



St. Francis of Assisi

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MUSTANG CONNECTION

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Mega Mustang Raffle

Spring 2013

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Principal Julie Fantone with students on Mega Mustang Raffle Kick-Off Day

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School kicked-off its 17th annual Car Raffle on Tuesday, March 19, just hours before the start of spring! It was a cold and windy day, but it felt like summer with a hot, red Mustang convertible parked in the front lot. Thanks to the generosity of **Ken Butman** (Dealer Principal, **Gene Butman Ford**) our school has this fabulous fund raising opportunity! As you can see from the picture above, the Mustang has enduring good looks (and plenty of power for cruising). The Mustang is also our school's mascot, so Mr. Butman decided to honor our 60th anniversary year with a symbolic grand prize.

Since its inception, the Car Raffle has raised \$1,151,297 for our school. Last year, through the tremendous support of our community, it raised \$100,431. Chairperson **Amy Smith** is optimistic we can build on that momentum to have another wonderfully successful raffle in 2013. Car Raffle proceeds go directly into our school's operating budget, so every ticket purchased matters!

The window sticker on this 2013 Mustang totals \$36,010. The grand prize winner will enjoy a 2-year lease with the car, or \$10,000. In addition, this year, the first, second and third place cash prizes increased to \$5,000, \$2,500 and \$1,000 respectively. Mark your calendar now for the May 31, 2013, 8 p.m. drawing at St. Francis - you just might win!

Tickets are available for purchase from any school family, or in the school or parish office. **The Alliance Catholic Credit Union**, located within Domino Farms, is also assisting with sales. We are sincerely grateful for the opportunity to partner with the Credit Union on this exciting endeavor.

Join the celebration and support Catholic education - buy your ticket soon! For more information, contact the Development Office at cpierce@stfrancisa2.org or at 734.821.2208. And, remember to listen for tailpipes rumbling ... **Go Mustangs!**



Philosophy and Mission Statement

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School is a family-oriented mission of the St. Francis of Assisi Parish community where each student is valued, respected and nurtured as a unique creation of God. We challenge our students spiritually, academically and physically to learn, care and lead as they work to discover the plan that God intends for them. As followers of Christ, we strive always to instill in our students the words of St. Francis of Assisi... "Preach the Gospel always, and when necessary, use words."

The Pastor's Perspective



Here at St. Francis of Assisi, the school year is coming to an end, as is my time as your Pastor. Upon my retirement in August, I will have served our Parish for 16 years, and the Diocese of Lansing for 38, following my ordination in 1975.

During my days as a priest, I have grown in my faith and learned many lessons too. That said, before I bid you farewell, here are a few parting thoughts to consider:

- Our school is an extremely important ministry at St. Francis. In a world that is often at odds with our Catholic values, the school is vital in helping to impart and strengthen these values. We need the school; our world needs the school!
- St. Francis School exists and prospers because of the dedication of hundreds of staff, volunteers and donors. The gifts of your time, talent and treasure are important. Please continue to be generous in sharing what God has given to you. The school depends on all of us.
- The Educational Trust Fund has tripled in my time at St. Francis; however, it still needs your support. It is an investment in bringing our Catholic faith to the world. Is there anything we can do that is more important than that?!

Now, please join me in welcoming your soon to be new Pastor, Fr. James Conlon; he will begin his service on August 12. Fr. James comes originally from Ireland and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Lansing in 2002. His first assignment was at St. Francis as parochial vicar from 2002-2004. He then served as Director of Bethany House at the St. Francis Retreat Center in DeWitt from 2004-2009, and as Pastor of St. Mary Parish in Westphalia, from 2009 until the present. May God strengthen Fr. James in his new ministry.

In closing, thank you sincerely for the privilege of serving as your Pastor. I will pray for you in the days ahead; please keep me in your prayers too.

Fr. Jim McDougall



Prayer for Priests

O Jesus, our great High Priest, hear my humble prayers on behalf of your priests. Give them a deep faith, a bright and firm hope and a burning love which will ever increase in the course of their priestly life.

In their loneliness, comfort them. In their sorrows, strengthen them. In their frustrations, point out to them that it is through suffering that the soul is purified, and show them that they are needed by the Church; they are needed by souls; they are needed for the work of redemption.

~ Amen

From the Principal's Pen



Spring has sprung at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School and the students have extra pep in their steps! The months of February, March and April were very busy. That said, everyone enjoyed an Easter respite with a week-long Spring break. Now, our activities really gear up as we approach the end of the school year.

In early April, I served on a team that reviewed another Catholic school for their accreditation. I spent one day reviewing their curriculum and talking with the principal regarding their procedures and policies. I learned many new ideas, but I also learned that our school is unique and special. We have an amazing community that leads with care and we are able to accomplish so much with such compassionate faculty, staff, parents, and friends. We are blessed!

On April 23, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School and Father Jim McDougall welcomed 7th graders from across the Diocese of Lansing to a vocations day at our school. We hosted men and women from various religious orders who visited and shared their call to be with God in their ministry. The day also included a special Mass with Bishop Boyea presiding, to help celebrate the vocations of so many people.

This year, our faculty reviewed our language arts curriculum as part of our curriculum review cycle. We have plans to roll out a new language arts curriculum in the fall for kindergarten and first grade. Second through fifth grade will also adopt a new language arts curriculum. Sixth through eighth grade are working to align a curriculum with best practices. Each grade level will align with the Common Core state standards. All that said, our language arts faculty will receive professional development to support student learning from one grade level to the next.

We are always eager to update technology in our school. Looking to the year ahead, we plan to purchase laptop computers to outfit our middle school computer lab. This will allow us flexibility within the middle school as well as provide opportunities for more student collaboration. We are excited to integrate these laptops with our 7th and 8th grade use of Google Nexus tablets that were donated recently by the University of Michigan. Each of our 7th and 8th grade students use these tablets in all of their classes to work with one another and to show understanding of various concepts. We are partnering with the University of Michigan to establish applications that will be helpful for student learning.

Many exciting things are happening here at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School. If you are ever interested in visiting, please call or stop in the office so we can give you a tour. God bless you!

Julie Fantone

Celebrating 60 Years



Bob Conlin with Kindergarten students

March was reading month at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School, but it was in April that Mrs. Bohl and an excited kindergarten class welcomed guest reader Bob Conlin, alumnus, Class of 1969. Bob

was delighted to accept the invitation to return

to his alma mater for a "guest appearance" from fellow alumna, Principal Julie Fantone. This special activity continued our school's yearlong 60th Anniversary celebration.

Another exciting event took place on May 3, following the May Crowning Mass. With shovels in hand, students buried a time capsule in the Peace Garden. Knowing 40 years would pass before it was retrieved, every class prepared an addition. The kindergarten students wrote a book entitled "Thank you, God!" Many thoughtful and unique treasures were included in the capsule. To see the entire list of the capsule's contents, visit:

www.stfrancisa2.com/school-60th-anniversary

Our final 60th Anniversary year celebration will happen during the annual Ice Cream Social on Friday, May 31. Plan now to join the fun beginning at 5:30 p.m., at the school, rain or shine! Alumni are always welcome to return "home!"

Comings and Goings

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School Athletic Director **Mr. Michael Smith** accepted a position in the mortgage industry in December 2012. Mr. Smith joined the school staff in 2011. We wish Mr. Smith the best in his new endeavors!

Media specialist **Mrs. Julie Rick** tendered her resignation in January 2013, following the birth of her son. Mrs. Rick joined the school staff in 2011. We congratulate Mrs. Rick on her new position as a full-time mom!

Mrs. Laurie Ruselowski, who directed the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School Media Center for 13 years before retiring in 2011, returned to direct it for the remainder of the 2012-2013 school year.

Mr. Christopher Bohn joined the school staff as the new Athletic Director. Most recently, he taught Physical Education and Health for the Livonia Public Schools. Mr. Bohn coached football for Churchill High School and served as the Strength and Conditioning coach there for several years. Mr. Bohn, who played football for the University of Michigan, has a Bachelor's Degree in Kinesiology and a Master's Degree in Education.

Media Specialist Job Opening



St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School is seeking a full-time Media Specialist for the 2013-2014 school year. Qualified applicants should contact the school office at 734.821.2200 for more information on the position, the complete list of required qualifications, and the application timeline.

Integrating Sustainable Practices

Students will see some changes in their classrooms when they return to St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School in the fall. As part of the parish's pastoral plan, the school will begin to integrate sustainable practices into the curriculum as well as in each classroom.

"Sustainability will be part of the broader curriculum," says Principal Julie Fantone. "We talk about sustainability in Science now, but we want to create a connection between our faith and our curriculum. We want to make the idea of sustainability more meaningful than just reading about it in a Science book."

Ms. Fantone says that each classroom will adopt a different sustainable practice, including recycling materials used in the school, such as paper, batteries and paper towel cores. Other classrooms will take responsibility for recycling printer cartridges and recyclable plastics. "We want to educate the children to make them more aware of sustainability and show them how they can put the practices to work in their homes and in their lives."



Ms. Fantone says the school will move toward more ecologically friendly practices like using electronic textbooks and resources instead of traditional paper-based ones. "We will also be asking parents to provide lunchboxes and fork-and-knife sets that their students can use, take home and wash, rather than using disposable utensils and disposable food containers. It's a process of habit-building. We are stewards of the Earth."

Ms. Fantone says that shifting to sustainable practices and making sustainability a focus in the curriculum is more difficult than it sounds. "We follow the Diocesan curriculum and the State of Michigan curriculum, so every curriculum change we make has to reflect the standards of the Diocese and the State."

Ms. Fantone says that one of the school's longer-term sustainability goals is to make the building more energy-efficient. As an example, she cites a new boiler, which will be installed in the building this summer. Dave Barera, Parish Business Manager, said that efficiency was one of the primary sustainability criteria for the replacement boiler. "Proposals that did not meet our minimum efficiency standards were not considered." The winning proposal included a boiler that will be more than 95% efficient.

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Our Newest Alumni Families

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School would like to extend its congratulations and thanks to the following families who will be graduating their last students this school year. We are pleased to welcome our newest alumni members!

Kirt and Patricia Bjork (Brady)
Norm and Chris Boston (Gillian)
Brian and Kathy Dennis (Alex)
Michael and Karen Kostner (Abigail)
Todd and Maureen LaHote (Natalie)
Mike and Diane Leoni (Olivia)
John and Sue Maguire (Claudia)
John and Cicie Miller (David)
Chris and Mary Moffett (Quinn)
Michael and Kimberly Olsen (Sloane)
Eric and Cathleen Schulz (Daniel)
Peter and Kristen Stumpo (Peter)
Andrew Waller and Adreanne Waller (Jack)

Alumni Notes

Drew Diedrich ('09): Drew has committed to play football at Cornell University.

To submit an **Alumni Note**, visit:
www.stfrancisa2.com/school-community/giving-alumni/alumni

Important Dates

- May 27 :** Memorial Day
(No School)
- May 30:** Eighth-grade Graduation
(6:00 p.m. in the Church)
- May 31:** Ice Cream Social & Car Raffle
(Drawing at 8:00 p.m.)
- June 7:** Last Day of School
(10:00 a.m. Mass in the Church)
- June 30:** 60th Anniversary Year Ends
- September 2:** Labor Day
(No School)
- September 4:** 1st Full Day of School
- September 20:** Teeing It Up for Tuition Golf Outing
(Polo Fields Golf & Country Clubs-Ann Arbor)
- October 18:** Grandparents' & Special Friends Day
- October 31:** Halloween Carnival
- November 1:** All Saints Day
(No School)

