

St. Augustine School

Faith + Family + Future

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

December 2009

The Saint for the month is Blessed Alfonso Maria Fusco.

The value for the month is Discretion.

In the Year of the Priest, we honor this month, Pope John Paul II.

The value for the month is Understanding.

****IMPORTANT TO ALL PARENTS****

Beginning January 2010, we will be going “paperless”. All mail and fliers from school, HSA and SASAL will be done by email. All fliers are posted on our school website. Please take the time now to go online and see what is there.

If you need to update the school with your email, please do so.

Strategic Plan for Development - Through the work of the Development Advisory Board, which all parents are welcome and encouraged to participate on, progress continues to be made on identifying solutions and steps that can be taken over the next three years to address some of the key challenges that were acknowledged during our Development Assessment. In recent weeks, we have been particularly focused on Enrollment Management and Alumni Relations. Enrollment Management is a systematic process to identify, attract and retain students so that we sustain and grow the enrollment at SAS. Our enrollment currently stands at 184 students with 85% of our student body residing in the East Ramapo (74%) and Clarkstown (11%) School Districts. Two-thirds of our school families are parishioners of St. Augustine's. We are evaluating a number of steps that could be taken in the short term to help increase our enrollment for next year.

In the meantime, in anticipation of our 50th Anniversary, which we will be celebrating in 2010-2011, we are trying to update our alumni database. We will be putting a notice in the parish bulletins throughout Rockland County as

well as the *Catholic New York* asking all Alumni to update their contact information by either contacting the school office or completing an online form on our website. We have created a Facebook Page (you can find the link on the school website) where our alumni can stay connected to each other and get updates on school events.

If you would like to be more involved in our strategic planning process or have any suggestions about how we can increase enrollment and get our alumni more involved, please contact Beth Rooney at 364-0443 or girlsoncamphill@optonline.net.

Thanksgiving Feast Day - Thank you one and all! What a great day! It might have been raining outside on Tuesday, November 24th but the sun was shining on our school wide feast. Thank you, Miss Angela and Mrs. Schmidhauser for coordinating the Kitchen. Thank you also Mrs. Schmidhauser for coordinating the Class Parents, and thank you, all parents who assisted in any way that you did. Without your assistance and support the day would not have been such a huge success!

"Hiding Pumpkins" - Congratulations to our winners! There were 31 pumpkins hiding in the school. Some classes had more than one student with the correct amount and their names went into a hat and a winner was pulled. Some classes did not guess the correct number, so the person who was the closest won. The winners are: Kindergarten -Sydney Jasinski; grade 1 -Mia Gong; grade 2 -Brandon Edwards; grade 3 -James Fiore; grade 4 -Joseph Bono; grade 5 - Dominick Jean-Baptiste-Ridore; grade 6 -Isabella Bono; grade 7 -Chelsea Chuck; and grade 8 -Alexa Crudele. Each winner received a \$10 Barnes & Noble gift card.

Christmas Band Concert - will be held on Thursday, December 10th, at 7:00 pm in the school auditorium for experienced musicians in grades 4-8. All are welcome to come and hear our school band!

Pre-K Christmas Play - Our Pre-K class will present their "Christmas Play" on Monday, December 14th in the school auditorium. Our little ones are preparing this beautiful Advent prayer to show their parents how much God loves us that He sent us His Son, Jesus.

Christmas Pageant - All are welcome to attend our Christmas Pageant on Wednesday, December 16th, at 7:00pm, in the Church. The children will report to the school at 6:30 pm. All parents and guests go directly to the Church. This year all grades, Kindergarten through eight, will participate. What a beautiful Advent prayer as we prepare for the birth of Our Lord, Jesus Christ. What a beautiful way for our St. Augustine School Family to celebrate this glorious event.

Advent Project - Once again, this year, we are asking each family to donate **ONE NEW ITEM** of basic baby clothing. These donations will be given to Birthright of Rockland County, Inc. and Good Counsel Home. Our students will be collecting these items along with the students in the School of Religion. All unwrapped baby items are due no later than Wednesday, December 10th. Thank you for your support with this service project.

Emergency Closings - Should a snowfall or another inclement condition cause the Clarkstown School District to close or delay opening, St. Augustine School will close or have a delayed opening. The Honeywell Instant Alert System will notify each family what St. Augustine School is doing.

SASAL - Our program is in full swing. If you haven't registered, you still can. Thank you to all our volunteers who give of themselves every week for this program. Just a reminder:

- Only those children scheduled for a game should be dropped off at the school. All other children **MUST BE UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF AN ADULT** at all times. Other children **CANNOT** be responsible for younger siblings or friends.
- Children **SHOULD NOT BE UP ON THE STAGE FOR ANY REASON.**

There are more than enough chairs set up around the gym for seating. I know that the safety of our children is first on the priority list for all of us. Thank you for your cooperation and support in this matter.

Please visit the school website to get the weekly SASAL schedule. The full season schedule is available as well.

Asbestos Inspection - occurred on Thursday, November 19, 2009. I am happy to announce that we passed the inspection.

Honor Roll - Congratulations to the following 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade students who made the Honor Roll for the 1st Quarter.

The Honors Breakfast took place on Monday, November 23rd. Thank you HSA, especially Mrs. Pisano.

5th Grade

Principal's List

Gabriella DePinho
Gabrielle Favre
Christine Jacob

First Honors

Second Honors

Kelsey Negron

6th Grade

Principal's List

First Honors

Nicholas Fiore
Aleksander Piatek

Second Honors

Zachary Miraz

7th Grade

Principal's List

Anthony DePinho

First Honors

Kushal Dave
Griffin Favre
Gianna Pisano
Gabrielle Valdez

Second Honors

Aaron Fisher
Daniel Mackle
Katherine Mahoney

8th Grade

Principal's List

Danielle Pavon

First Honors

Second Honors

Alexa Crudele
Victoria Forlini
Alessandra Garcia
Christian Torres
Emily Walter

Cold Weather - As winter approaches, please remember to have your child dress warmly. Hats and gloves are appropriate; the children will go out for recess daily provided the temperature is above 32 F. **Be sure to label all clothing.** This includes: school sweater, sweatshirt, coat, gloves, hat and lunchboxes.

The Lighting of the Nativity Creche - On Thursday, December 10th from 4:30-5:30 pm, the lighting of the Nativity Creche will take place in front of the Legislative Building on New Hempstead Road, New City. The lighting will follow a brief blessing, prayer, and song. This is a lovely way to "enrich your family's Christmas by giving witness to Jesus, who gave unforgettably enduring worldwide witness down through the ages - from a stable in Bethlehem. A true miracle." Please look for the flyer that will be coming home.

Save the Date:

- The Father/Daughter Snowball is set for Saturday, January 16th, 7-9:30 pm in the Zoeller Center.
- Catholic Schools Week theme for this year is "Catholic Schools Service". We will be celebrating the week of January 31st through February 6th.
- Open House on Wednesday, February 3rd, 9:30 - 11:30 am and 7-8 pm.
- Kindergarten - 7th grade Registration will occur February 9th and 10th.
- Pre-K Registration will occur February 9th and 10th 9:30-11:30 am.

Box Tops - Our Student Council is collecting General Mills Box Tops For Education. If you purchase and use General Mills products, please clip off the Box Tops For Education and send them into school. Thank you.

Campbell Soup Labels for Education - Save your Campbell Soup Labels and other Campbell product labels. Just look for the emblem that states Campbell Soup labels for Education. Thank you for your support!

Coupons - Sister Diane would appreciate receiving all the manufacturer's coupons you do not use. Please do not cut them up. Thank you for your support.

May the blessings of Christmas remain with you throughout the year. A Joyous Christmas and Holy New Year to you and yours,

*Mrs. Katharine Murphy, Principal and
The Faculty and Staff of St. Augustine School*

*The Story
Of the
Christmas Tree
“And this shall be
a sign to you ..”*

*The Christmas tree traces its roots, so to speak, to many ancient customs. Before Christ, people decorated their homes with evergreen branches in hope that the short winter days would soon pass. In 16th century Germany, the custom began of bringing an evergreen inside and decorating it with apples. Called a “Paradeisbaum,” this tree was set up on Dec. 24th to represent the tree of life. One legend suggests that a German minister, walking home one winter night, saw stars through the branches of a pine tree, calling to mind the angel-filled skies above Bethlehem. He brought an evergreen home to his family and decorated it with candles to remind them of Our Savior’s birth. German immigrants brought the tradition to America, and Christmas trees grew and grew. Because the fir tree is “eternally green,” and because its triangular shape points to heaven, the Christmas tree is a symbol of our hope for the life everlasting
Our Lord Jesus gives us.*

