



St. Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MUSTANG CONNECTION

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011

In This Issue:

Page 1:

60 Years of Catholic Education

Page 2:

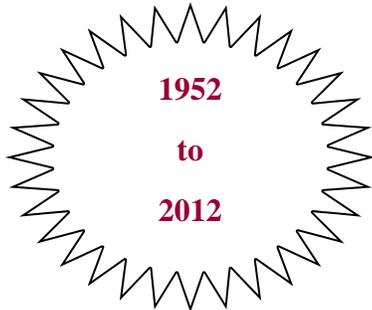
The Pastor's Perspective
From the Principal's Pen

Page 3:

Tuition Assistance Golf Outing
ETF Benefit - How Sweet It Is!

Page 4:

Shoes for Christmas
Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi
Upcoming Events



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."

60 Years of Catholic Education

By Susan Zill

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School has "a family-centered mission." With that philosophy in mind, we invite you - as members of the St. Francis family - to reconnect with us for St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School's 60th Anniversary Celebration on **October 6, 2012.**

The first school building (current 2nd & 3rd grade classroom section) opened in September 1952 with 155 students staffed by the Sisters of St. Dominic of Adrian (Adrian Dominican Sisters). Now, nearly 60 years later, we have begun planning a celebration that will include a Saturday evening Liturgy presided over by Most Rev. Earl Boyea, Fifth Bishop of Lansing. We also have tentative plans for a year-long celebration that includes the creation of a Peace Garden, a Mustang Re-Connection Party and more!

Patti Dobbs and I, Susan Zill, are co-chairing the 60th Anniversary Celebration in concert with the Development Office, Development Council, school staff and energetic volunteers who are already bringing together ideas and resources in order to plan a not-to-be-missed all-class reunion.



Patti Dobbs & Susan Zill

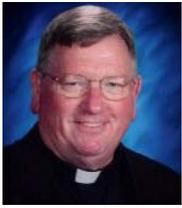
Patti has been involved with the Development Council since its inception. She has also served as a Trustee of the Educational Trust Fund Board. Her daughters, Shelly and Cheryl graduated in 1984 and 1987 respectively.

My husband, Nate, and I truly value the education/formation that our children Samantha ('00) and Kyle and Joseph, ('03) received. My school activities included Room Parent/Coordinator, Development Council Administrative Assistant and substitute teacher. I have been involved with the parish music ministry for almost 20 years and currently co-chair the Annual Rummage Sale.

Alumni - please mark this date on your calendar and contact your fellow classmates so that everyone knows of the upcoming celebration. We also invite the Alumni, and family members, whether near or far, to contact us for information on how you might offer your talents and resources to create a memorable reunion!

If you are interested in participating in the 60th Anniversary Celebration or would like to be kept up-to-date on the 2012 Re-Connection Party, please contact the Development Office, at cpierce@stfrancisa2.org or at 734.821.2208.

The Pastor's Perspective



Dear Friends,

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School has much to be thankful for. We can reflect on our blessings with gratitude, and I am honored to share some of them with you.

First, and foremost, our students receive a superior Catholic faith foundation. They participate in daily Morning Prayer, attend weekly Mass, and monthly partake in Eucharistic Adoration and a Prayer Service. In the classroom, teachers periodically ask students to “Drop Everything and Pray.” And, the school’s monthly “Wednesday Morning Walking Club” provides families, students, and faculty an opportunity to walk and pray together before the school day begins. All of these prayerful moments, in addition to learning about Catholicism in the classroom, help our students practice and strengthen their faith.

Second, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School is blessed with a dedicated and caring faculty. They have diverse gifts and talents and work well together as a team. Each day they share their God-given strengths with the children in their classroom.

Third, the curriculum at St. Francis of Assisi School is exceptional. Many subjects include a hands-on, inquiry based approach to learning which helps students develop a life-long love for learning. Several of our teachers have Master’s degrees, and all of our faculty integrate their skillful knowledge into the curriculum. Furthermore, the education at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School is aligned with the State of Michigan grade level content standards.

Fourth, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School works on service projects throughout the year to help the poor in our community as well as others in need, internationally. A hallmark of our Catholic faith tradition is a concern for the common good, borne out in service to others.

Good things are happening at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School. Friendliness fills our halls and we have an environment that is conducive to learning. We ask for your continued prayers and support to help our beloved school of nearly 60 years continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

Fr. Jim McDougall
Pastor

From the Principal's Pen



The autumn leaves have finished falling and the calendar keeps moving forward. I can hardly believe it is December already. I want to take a moment for appreciation and gratitude of so many blessings here at St. Francis. Today, I was blessed to watch the students return from Adoration as they walked through the front door. The true beauty of their faith and love has been permeating the school as they lend a caring hand and smile to an acquaintance in the hallway. The friendly smiles and laughter is such a remarkable reminder of God’s hand in the work we all strive to accomplish with these special little people.

We have had some remarkable events and new initiatives these past few months in St. Francis School. In September we began implementing a Math intervention program for students in first through sixth grade. We have 3 interventionists: Mr. John Butsic, Mrs. Janet Mainz, and Mrs. Alaina Smith. They are each qualified and experienced in math concepts and working with children. The interventionists attend classrooms during the classes regularly scheduled math time at least 2 times a week. They work with students, at the teachers’ direction, on specific skills in math. This helps us, as a school, meet each student where they are individually in their math skill development. The addition of these interventionists also allows smaller group work so the students who have mastered a particular skill have the ability to receive enrichment in their math curriculum. For fourth through sixth grades, we are utilizing the Accelerated Math program to enhance the ability of the intervention time. It has been a transition time for many of us, but we are working to become more available to meeting the needs of each student at St. Francis School.

One special event that has occurred was on Friday, October 21st. We were blessed with a visit from many of our grandparents and special friends during Grandparent’s and Friend’s Day. A ceremony began the morning in the Parish Activity Center (P.A.C.) with performances from our Middle School Choir, Strings Program, and our Heartbeats team. The P.A.C. was decorated with artistic ornaments to thank so many for their wonderful support of Catholic education. After the ceremony in the P.A.C., grandparents and special friends visited their students in the classroom. The teachers had many creative bonding experiences for all the visitors. The morning classroom visits and the day commenced with a beautiful Mass led by our school choirs. We feel so blessed to have celebrated such a strong foundation within each of our school families. Thank you to all that joined us for this special day.

May God Bless You.

Julie Fantone
Acting Principal

Tuition Assistance Golf Outing



In September, the second annual Tuition Assistance Golf Outing took place at the Polo Fields Golf and Country Clubs. This year's event was well attended, and it raised over \$5,400 in net proceeds.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School strives to provide tuition assistance to any family that requests it based on need. In the 2010-2011 school year, 25 families received \$73,600 in assistance; this year we estimate that financial aid requests will be at least as great. The golf outing helped ensure access to affordable Catholic education for many families since it raised critical resources for the Tuition Assistance Fund.

The outing had many new corporate sponsors which made the event a success. Most notably was the Hole-In-One sponsorship by Gene Butman Ford. The Gene Butman Ford Hole-In-One Contest provided golfers four hole opportunities to win major prizes. The grand prize was a 2012 Ford Focus. There were two golfers who came very close to winning the car.



Guests Enjoy Lunch

The event concluded with a post-game lunch off the grill which both golfers and non-golfers attended.

On behalf of Chairman Doug DeFord and the Development Office, thank you to all of our golfers, generous sponsors and donors, and our outing volunteers. To one and all, plan now to be on the links next fall to support of our great school, our families, and the Tuition Assistance Fund.



Team DeFord

Did You Know?

The Educational Trust Fund awarded \$53,000 to St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School this year (based on a formula set forth in the Trust documents.)

Educational Trust Fund Benefit

Join Us February 4 for "How Sweet It Is"!

Every year since 2002, supporters of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School have participated in a Benefit to raise money for the Educational Trust Fund (ETF) while having a truly wonderful and unique evening.



Sergio & Kristin Scarcella



Jeff & Stacey Higgins

This school year, the 11th annual Educational Trust Fund Benefit will celebrate "How Sweet It Is" on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at Weber's Inn in Ann Arbor. Attendees will have a great time as they support the ETF; they will also have an opportunity to contribute to the Tuition Assistance Fund during a special appeal that will conclude the bidding festivities. Last year's event, which had a Mardi Gras theme, raised over \$52,000 in net proceeds for the ETF. Guests also contributed \$47,400 to the Tuition Assistance Fund, so nearly \$100,000 was raised altogether. And we know we can top that next year.

With our theme of "How Sweet It Is," the Benefit will offer games, a raffle, live and silent auction items, including live auction items like "Coffee with Coach Carr" and 2 season tickets to the 2012 University of Michigan football games. Silent auction items range from the ever-popular "Principal for the Day" and a hand-made dollhouse. Between the live and silent auctions, there are items for everyone to bid on and enjoy. Or just come for the great food, chance to see friends, and support Catholic education.

As this year's co-chairs, we invite you to join us on Saturday, February 4, 2012 at Weber's Inn. Celebrate St. Valentine's Day early, enjoy an evening out with your family and friends, and raise money to support St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School. With your participation and support, we will make this year the "sweetest" yet!

Sergio & Kristin Scarcella and Jeff & Stacey Higgins
ETF Benefit Co-Chairs

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Shoes for Christmas

The sixth-grade students at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School started a “Shoes for Christmas” collection on November 14.

They sought gently-used or new shoes of all sizes (up to a men’s size 9) for schoolchildren in Uganda and Kenya, in time for Christmas. The students collected and organized the shoes until November 22; they were then sent to Africa. This service project helped our children understand the importance of sharing their blessings with others.



Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is
doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light. Where there
is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console, to be understood, as to understand, to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.
-Amen

Upcoming Events



- Nov. 23-25:** Thanksgiving Vacation – No School
- December 8:** Immaculate Conception
(All School Mass at 9:15 a.m.)
- December 20:** Christmas Program
- December 21:** Last School Day before Christmas Vacation
- December 25:** Christmas Day
- January 1:** New Year’s Day
- January 9:** School Resumes
- January 16:** Martin Luther King Day – No School
- January 29:** Open House / Catholic Schools Week Begins
- February 4:** Educational Trust Fund Benefit
(Weber’s Inn, Ann Arbor)
- February 17-21:** Winter Break – No School
- February 22:** Ash Wednesday