

St. Joseph School Newsletter

Newsletter September 2011
Volume 1, Issue 1

Principal Dr. Patricia Nugent



Contents

Principal's News	1
Tuition News	1
Upcoming Events	1
Kindergarten News	2
First Grade News	2
Second Grade News	3
Third Grade News	4
Fourth Grade News	4-5
Fifth Grade News	5-6
Sixth Grade News	6-7
Seventh Grade	8-9
Eighth Grade	10
Specials	11-16

Upcoming Events

- ✓ September 5th
Labor Day
- ✓ September 12th
Peace Prayer Service
- ✓ September 19th
Picture Day
- ✓ September 23rd Teacher
in-service
NO SCHOOL
- ✓ September 28th Blue
Ribbon Shirt Day
- ✓ September 30th
School Mass

Principal's News

On behalf of the faculty and staff of St. Joseph School, we welcome you to the 2011 - 2012 school year. We offer a special welcome to our Kindergarten students - the St. Joseph School Graduating Class of 2020! The school year is off to a great start and all of the students seem to be adjusting well to their new classrooms. Thank you for getting them here on time and for being extra cautious while driving in the parking lot. Please utilize the crosswalk that has been newly painted to help with safety.

School enrollment is at 342 students. Miss Spalvieri, in the seventh grade, and I are the only new staff members. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. The students and staff are striving to "let the light of Christ shine through them." By being a beacon for others, it is our hope that all of our students feel positive about themselves and continue to grow in their faith.

May this coming year be a year of growth for you and your children as we work together. Please join us at our school masses, as a volunteer in the lunch room or library or any other school activity. Thank you for choosing a Catholic education for your child. Together we are shining the light of Christ to all those we meet.

Dr. Nugent

Tuition News

As a new school year begins, we want to welcome our new families as well as welcome back our returning families.

We realize that for most, sending their children to St. Joseph – or for that matter any Catholic or private school is a sacrifice. We join with Father Marsick in appreciating your sacrifice!

While the economy has been tough on families it is also difficult on our school family. We must pay our bills just as you do, so we remind you that tuition is due the first of each and every month. We cannot let some families slide while others sacrifice to pay on time. Your children's teachers need to be paid as well as our creditors

Now that school has started, tuition statements will be sent home around the tenth of each month with your student. Please make sure your tuition is paid by the first.

Kindergarten News

Mrs. Haubert and Mrs. Hale

Welcome to Kindergarten! We have had a smooth transition; everyone has adjusted nicely and made a few new friends. We are gradually getting into our routine and becoming familiar with our new school and new teachers. We are looking forward to a great year!

September will be filled with learning. We will spend time continuing to get to know each other and become familiar with our school as we review basic concepts. We will also review shapes, sizes, and colors. We will learn to recognize and write the letters *M*, *S*, *R*, and *T* and the high frequency words *a*, *my*, and *the*. We will be learning about apples. We will visit the apple orchard and celebrate Johnny Appleseed's birthday. We will mark the Anniversary of September 11th with a prayer service. September 17th is Constitution Day. We will learn a little about the Constitution and even write our own. We will be practicing our prayers in Religion.

Please practice *The Sign of the Cross* using the right hand. We will learn that God made us all special and unique and that he loves each of us.

Please continue to check the daily folders and the weekly newsletters for important class information. We update Edline regularly; please make sure your child's account is activated.



First Grade News

Mrs. Ciraldo and Mrs. Tondra

The first graders are very busy working on learning the short vowels sounds, writing sentences with proper capitalization and punctuation, identifying spelling patterns, and reading our weekly stories. Please help your child learn the weekly vocabulary, high frequency words, and spelling words all of which are posted weekly in our class newsletters and on Edline. Spelling word practice at home is so very helpful. We continually work on our handwriting and have books for practice.

All children will be participating in the Accelerated Reader program. Parents may read with or to their child, with the tests being taken at school. Test results will then be sent home in the child's AR folder.

Math lessons involve many fun manipulative type activities, making the lessons quite interesting. We are working on shapes and their attributes, corresponding numerals to sets, geoboards, graphs- bar and picto, ordinal positions, and counting pennies and dimes. Soon we will need to memorize addition facts! Once addition fact practice starts, children will have flashcards to take home. Please help your child with memorizing the facts and review and sign your child's homework daily.

The Social Studies focus is on families and their similarities and differences. We discuss living in neighborhoods within communities. The children really enjoy sharing during discussions. Holidays and special days, as they approach, will be included in lessons.

Religion activities are centered on being followers of Jesus and belonging to the Church family. We discuss ways to show care for others through sharing and other kind things we can do. We also do activities relating to our school theme, "Let the Light of Christ Shine Through You."

Science lessons involve learning the life cycle / stages of plant life, followed by lessons on identification of various landforms. "Hands-on" activities make science much fun.

The year is off to a very good start with the children eager to learn. Parents are asked to check homework assignments, class news and Edline regularly. Please contact us with any questions.

Second Grade News

Mrs. Stadelman and Mrs. Zaucha

We are off to a great start in Second Grade! The children are quickly learning the routine and they are working hard.

In Religion, we will be reviewing the Sacraments. We will really focus on Baptism and the four signs that help us to celebrate Baptism. The children will be bringing in a special item that they received for their Baptism.

In Social Studies, the children will learn about different types of communities. They will also learn what their different roles are as good citizens. Also, in Social Studies the children will work on geography skills using maps.

In Science, we will begin a unit called Buzzing a Hive. This unit will allow the students to explore the complexity of the honeybee's social behavior, communication, and hive environment. At the end of the unit a Beekeeper will be coming to our classroom to share even more information about these helpful insects.

In Math, we are reviewing how to tell time to the hour. We are working on our doubles facts and learning how to read information on a bar graph. Please remember to check over your child's homework and then initial in the corner.

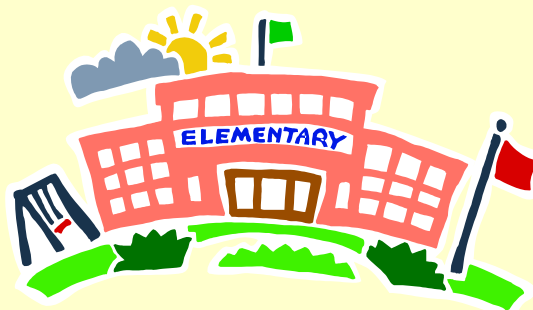
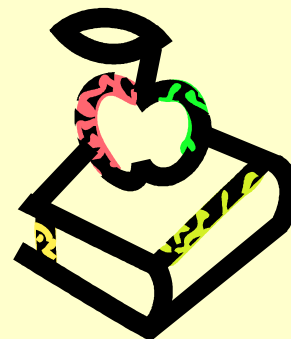
The children have been introduced to their first reading story in the reading book. This book will be coming home each week so the children can work on fluency. We have talked to the children about Accelerated Reader (AR) and it is up and ready for them to begin taking tests. Don't forget to use AR BookFinder for those books at home. If you go to this site it will tell you if the book is an AR book.

The children are doing a fine job of remembering their gym clothes and getting dressed for class. It is important to label all of the uniform clothes so that we can find the owner if something is misplaced.

Please remember that if your child is wearing uniform shorts or pants to school he or she must have a belt on.

There will be a Peace Prayer Service on Monday, September 12 at 2:15. Picture Day will be on Monday, September 19. There will be no school for students on Friday, September 23. The teachers will be attending a Religion in-service that day.

We are looking forward to a great year!



Third Grade News

Ms. Marino and Miss Sibila

The third graders are off to good start. Everyone is adjusting to the routine and schedule. Continue to have your child study Spelling and Math facts. Please remember to correct and sign the Math homework. Also, be sure to put the score on the fact paper. This is the number of problems done correctly in the allotted time.

In Social Studies we are reviewing map skills. This will be a yearlong practice. Also, we will be learning about different types of communities. Rural, urban, and suburban living will be explored.

In Religion, we are studying the Sacraments of Initiation and are reading about the four marks of the Church. The students have learned about the community of Jesus' friends and the challenges of living as a one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church.

In Science, We are learning how the different parts of a plant help it live and grow.

Look for "All Star Reader" forms to come home. Third graders will read two books per month for "All Star Reader." Books being read for Accelerated Reader count for "All Star Reader." This is a requirement for third grade.

Our first field trip will be a walking tour around our community. We will be walking (if weather permits) to various businesses to understand how they are important to our community.

Please remember that the students need to be in their desks ready to begin school when the bell rings at 8:25.

It is very important to check your child's homework daily. Checking the assignment book each day will help your child stay organized. You can also check the home page at www.edline.net. Please view regularly.

Parents, if you have read this newsletter, please send a note in with your child. He/she will receive five bonus points in Religion.

Fourth Grade News

Miss Fearon

The year is off to a great start. The children are adjusting to fourth grade very well. Please remember that your child should be getting his or her assignment book signed every night. It is your child's responsibility to ask you for a signature. I don't expect that each homework assignment be signed. If your child is having difficulty with an assignment, please help them. I don't expect the homework to be perfect.

Please, practice the basic addition and subtraction facts. Many of the students are still struggling with the basic facts. We correct the Math homework in class. The students highlight the box of each question that is missed. Please take the time to review these problems with your child.

Your child is beginning the intermediate years of his or her education. This will be a year full of growth. For many of them, it will be quite a challenge to become independent and responsible for keeping track of and completing assignments. Students will be challenged to organize their work, take notes, and study more for tests. This growth should be steady throughout the school year.

Edline is a great tool to use to stay updated on your child's progress. I will upload grades on Monday. Please teach your child how to access his or her grades. You can contact me through e-mail or write a note if you have any concerns.

Please remember that we are a team. We need to work together in order to provide your child with the best education possible. There is an open door policy in my classroom. Feel free to stop in and ask questions. Thank you for your support.



Fourth Grade News

Mrs. Williams

Let me begin by saying how smoothly the school year has begun! The cool weather has been wonderful. I am happy to be back at St. Joseph's again this year. It has been a pleasure to meet with so many of you. It has also been my pleasure to become acquainted with your children. They have been respectful, fun, eager to learn, and hard working. In our classroom, we have a basket filled with names and actions of students who have been kind to their classmates. I have noticed the kindness and the students are noticing it in each other. It is great to see. I know you as parents are greatly responsible for the kindness and compassion your children are sharing. It's been a fine beginning and I expect this to continue throughout the school year.

We have been, and will continue to be, working on developing a consistent classroom routine. Right now, we are doing much of the work together so that the children can understand my expectations. As we move along, they will be working more independently. As a result, there will be more homework coming home. It should not be a great deal, but there should be something each day. If your children are completing nearly everything in class, please have them read, read, read at home. A routine of daily reading is so important. Also, fourth graders still need help studying for tests. Please review vocabulary and quiz your child at home when a test is approaching. Sometimes it is easy to assume that they know how to study, when in fact they need to learn how to study.

As the math problems become more involved, please monitor the homework. If you notice that there are many errors on the lessons, please go over the errors with your child. I will also do my best to address the errors and work individually with students who need more reinforcement.

Please be sure to check Edline routinely and have your children check their progress as well. Feel free to contact me at any time for any reason and I will get back to you as soon as possible. I am looking forward to working with you this school year.



Fifth Grade News

Mrs. McClellan and Mrs. R. Wilson

Welcome back to school everyone! What a pleasure it was to meet the parents before the students at "Meet the Teacher Night".

The fifth graders are off to a great start! We are into our routine and adjusting well. What terrific classes they both are!

In Religion we are learning about the Beatitudes and the sacraments. The students will be learning about types of prayer, devotions, and sacramentals. A rosary assignment will be coming home soon.

The fifth grade Social Studies classes are learning about early American civilizations such as the Maya, Aztecs, and the many other groups of Native Americans in the region of the United States. We will then learn about the Spanish and English coming to the new world and how the Native Americans' way of life will forever change. Our Native American expert, Mrs. Cathy Nelsen, will speak with the classes on October 7th. Ask your child what they learned; Mrs. Nelsen is always an enjoyable and entertaining speaker. She brings in many of her own Native American artifacts to share with the class.

Fifth grade Science is beginning with Life Science. The students are learning about the classification system scientists use to classify organisms. We will then move on to learning about the different biomes found around the world. The students are practicing note taking skills and are doing a nice job with them.

The students this year are very well prepared for fifth grade Math. However, if your child is missing more than four on their problem sets, please check their homework over with them before they turn it in. We will have vocabulary tests throughout the year.

Students have their goals for Accelerated Reader. Students MUST have their book with them in class every day. They will periodically be given time in class to read. They also need to read at home daily. Please make this a part of their daily routines.

We are looking forward to a great year!

Sixth Grade News

Mrs. N. Wilson

I would like to thank all of the parents who came to Open House. It was nice to see so many faces and to meet many new parents. Remember to contact me at school if there are any questions or concerns.

All of the Sixth Grade students have adjusted well to Junior High. There is so much work to be completed in a single day, and between five to nine different teachers to deal with. I strongly encourage all of my students to use their assignment notebook every day. All of the homework is written on a homework board in my classroom and is reviewed with the students every day before 3:15. You can also check on the schools' web site, www.saintjoe.org or Edline, for important information. I also have an e-mail address posted to both sites, so please send an e-mail if there are any questions.

All of the math classes are progressing well.

The Sixth graders have begun discussing prime and composite numbers, as well as drawing factor trees. Both Seventh grade classes have begun the year with a Geometry unit, learning how to draw geometric solids like cylinders and rectangular solids, also using formulas to help solve problems.

The Eighth grade Pre-Algebra class has delved into angles and solids also. The Eighth grade Algebra class is working on The Pythagorean Theorem, as well as finding square roots of real numbers. New material is being introduced every day. Please check that your child is doing homework. Also, don't forget to check the web sites for each textbook. There are wonderful resources on these sites to aid your child in math. Check Edline to find the links to these books.





Sixth Grade News

Mrs. Huber

What a great start to a new school year! It was wonderful seeing so many of you at the Open House! The sixth graders have made a wonderful adjustment so far to the “system” of junior high. The “behavior envelope” is circulating to each class, so we ideally can address any issues before they become problems.

Everyone has their “4-1-1” for Religion, which will be kept in their Religion binder for the year. I did ask the students that, if possible, they might also have a notebook for Religion Reflections rather than writing them on loose-leaf paper. If this is not possible, they will be keeping their reflections in the first section of their binders. Each class has taken a pretest on Bible information that does not count for a grade. All grades will be reviewing information about the Mass, given that the changes will go into effect at the beginning of Advent. Certainly I will be encouraging full participation in our school Masses as well as Sunday liturgies.

In 6th grade we are currently “taking a tour” of the Bible to become comfortable with looking up passages. We also will be completing some basic factual info about the Bible. We will be delving into some of our ancestors in faith, like Abraham and Sara.

7th graders should be familiar with their responsibility in the process of assignments and bringing supplies. We are working on learning more about the mystery of the Incarnation and our role to bring Jesus into the world by our words and actions.

In 8th grade our focus is to learn more about the history of our Church, from the inception at Pentecost to current situations. Exploring the meaning of the marks of the Church, we will have emphasis on being apostolic and united as one in the Eucharistic celebration. This connects very well with our preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Be on the lookout for updates regarding important dates. Please start turning in Volunteer Service Hour forms along with Sponsor certificates (from their Parish). Soon, we will begin the selection of our individual saints to research and report on.

Please let me know if you have any concerns. Let’s work together to make this a great year for all.

MISSIONS

Our first Missions Day (Casual Day) will be Friday September 16th. Throughout the year we will continue to sponsor our child through the Catholic Relief Services (CRF). We will also have Missions Day collections for specific worthwhile causes to help support our brothers and sisters throughout the world. The 6th graders will be in charge of helping to count the money each homeroom brings in. We encourage the students to give generously, as we are all called to let Christ’s Light shine through in our words and actions.

Seventh Grade News

Mrs. Cottrill

We are off to a great start in 7th grade! It is interesting to see the difference in the students compared to this time last year when they were new to the junior high. This year they know the routine and what is expected of them from each teacher. The students are ready to learn and we are all looking forward to a great year!

The 6th grade reading classes are starting the year with a unit on the forms of fiction. Students will be learning about and reading short stories, folk tales, fables and myths. They will complete a variety of activities with each selection, including vocabulary activities, answering questions to check for comprehension, and a test on each selection. We typically complete one selection per week. All reading tests are open-book. The 6th graders write in a daily journal for a few minutes at the beginning of class. These journals are a great way for the students to become comfortable with writing and to increase the fluency in their writing. They are also a great way for me to get to know each student. They can be quite entertaining! We have been moving at a slow pace to start the year so that students can become familiar with classroom procedures and expectations.

The 7th grade reading class is starting the year with a unit on fiction and nonfiction. Students will study the elements of the short story: character, setting, plot, conflict, and theme. They will learn the elements of nonfiction and study various forms of nonfiction, such as autobiographies and biographies, essays and articles. 7th graders write a weekly journal entry. I have given them a wide range of choices, including prompts for each type of writing: narrative, persuasive, creative, and expository. These journals require a more in-depth approach than the daily journals they worked in last year.

All students have been given the requirements for Accelerated Reader and they will be posted on Edline as well.

Both the 6th and 7th graders will be using their English textbooks throughout the year to work on grammar skills and to apply those skills to their everyday writing.

Vocabulary lessons will be completed once a week. Students have a class period each week in which to complete the lesson. Some students will finish in class and others may need to finish for homework. All lessons are due on Thursday or Friday, depending on the schedule. Students will be informed in class of the due date and it is usually posted on Edline as well. A vocabulary test will be given after every two lessons.

Please check Edline often to monitor your child's progress. Look for **patterns** of low scores and/or missing assignments. We all have a bad day now and again, so it is best to focus on the overall grade instead of becoming alarmed at one or two low scores. Please email me with any questions.

I am looking forward to a great year!



Seventh Grade News

Miss Spalvieri

I have been very excited getting to know the faculty, parents, and students at St. Joseph School. The 6th, 7th, and 8th graders have been wonderful. We have been doing some interesting things in our Social Studies classes.

In 6th grade we have been concentrating on understanding what type of things we will be studying in Social Studies. We have talked about different cultures and customs and have done a little bit with map skills. We will be starting to learn about ancient cultures in September.

Early Mesopotamia, Egypt and Israel are where the 7th graders are heading. We are talking about some of the technology that the people of the Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages have developed. At the beginning of the year we concentrated on how different people communicated and we designed our own personal flags to represent us. I appreciated the time and thought that went into these. The students put a lot of symbolism on their flags. These creations really look terrific.

Our American Journey in 8th grade started with a trip through the reference sections of our book. We looked through our atlases and the appendix to see how these areas can help us find important information. Now we are concentrating on the Earliest Americans. The Mayans, Aztecs, and Incas as well as many other Native American groups will be the focus of our Earliest Americans Trading Cards that we will be making in Computer class.



Eighth Grade News

Mrs. Ross and Mrs. Watson

The school year has gotten off to a wonderful start. The students are excited and ready to have a great eighth grade year, and we are glad to be a part of this memorable time in their lives. Eighth grade is a challenging, but fun year. The students will be faced with many assignments, but at the same time will be enjoying some awesome experiences, as they wind up their St. Joseph School years.

We will begin the year with a retreat at Camp Christopher. Our retreat will be on Friday, Sept 9, 2011, from 8:45-3:45. We are looking forward to a spiritual day filled with team building and leadership activities. We would like to send out a special "thank you" to all the parents who are donating items for lunch, and a special "Thanks" to Mr. and Mrs. DiLullo for making the pizza. The rest of the school looks to the eighth graders as leaders, and we are hoping this retreat will help guide them to be good role models for the younger students.

Every Friday morning, both eighth grades get together for "peer group." This gives the students a chance to get together with friends from the other homeroom. We use this time for a variety of activities; including, organizing many community outreach projects, making cards for the sick, building sets for the school play, and education on peer pressure and other class topics that may arise. This time spent together really builds a sense of team within our eighth grade.

Cedar Point seems too far away to discuss, but believe it or not, this year will fly by. We have had parent drivers for the past several years, but this year we will be taking a bus. We have reserved an Anderson bus for June 5, 2012. We must pay the bill now to ensure that the price will not increase. The price for the bus and ticket into the park is \$60.00, which is due by Friday, September 16, 2011.

Washington D.C. will be May 8-10, which is a Tuesday through Thursday trip this year. Friday, May 11, is a teacher in-service day and the school is closed for students. A detailed letter and payment plan will come home by October 1.

The school play will be December 2, 2012, and we are the co-directors. Students have auditioned and we are currently working on casting the play. Practices will be every Tuesday and Wednesday until 4:30pm or 5:00pm, and every day during the week of the production. All play practices will be on the stage in the cafeteria. Play practice is mandatory. It is very important that we have all the actors/actresses at practice to ensure a great production. Emails will be sent to parents with play practice times and dates. Please be sure that your Edline email is correct, so we can communicate this important information to you.

We are looking forward to a great year. Please feel free to email us at anytime with questions or concerns. Communication between teachers and parents makes for a great year for everyone!

dross@saintjoe.org

dwatson@saintjoe.org



Computer News

Miss Cosgrove



Edline is again up and running. We hope you will find it to be a useful real-time format for online monitoring of your child's progress in school. A big THANK YOU goes out to all the parents and students who have activated your Edline accounts!



Remember... Parents must activate **parent accounts**, students activate **student accounts**.

Some parents have questioned the reasoning behind this, please let me explain. First, as the children get older, the teachers require the students to be responsible for their own assignments, they do this through Edline, but more importantly, we ask the parents to set up an email account through Edline so we can, if necessary, email important information. If the student has access to the same account as the parents, the child has the capability of altering the account and blocking the parent from getting important school information. If you have any questions or problems with your account, please let me know. I will assist in any way possible to get your Edline account up and running.

Classroom happenings:

- Kindergarten is learning the parts of the computer, special keys on the keyboard, and how to logon as "student". We will soon explore the Internet visiting "Johnny Appleseed" sites.
- 1st Grade is working in *KidPix*. We are creating "Living/Non-Living" Science charts; this is being integrated with Mrs. Tondra's Science class Next, we will be reviewing shapes so we can create "Shape Land" pictures.
- 2nd Grade has just finished working in *KidPix*. We created lightning bug pictures and wrote sentences about how we can let our light shine as they do. Our next project is also in *Kidpix*. We will be creating flower charts and labeling the specifics parts of a plant.
- 3rd Grade is learning how to logon on with a username and password. We are also exploring the Internet visiting interactive sites dealing with the different types of sentences. Next, we will begin writing Haikus with an autumn theme and illustrate them in *KidPix*.
- 4th Grade We are now in *MSWord* working on "How To..." flowcharts.
- 5th Grade is working in *Excel* creating word searches.
- 6th Grade We are now beginning self-portrait similes which will be created in *KidPix and MSWord*.
- 7th and 8th Grades have just finished writing a 3 paragraph report on how they can shine their light to others as Jesus taught us.
- 7th Grade will begin researching various aspects of Ancient Egyptian life. We will then create a 3 panel informational brochure in *PrintShop*. This is being integrated with Social Studies.
- 8th Grade will begin researching ancient Indian tribes. We will collect information and graphics to create informational trading cards. This is being integrated with Social Studies.

All the students K-5 work throughout the year in the independent Math and Reading programs "Success Maker" (CCC). Grades 3-8 work also in "All The Right Type" (ATRT).

Throughout the school year, much of what we do in the Computer Lab is closely tied into what the students are doing in the classroom. We integrate technology into the students' curriculum as much as possible.

Websites to peruse:

- ✓ www.spellingcity.com
- ✓ www.prometheanplanet.com

Lastly, parent volunteers are needed M-F. If you are interested in volunteering your time, please email me at: acosgrove@saintjoe.org

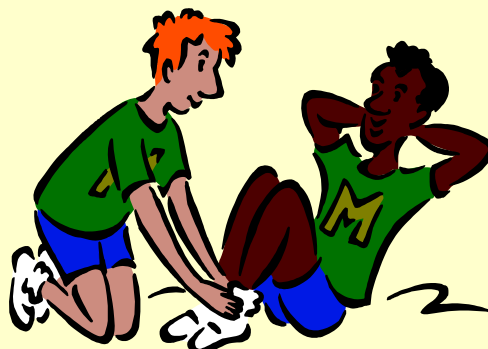


Physical Education
Mrs. Guanciale



The students started the school year learning recess games, safety, and respect of others on the playground and in P.E. Some of the recess games include: the walking program, corn hole, scatter ball, long jump ropes, short jump ropes, Chinese jump ropes, four square, Pac Man four square, and kickball. We continued the following week with cooperative games. These games included monarch, crazy ball, field ball, large red ball, U.F.O., and bonkers.

The students have started their fitness circuits. The circuits include: agility, upper body strength, core strength, cardiovascular workouts, and flexibility. Students in grades 4-8 will be tested in fitness monthly. Fitness testing is not a test of athletic ability. It is not a test that your child can fail. It can, however, show you and your child where he or she stands in relationship to other children (of the same age) in the country on measures of fitness. Although improving your child's fitness can improve their athletic ability. Your approval and reinforcement of your child's attempts to attain and maintain higher levels of fitness are very important. I feel sure that you will want to lend your support. If you have questions about this program or your child's progress, please contact me at: cguanciale@saintjoe.org



Music News

Mrs. Wenmoth



Welcome to Music! What a busy month we have had!

Kindergarten is getting adjusted to the routine of leaving their classroom teacher and coming to special teachers. We have sung some “Old favorites” like “Eency Weency Spider” and “Mary had a Little Lamb”. We have learned new songs like “Two Little Kitty Cats” and “I Have a Funny Puppy”. The children usually love to share these at home. Coming up, we will learn two songs about apples in conjunction with the unit on apples, and we will be working on fireman songs to go with fire safety week. As we learn new songs, we are also learning to pat the steady beat and clap the rhythm of the song.

First grades have shown that they remember the music vocabulary “beat” and “rhythm”. We have performed both on instruments, and with the computer game “Music Ace”. We have enjoyed our old favorite songs, and are learning new ones as well.

Second graders were evaluated on steady beat individually and practiced placing stems on notes. They used dry erase staff boards to draw notes on specific lines and spaces, and to practice placing notes from left to right. It is a very difficult concept to understand that notes move both left to right and up and down simultaneously. The computer program Music Ace helps students place notes “on a line” or “on a space” in a fun and rewarding way.

Third grade was able to identify songs from staff notation, and rhythmic notation. They sure remembered a lot over vacation! We are practicing finding the pages both in the hymnal and the music book quickly and quietly. It would help if your child practiced this during Sunday Mass as well. The students are also learning how to follow verse one, verse two etc. This is a very demanding skill, and you could help them follow at Mass by showing them with your finger where the words are in the hymns. Being able to follow the hymnal would enable them to participate more fully in liturgy.

Grade 4 will soon begin reviewing the notes and fingerings for recorder. We have reviewed the terms staff, treble clef, do clef, measure, bar line, double bar line and repeat sign. They can identify these in songs. We used the skills we have learned in reading rhythms and solfege to learn a new song without me singing it to them first. They should be very proud of their ability to read music! For an upcoming quiz, students need to know the name of a quarter note, half note, etc, and how many beats each receive. They will receive a review sheet to help them study, and the names and values are also in their recorder books.

Grade 5 began their unit on Instruments Families. The students love this unit because they get to blow into different instruments and discover how their sounds are made. This also helps many students decide what instrument to play in the band. Beginning band members will narrow down their choices and have some individual time with me to help their decision making process. I am looking forward to a whole new group of band musicians.

Grade 6 is studying the elements of music, and applying them to songs from around the world. After learning about the history of the song “We Are The World” (both the original and the remake) students sang along and discussed ways in which they can help fulfill the lyric “it’s true we make a better day, just you and me”. The songs in the first unit come from The Caribbean Islands.

Grade 7 is studying the history of Classical music beginning at the first written music, Gregorian Chant. Students will sing from the original 4 line staff, and find examples in the Gather book with modern notation. There will be an open notes test at the end of this unit, so be sure to watch the Music page of Edline for the exact date. Open notes does not mean that the student doesn’t have to prepare. They should see that their notes are organized and complete and be able to find the information quickly.

Grade 8 studies the history of jazz and rock. We have begun with the unit on the blues. In this unit, students will be able to identify and perform 12 bar blues form, and write a blues lyric. We should be able to combine some of these lyrics with our talented musicians and perform a few original blues compositions. There will be a test at the conclusion. See Edline for a list of what needs to be reviewed, as well as the exact date.

Congratulations to 8th grader Mason Hawes who is performing with the St. Vincent-St. Mary High School Marching Band this season. Congratulations also to Grace Coley who sings with Summit Choral Society's Childrens' Choir.

Art News

Mrs. Coley

The start of a new school year is always exciting yet the first few weeks can be challenging. I am so pleased to see how quickly the students settled into the routine and it feels like we just picked up from where we left off. It has been a pleasure to welcome the new students to St. Joseph's and to have them fit right into the Art Room routine. I am always moved by the kindness that I see in our students from day to day and am reminded of a quote ... "Remember there is no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end." Having the privilege of teaching all the students at St. Joseph's, I witness many acts of kindness throughout the year. I would like to acknowledge a few students:

- Brandon Curtin, thank you for the quiet way in which you are always kind to your classmates.
- Lindsey Bechter, thank you for your readiness to always help me... I never have to ask and you always seem to know what to do to be helpful.
- Chaz Scwank, thank you for your wonderful sense of humor that always makes me smile.
- Thank you, Joey Rizzo, for the 110% effort that you put into your work
- Kristen Lauck for asking the questions that make me think!



We are well into our projects and I appreciate the effort and enthusiasm from our students. The eighth graders are learning how to create balance and use color schemes. They will use these objectives to create a stained glass project. The theme of the stained glass is to illustrate what the sacrament of confirmation means to them and to personalize their journey. It is moving to hear their ideas. The seventh graders are completing optical illusions. This project involves many math and measuring skills. It has been challenging but the results well worth the effort. In the sixth grade we will be entering our artwork in the 2012 Safety kids Calendar Contest once our drawings are complete. We discussed the 12 safety rules and how they can apply to us personally, our school and our community. The goal of the poster contest is to begin teaching our kids ways to stay safe. The discussion prompted the students to be able to put their thoughts and ideas onto paper about how best to illustrate the safety rule they chose. I encouraged the students to make sure their ideas are relevant to keeping our community safe. Fifth graders just completed oil pastel projects inspired by the sunflowers of the artist Vincent VanGogh. Fourth graders worked on self-portraits last year and are now using facial proportions and expression to create paper masks. Third graders are continuing their art journey around the world. We began with French Impressionist, Henri Matisse. Second graders are studying the works of Piet Mondrian and are creating grid paintings. First graders are continuing to be inspired by children's literature and are finishing owl paintings portrayed in the storybook "Little Owl". A wonderful story about trying no matter how difficult the task! Kindergarteners will be learning about shape, line and pattern and completing projects displaying their new understanding and emerging art skills.



Spanish News

Mrs. Tomin



Buenos Dias!

Spanish classes are moving along very well. During the first quarter much of what we do is review. This gives the students great reinforcement and allows others to finally “click” with concepts they may not have understood well last year. When new material is introduced I will put it on Edline. There are some notes on Edline from last year. I left those because things like the verb list and other information is used year to year. Also, please encourage your students to participate orally in class. I will give participation grades, and these make up a large percentage of a student’s quarterly grade. I am very “easy” when it comes to participation. Any effort is considered good effort. However, no effort is unacceptable. Ultimately, the students should be comfortable using Spanish or any other language they decide to study. If you have any concerns, please call me or send a note.

Library News

Mrs. Rauber



Welcome back to the new school year. Over the summer 134 students participated in the St. Joseph School Summer Reading Program. Altogether these students read 766 books. Their efforts were rewarded with a dress down day and an ice cream social. Thank you to Mrs. O’Dell, Mrs. McIntyre, Mrs. Szahlender and Mrs. McMullen for volunteering their time to help scoop 134 dishes of ice cream.

In August new books were added to the school library shelves. This was made possible from the Spring Book Fair proceeds. The collection was enriched with numerous non-fiction series books. To name a few; Shakespeare Can Be Fun! Is a series, all written in rhyming couplets and illustrated by students. Structural Wonders, this series identifies some of the world’s best-known structures, exploring their history, the people responsible for their creation and the science behind their construction.

A special thank you goes to Mrs. Sandy Simko for her dedication to our school library. Her labor of love makes our school library beautiful.

We’re on the Web!
www.saintjoe.org