Space learning about the planets in our Solar System. Our Space Museum is scheduled for Wednesday, March 24th. How long would it take to fly a plane to Jupiter? Come over to find out the answer to this and any other space related questions you may have!

In math we are making excellent progress with our multiplication and division facts and enjoy playing math BINGO and Around the World to help practice!

Thank you to our classroom coordinators for making our Valentine's/Hundredth Day/Lunch Swap so much fun!

Happy Birthday to:
Cael F. – March 15th

Grade 4 News

March brings "Operation Rice Bowl". Please remember that your rice bowls are due on March 29th.

This month, we'll begin working with fractions in math! In Science, we'll continue our study of Physical Science. In Social Studies, we'll continue our study of New York during and after the Revolution.

I look forward to our field trip to see "Freedom Train" on March 11th.

Happy Birthday to:
Joseph G. – March 22nd
Emily Z. – March 22nd

Grade 5 News

Grade 5 wishes you a blessed Lenten season. In Religion, our focus will be lent as we prepare for the coming of Easter.

We will be reading science fiction books for the month of March. We will finish our unit on Adapting in Reading and start a new unit on Adventures.

In math, we will be working on Geometry. We will also begin reviewing and practicing for the State test in April. Please review basic facts and computation skills at home.

In Science we will focus on invertebrates, especially arthropods. Earth Science will be next.

The Civil War and reconstruction will be our next unit in Social Studies.

Many students are behind in their New York State reading requirements of 25 books. Please remind your child to bring in books once they have completed them to put on their book logs.

Thank you to all those who worked at the Nature's Classroom BINGOs. More information on our field trip to follow soon.

Happy Birthday to:
Allie R. – March 12th

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

We are proud to announce that the following Middle School students achieved High Honors and Honors during the second marking period.

Grade 8
High Honors
Carrianna V.
Emily L.
Roan F.
Kevin B.
Samantha B.
Zoe F.
Kaitlyn M.
Isabella K.

Honors
Andrea K.
Cassidy P.
Regan M.
Shayne B.
Sydney W.
Zachary D.
John E.
Cullen U.
Elizabeth M.
Mihee P.
Phyllis R.

Grade 7

High Honors

Christina B.
Jacob L.
Althea M.
Amelia S.
Dominique S.
Honors
Cole B.
Sarah D.
Ethan D.
Stephen J.
Christian L.
Robbie M.
Logan R.
Kathryn S.

Grade 6 High Honors

Thomas M.
Brevin F.
Ryan F.
Christian E.
Jackson M.

Grade 6 Honors

Danny Y.
Riley W.
Stryker R.
Jacob P.
Jessica P.
Claire M.
Nick F.
Justin P.
Taylor P.
Judy N.
Reid L.
Ryan G.
Dermot C.

From Mrs. Voellm

A special thank you to all parents, 8th grade students, 6th grade students and alumni for volunteering at our middle school open house.

Middle School Math

Math 6 students will continue on with circles to find their parts, area, and circumference. They will also find area of a sector of a circle.

Advanced Math 6/Math 7 students will display data in a circle graph. They will also work with mean, median, mode and central tendency.

Advanced Math 7/Math 8 students will plot ordered pairs, determine slope of a line, y intercept, and equation of a line. They will then solve system of equations graphically

Happy Birthday to:

Ryan F. – March 7th
Claire M. – March 19th
Kevin P. – March 19th

From Mrs. Giabanis **Middle School Social Studies** **& Literature 6**

Social Studies 6- We are currently studying Ancient Rome. We are taking a comparative look at the differences and similarities between Ancient Rome and Ancient Greece. Students are enjoying taking a look at this historically rich civilization.

Social Studies 7- We are learning about one of the most important periods in American History, the American Revolution!!! We are learning about important leaders, battles and the significance of our beautiful Hudson Valley in the War.

Social Studies 8- We are currently finishing up our study of the "Roaring Twenties". Students are enjoying learning about this period of excess and social change. We are also taking a look at how that excess got us into the worst economic crisis of the 20th century, the Great Depression.

Literature 6- We are getting ready for the English-Language Arts exam, that for first time ever is in March. We are taking practice exams, listening to passages, and answering questions. A big "thank you" to Mrs. Kennedy for all her help and collaboration!!!

From Mrs. Kennedy
Middle School Literature and Grammar

Our 8th graders will be visiting Washington, D.C. from March 23rd – March 26th. We look forward to a safe, fun and educational trip.

Literature 8- In both advanced literature and literature 8, the students are exploring the time period surrounding the Great Depression through two different novels. Advanced literature is reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and literature is reading *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Also, both classes are working on writing research papers.

Literature 7- In advanced literature, students are reading *The Giver* and enjoying this novel about a controlled society. In literature, the students are reading *The Outsiders* about a group of teenagers struggling to make it in the 1960's.

Advanced literature 6- Students are reading *The Cay*, a novel about a young boy who is stranded on an island and must learn to survive, and are thoroughly enjoying it.

Happy Birthday to:
Cassidy P.- March 4th
Isabella K.- March 10th
Ryan A.- March 24th

From Mrs. Colangione
Middle School Spanish

Grade 8 Spanish students continue to work on their communication skills, both verbal and written. They create verbal dialogues with their peers on a variety of topics and write letters and dialogues on similar topics. The students have just concluded a unit of study on physical environment and are presently studying a unit on leisure. In addition, they are learning more advanced grammatical concepts, and are incorporating this learned material into their speaking and writing activities. They have also been reading the Spanish magazine "Ahora" which has proven to be fun, funny, and interesting.

Grade 7 Spanish students are advancing to another level of communication by creating conversations based on everyday topics. They are working with each other to develop these conversations in Spanish. The students are also studying a unit of study on community and neighborhood, which lends itself nicely to these types of conversations. They, at the same time, are targeting their listening, reading, and writing skills. Their vocabulary knowledge and their understanding of grammatical concepts will contribute significantly to their communication skills.

The **Grade 6 Spanish** students just finished a unit on professions, and are presently studying a unit on Spanish and Mexican foods. They are learning about some of the special dishes from both countries. In addition, there is a wealth of every day vocabulary which they will be learning and using within this unit. The students continue to work on their vocabulary which they will be

learning and using from within this unit. The students continue to work on their vocabulary base for speaking skills, as well as their writing skills.

From Mrs. Leverone
Middle School Religion

This month eighth grade became secret prayer partners with the students in Mrs. Raven's Second Grade as they prepare for First Reconciliation and Eucharist. They will be praying for our second grade students as well as writing notes of encouragement. In class we continue to explore Sunday's Gospel and study the history of the early Catholic Church.

In seventh Grade we studied the lives of many February saints, including St. Bernadette and the miracles at the grotto in Lourdes. We continue to explore the weekly gospel and how to apply it to the life of a Middle School Student.

Sixth Grade continues to journey through the Old Testament and God's covenant. We also studied the life of St. Bernadette and look forward to watching the Catholic movie entitled, "The Song of Bernadette".

Together we will journey through the days of Lent with activities that promote a better relationship with God and each other.

Friday, March 5 -Grade 7 hosts First Friday Mass

YOUR VERY GENEROUS DONATIONS RAISED \$1,162, that went directly to Catholic Relief Services in Haiti. Please continue to remember our brothers and sisters in Haiti and all those who contribute to the ongoing relief efforts.

March Saints to remember:

17- St. Patrick
19- St. Joseph
25-Annunciation of the Lord- *Remember Mary's "yes" to God. Say "yes" to God today*

Random thought:

"Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God. Do all that you do with love."

-St. Therese of the Child Jesus

From Mrs. Valley
Grade 8 Advanced Math and Science
NYS Regents Earth Science

In Earth Science this month we completed a unit on weather. We studied the many factors that contribute to weather, including temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, winds, and precipitation. Throughout this unit we completed individual maps of each property for a given day in the United States, and in the end we combined them all onto one 'Synoptic Weather Map'. The numerous weather systems crossing over our country during the end of February gave our students many instances to apply their new knowledge of interacting weather properties. We finished this unit with a study of cyclonic systems, including hurricanes and tornadoes. In March we will study water flow through the ground, and the processes of weathering, erosion and deposition.

NYS Regents Integrated
Algebra

In Math class this month, we have worked on determining if relations are functions from either a set of data or from a line graph. We continued with a

study of rate of change, and related it to the slope of a graph. We finished February learning the various forms of the equation of a line, and how to plot the graphical representation of a linear function from its equation. In March we will study systems of equations and inequalities.

From Mr. Mahoney
Middle School Science

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Mr. Nathan Mahoney as our new Middle School Science teacher.

From Mrs. Stone
Writing 8

Eight grade 'writers' continue to work on communication with the "outside world". Letters have been sent to a wide range of recipients from whom we await responses.

We'll be spending time on vocabulary building and continue preparation for the state exam in language arts.

The research paper in conjunction with Literature class will also be a focus for the next few weeks.

I was glad to hear from many parents about the Christmas Letters of Gratitude from your wonderful children. They worked so very seriously to tell you how you are loved, honored, and appreciated.

Spanish

Kindergarten has been working with an Alphabet book in Spanish and warm up activities. Keep up the good work!

Grade One has started working with opposites (opuestos), making a book in Spanish, and practicing words. Keep up the good work!

Grade Two and Three students have been working on a Unit of Opposites using the words to describe pictures and work with simple sentences to reinforce the lesson. We are continuing with our worksheet papers. Keep up the good work!

Grade Four and Five students have started working with Spanish verbs learning the different endings; ar, er, ir. They are using worksheets to reinforce the verbs and practice the personal pronouns such as it, you, he, she etc. Keep up the good work!

Library

In March we celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday!

Kindergarten has begun fiction and nonfiction studies.

We have also begun author/illustrator studies starting with Mo Willems and Dr. Seuss!

Grade 1 just completed their first mystery book and will be celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday with an author study.

Grade 2 is continuing work on non-fiction call numbers and will be starting poetry in the weeks to come.

Grade 3 has just been introduced to the online catalog and will be practicing utilizing our automated system this month.

Grade 4 is completing Dewey collages for the different classes in non-fiction.

Grade 5 is using publisher to create an informational flyer advertising a fairytale.

Grade 6 students are writing their own fairy tales using PowerPoint, so that we may print them as minibooks.

Grade 7 is using PowerPoint to create Dewey Slideshows highlighting the non-fiction books available in each class.

Grade 8 students have begun their research paper.

My Teddy Bear Library friends are almost to the end of the alphabet!

Keep Reading!

Music

Our Kindergarten and First Grade classes have been enjoying songs for Groundhogs Day, President's Day, and Valentine's Day. These have included motions, and playing various instruments.

The Second Grade class has also been singing songs for President's Day and Valentine's Day. They sound great, and have enjoyed singing.

The Third Grade class recently learned a new recorder game, and they've done a great job with it. We added singing and Orff instruments along with the recorder, and created a really beautiful song. We will continue to play the recorder and are learning new music all the time.

The Fourth Grade class is also continuing to study the recorder. They have really come a long way. We will begin a new singing unit soon, as well.

The Fifth Grade has completed their unit on instrument families, and they recently played a Latin song called We Are Making Music. This incorporated singing and playing rhythmic instruments. Now they are going to be creating their own rhythmic compositions. We are going to write beat patterns and play them using every day household items. You will soon be getting a request from your child to bring in an item you have at home!

I am looking forward to seeing the new classes for the Middle School. We are going to be doing a lot of

xylophone playing, as well as singing in parts.

Handbell rehearsals are in full swing. Please be sure your child attends each rehearsal. Thank you!

Technology News

K-2 Students have been using KidPix CD to create Valentines. They enjoyed printing them and sharing with their parents.

Grade 3 Students used the website http://www.edheads.org/activities/simple_machines to learn to identify the uses and the descriptions of Simple Machines. This will help them in their Grade 3 Science Unit on Simple Machines.

Grade 4 is continuing their study of Microsoft Power Point. They will be using the microphone to record their voices while they are describing their slides.

Grade 5 has finished their Parts of Speech Slide Show. They are now learning how to create a Flyer using Microsoft Publisher.

Grade 6 has been learning how to evaluate various websites. They will continue to investigate websites and find clues as to which ones are authentic and which are not.

Grade 7 Fractured Fairytale Cartoons. Students will create animated cartoons using the fractured fairytale stories they created in Language Arts Class. Some of the students in this class have also created Spanish Brochures for the Tech Fair.

Grade 8 is working on their Research paper. This is an integrated Library, Language Arts and Technology assignment.

