



The St. Augustine Monthly

St. Augustine School † Founded in 1857 † www.mdschblind.org

A School You Can Have Faith In † January 2009

From the Principal's Desk...

Last summer Pope Benedict XVI announced that the church would observe a celebration in honor of St. Paul the Apostle from June 28, 2008 to June 29, 2009. Periodically, the Church sets aside an entire year to encourage all of us to focus on some particular and important aspect of our faith. One of the teachings of St. Paul that is most meaningful to me is his call to rejoice in all things: *"Brothers and sisters, rejoice always. Pray without ceasing, in all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."* When life is going smoothly it is easy to put this exhortation into practice. When Paul wrote these words he was imprisoned, facing physical limitations and a sense of failure. Rejoicing when we are facing personal loss, fear and worry over things we have little control over is a tough call. As Paul knew, what makes it possible is the fact that Christ is with us. He is here with us to help us bear our burden, strengthen and guide us, especially when things are difficult. That has been our spiritual focus through the beautiful seasons of Advent and Christmas: Emmanuel, God is with us. Through our prayer, which Paul tells us to do unceasingly, Jesus comes to us. Being in contact with God fills us with gratitude despite our difficulties.

As I welcomed the faculty and students back to school yesterday, I was filled with a sense of gratitude for all the goodness I experience in this community. There is a generous spirit of service and compassion for one another. I am thrilled that we will once again be celebrating Catholic Schools Week and that this year's theme, "Catholic Schools Celebrate Service," rings true at St. Augustine School. The faculty and staff of our school work unceasingly and tirelessly to serve our students the best they can. Our school board and HSA executive committee members generously use their time and talent to ensure that our school continues to carry out its mission. The parent volunteers help our students and staff in countless ways and always with such a willing and humble spirit. The parishioners and alumni who support our school financially and through their prayers serve us and the ministry of Catholic education. The example of service given to us through the dedication of the School Sisters of Notre Dame is truly awe-inspiring. Busy people who are facing many challenges continue to say, "Yes." I believe this outpouring of service comes from deep faith and awareness that God is with us. I know this month will be busy and that many things will be asked of each of us. I pray as we continue to serve others, we will remember St. Paul who was filled with the knowledge that God is with us, for us and in us.

~Patricia Schratz, Principal

Pray Always

Be at peace among yourselves. And...admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-18

Catholic Schools Celebrate Service



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Our entire school community will celebrate "Catholic Schools Week" **January 25-30, 2009**. A schedule of special events planned for this week is attached to the newsletter. We are in need of many parent volunteers to help with set-up and clean-up at several events (Grandparent's Day, Student Appreciation

Day, etc.), as well as to serve as tour guides at our Open House. This is a great way to earn volunteer hours! Please contact Mrs. Mobley at smobley@staug-md.org or 410-796-3040 to volunteer. Thank you for donating your valuable time to our school in order to make CSW a success!

Save the Date... Open House!

We will hold a special Open House for **current school parents and grandparents** on **Monday, January 26**. There will be a special presentation by students in the hall, followed by classroom visits. This is a great opportunity for all parents and grandparents to visit the classrooms to observe the wonderful learning that is occurring. We hope you will be able to join us!

In addition, we will hold an Open House for **prospective families** on **Tuesday, January 27** from 9-11 AM. If you have any family, friends, neighbors or co-workers looking for a Catholic school for their child, please encourage them to attend this Open House. Applications will be accepted for new students at this time. **Remember: If you refer a new family to SAS and they attend for an entire school year, you will receive a \$500 tuition credit!**

Second Collection

During each mass on **January 24 & 25**, the second collection will be dedicated to the school. At each mass, we would like to have a parent speak briefly about his/her positive experiences at our school. **To volunteer to speak at mass, please contact Mrs. Mobley at smobley@staug-md.org as soon as possible.** Thank you for volunteering your time to benefit the school!

Re-Registration Right Around the Corner

It's hard to believe that re-registration is right around the corner! Forms will go home in January and will be due by **January 20**. In order to re-register children for the 2009-10 school year, all accounts (tuition, after care, lunch, etc.) must be current. Also, parishioner status is re-evaluated at re-registration time. Any family registering as parishioners should be using the parish envelopes on a regular basis to support the church, which in turn supports the school. Families who no longer qualify for the discount rate will be informed by letter by **January 10**.

Winter Weather Is Upon Us

The brisk winter weather has finally arrived. Please be sure that your child is properly dressed for the cold temperatures. Hats, gloves and warm coats are necessary and should be labeled for young students.

School sweaters or sweatshirts are highly recommended in the event that the building is chilly or we have a fire drill. **In the event of snow or ice, we follow the decisions made by the Howard County Public Schools for late openings, early dismissals and closings. Please listen to WBAL for this important information.**

***Please note: If the school closes early due to inclement weather, there is NO AFTER CARE.**

Annual Fund Extended

We understand that many families were not in a position to contribute to the Annual Fund due to the costly Christmas holiday, so we have extended the deadline for Annual Fund donations to **Friday, January 30, 2009**. It is our sincere hope that this will enable more families to participate in this critically important fundraiser. To date, only 53% of our school families have participated.

Please help us reach our goal of 100% participation by making a tax-deductible contribution today. We rely, in large part, on the Annual Fund to help make up the difference between tuition income and the many expenses related to operating the school. In addition, income from the Annual Fund helps us to keep tuition increases to a minimum, while at the same time continuing to provide a high-quality educational program and staffing the school



with highly skilled teachers and staff. Finally, a high level of Annual Fund support by our school families greatly increases our chances of receiving outside funding from corporations and foundations. **A donation of any amount is greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!**

Congratulations, Math Masters!

The following students achieved "Math Master" status in December...great job!

Grade 3 – Noah Bahur, Dominique Buteau, John Dutan, Julia Hoffman, Eddie Madera, Gregory Peterson, Jessica Schneck

Grade 4 – Sam Goodman, Shannon McDonnell, Leah Manu, Julia Stanitski

Grade 5 – Anna Peyla, Emily Thompson, Sean Zaranski

Let's Go South!

Take a break from cooking and enjoy a homemade, all-you-can-eat dinner in the hall on **Friday, January 16** from 5-9 PM! Miss Ruth's delicious menu will feature North Carolina pulled pork BBQ, fried



chicken, country fried potatoes, baked beans, cole slaw, desserts and drinks. **Volunteers are needed to help with set-up, clean-up and serving food. This is a fun, easy way to earn volunteer hours! To volunteer, please contact Mrs. Mobley at smobley@staug-md.org or call the school office at 410-796-3040. Thank you!**

Get Your Raffle Ticket Today!

Don't miss your chance to win **tuition for one child or \$4,000 cash!** Raffle tickets are only \$25 each and the drawing will be held on **Friday, January 30, 2009***. Second prize is one family registration fee for next year and third prize is a \$100 gift certificate to Flynn & O'Hara Uniforms. Order your ticket(s) using the attached order form.

***We must sell 250 tickets in order to have the drawing.**

Spotlight on Specials...Spanish



Spanish is taught in grades 1-8 by Miss Heather Satalin. Miss Satalin grew up in Syracuse, NY and graduated from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

In Spanish class, students are currently learning food vocabulary and the younger students recently learned Christmas words. Middle School students created Spanish menus and are now working on conjugating verbs and learning how to form sentences. In addition, students continue to work on memorizing 'Padre Nuestro', Our Father.

In addition to learning Spanish vocabulary, students are exposed to the Spanish culture and middle school students are prepared for high school Spanish.

Geography Bee

Our school-wide Geography Bee will be held on **Friday, January 16**. The results of the Bee will be published in the Friday Flier. We wish our students the best of luck in the competition!



Thank you, Knights of Columbus

We would like to extend a very special thank you to the **Knights of Columbus, St. John Neumann Council**, for their assistance with parking and traffic at the Christmas Pageant. Thanks in large part to their efforts, everything went very smoothly. In addition, we would like to thank



the Knights for their support of our school through their financial donations and prayers. The fathers of several of our students are currently members of the Knights of Columbus. We encourage others to join this important ministry.