



Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

“School of Distinction”

Dynamic Education
Centered in Christ

THE PEACEMAKER... *PIECES*

Vol. 15 Issue 14

March 10, 2010



Congratulations to our 8th Grade Girl's Basketball Team, the 2010 City Champs! Way to go, HORNETS!

A parting message from Mrs. Michels

I have been teaching in the Grand Rapids Diocese for the last 25 years, and I have reached the stage in my life when it is time for me to retire, at the end of this school year. I have given this a lot of thought and prayer and I feel that this is what God is calling me to do. The last ten years that I have been at St. Thomas, have been the *best* years of my teaching career and in many ways I'm sad to be leaving.

I want to thank everyone for all the help, support, kindness and love you have given me - it won't be forgotten.

I will miss the people here at St. Thomas the *most*. We have the best staff & faculty anybody could ever work with. The best families – I have never met such loving and generous people. And, most of all I will miss the children, they are the *GREATEST*. Please know that you will always be in my heart and in my prayers.

~ Sue Michels

Reading with the STARS Welcomes Olympian Brian Diemer



Mr. Brian Diemer, bronze medal winner in the 1984 Summer Olympics, visited our school on Friday, February 26, promoting reading to many of our classes in the library. He chose to read a passage about attitude, encouraging all students to respond with a helpful attitude when their parents ask them to do something.

He also showed our students his bronze medal and shared a video of his steeplechase race at the Olympics when he won the bronze medal! He was an inspiration to the students, faculty, and staff.

We were truly blessed to have Mr. Diemer encourage our students to read and to set the example for hard work and humble service.



Thank you, Christina Roslaniec, for suggesting Mr. Diemer and for extending the invitation to him.

~ Liz Aschwege

Cha Ching Challenge for Charity

The annual Cha Ching Challenge for Charity event is taking place the week of March 15th, and ending on Monday, March 22nd. Children are encouraged to gather up coins from couch cushions, car floor mats or their change jars and bring them in to increase their class totals each day. Of course, they can bring in dollar bills to decrease another classroom's totals as well! This is the challenge! Class contributions are counted daily, and announced at the end of the day. The classroom that collects the largest donation at the end of the Challenge is rewarded for their generosity with a Pizza Party, compliments of the Student Council! Proceeds from the Cha Ching Challenge for Charity go to Catholic Relief Services to help Haiti.

Early Dismissal Reminder:

Due to a teacher inservice, students will be dismissed at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, March 19th.



ATTACHMENT

- Challenge Father/Daughter Dance



The "Cat in the Hat" made a special visit to Saint Thomas last week, reading to several of our classes. He was here in celebration of the birthday of Theodore Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss.

Protecting God's Children Awareness Sessions

If you are new to our school or an existing volunteer who still needs to attend Virtus training, (required for all school volunteers), please note the upcoming sessions:

If you plan to attend this session, and have not already registered, please register online as follows:

Holy Spirit (Grand Rapids)
 Wednesday, March 24, 2010
 6:30 p.m.

St. Joseph the Worker Parish (Wyoming)
 Saturday, April 24, 2010
 9:30 a.m. (conducted in Spanish)

St. Sebastian Parish (Byron Center)
 Monday, May 3, 2010
 6 p.m.

- Go to www.virtus.org
 - Click "Registration"
 - Click "Begin the Registration Process"
 - Select Diocese of Grand Rapids as the organization.
 - You will be required to enter a UserID and password (of your choice)
 - Fill out registration form
 - Choose a location

Morality & Chastity Jr. High Presentations

Attention Junior High Parents: Morality and Chastity presentations are happening this month! The schedule is as follows:

- Fifth grade – March 17th; 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
- Sixth grade – March 11th; 1:30 to 3:00 p.m.
- Seventh grade – March 25th; 1:45 to 3:00 p.m.
- Eighth grade – March 18th; 1:45 to 3:00 p.m.

Parents are encouraged to attend the presentation with their same-gender child. All the girls' presentations will be in the Ministry Center Chapel and all the boys' presentations will be in the Ministry Center Community Room. A few book selections will be available for purchase at the presentations. If you feel that you need to be more well-informed on this urgent area of your child's growth, one or both of these books may be a wonderful help to you.

Child care is available for those who have preschoolers but would like to attend the presentation with your junior high students. Call Margaret Murphy and she will provide the details.

A permission slip and more info about your child's presentation has been or will be mailed to your home. Please call Margaret Murphy at 459-5227 or Krisann O'Neil at 459-9704 if you have questions.

An Invitation To Pray The Rosary in Church

Every day at St. Thomas School you can pray the Rosary with other parents and friends.

You can pray for our school, our teachers, your children, the sick, a special intention, yourself ...

For any reason at all, please feel welcome to join many other men and women who would like to lift up a Rosary to Our Blessed Mother. No prior experience necessary.

3:00 pm every **Monday, Wednesday, Friday** (right before school lets out)

8:00 am every **Tuesday, Thursday** (right after school starts)

~ Lois Ens

The Church Speaks:

"All men of whatever race, condition or age, in virtue of their dignity as human persons, have an inalienable right to education."

GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS (Declaration on Christian Education) 1965

America and Me Essay Contest

Last fall the 8th grade Language Arts students wrote essays for the Farm Bureau Insurance Co.'s Michigan essay contest. The topic for the contest was *My American Hero*. Each school sent ten qualifying essays for the first round of judging. Out of the essays sent from each school a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd essay is chosen that best represents the ideals of the contest. The first place essay is then pooled with all of the other 1st place essays from across the state for further judging. St Thomas will be notified sometime in April of the final results. All of the students from St. Thomas wrote excellent essays. Chosen from our school essays: Kassi Mirandette's essay was selected as 1st place school essay, Luke Ens placed 2nd, and Connor Knapp's essay placed 3rd. Congratulations to Kassi, Luke, and Connor.

~ Debra M. Zoppa



Kassi Mirandette, Luke Ens and Connor Knapp with their winning essays.

Thanks to All Who Made Our Carnival a Success!

Thank you to all those who donated pop, books, cakes and their time!

Also a special thank you to the following committee chairpeople:

Heidi Schliem - Games

Carla Klimp-Van Dokkenburg - Volunteers

Amy Drees - Bucket of Wishes

Christina Rosloniec - Cake Walk

Julie Line-Neuman - Publicity AND photographs

Melisa Skinner - food/drinks and

Mike Trenshaw - clean up

We'd also like to thank Mr. Faber & Mrs. Furtwangler for helping all night and all of the teachers for letting us take over their rooms for a night.

~ *The 2010 Auction Chairs*



F.Y.I. (For Your Information)

Did you know our Saint Thomas Celtic Cross is actually called St. Kieran's Cross? Bishop Kieran of Saighir was the first Saint born in Ireland. He was one of two Saint Kierans who,

because of their prominence in the early Irish church, were known as two of the "Twelve Apostles of Ireland." Our cross logo, commonly referred to as the Celtic Cross, was first designated as St. Kieran's cross and is found on many churches bearing his name.

Read n' Give

The first graders are participating in the "Read n' Give" program. We are collecting new or GENTLY USED books to donate to children who need books. We will be putting stickers in each book encouraging the recipients to read the book and pass it along. Our books are going to be delivered to Family Haven. Please consider purchasing some books for our drive or bringing in some books that you are no longer using in your home that are in good shape to pass on to many others! There are boxes located outside Mrs. Lake's room and Mrs. Donohue's room. Thank you!

Bandtastic Change

Out of respect for the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral on March 30th and potential parking problems on the campus of Catholic Central, we would like to move Bandtastic to Monday, March 29th.

Our 5-8th grade band students will be attending rehearsals at Catholic Central from approximately 9:30am-2:00pm. Busing will be arranged by us. The concert will be at 7:00pm in the evening in the Catholic Central Gym. There is a Bandtastic spaghetti dinner fundraiser in the CC cafeteria prior to the concert for all band students, families and their guests.

Reflection

By Rachel Syrba (7th Grade)

The wages of sin are death. That is what Father Jim told us at Mass a few weeks ago. Gossiping is a sin we all tend to do in our life...especially if you are a middle schooler like me and my seventh grade class. Since gossip is a sin, gossip kills. It can kill the spirit of the person who is at the center of it and it can kill possible future-friendships. But mostly, gossip kills the person, or people spreading the gossip. Every time we gossip about someone we kill a little goodness in our hearts and in the hearts of others. This year, my seventh grade class and I are trying to stop all of this. For our seventh grade retreat we are making a cross to show us how much goodness we kill in each other. Every time we say something hurtful to someone, or someone says something hurtful to us, we go take the hammer Mrs. Zoppa provided and pound a nail into the big wooden cross hung on the wall outside our homeroom. Once we get to the retreat we're going to see how much damage we did to the cross by taking out every single nail. Our sins died with Jesus on the cross. We need to die to sin and rise in new life for Jesus. Anytime anyone hears a nail being pounded into the cross, they'll know something has happened.

From the desk of the Technology Coordinator:

Parents:

You look out for your children in the real world, but do you know what they're doing online?

You are invited to attend an i-Parent Program to learn how parents around the country are making their homes and communities Internet safe through the i-Parent Campaign.

According to an ongoing i-SAFE poll –

Just under half of all 7th graders visit Internet chat rooms

Nearly 70% of 8th graders admitted to having “flamed” someone (sent hurtful or angry online message)

Over 30% of high school seniors have posted their photo on the web and up to 20% have met someone face-to-face they came to know online.

Learn how to:

Protect your family from online risks

Avoid being victimized by Internet predators

Be part of a nationwide Internet Safety education campaign

This session is scheduled for Friday, March 26 @ 8:15am in the Family Center Community Room. Please plan to attend so you too can learn how to keep your family safe as well as your neighborhood.

Did you know? **1 in 8** children have been asked by someone on the Internet to meet face to face. Source: A recent i-Safe America survey of students nationwide.

~ Maryly Skallos, Technology Coordinator



Crayon Mural is Potential Art Prize Entry!

Thank you for the many donations of used and new crayons! Keep them coming!! We are nearly halfway done with our 4 foot by 9 foot, seven panel mural depicting the seven days of creation. Students from all over the building have lent time peeling crayons, sorting by color, and gluing the crayons to the panels. Over the next few months, I will be taking the remaining panels to classrooms to assure that all students at St. Thomas have had a chance to work on the mural. In April, I am hoping to enter the mural in the 2010 Art Prize. The artist will be listed as the Students of St. Thomas the Apostle School. Our finished mural will be installed on the bulk head above the ramp in the Middle School Hallway. If you have crayons that you would like to donate, send them to school or drop them off in the office.

~ Suzi Furtwangler



Hornet Athletes and Siblings Special Program for After School Café

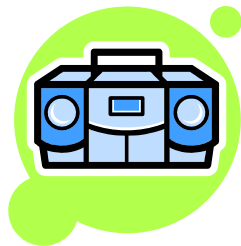
We are launching a new program that will allow parents to have their students attend the After School Café until sports practice begins, rather than driving back and forth to St. Thomas! The true value in this program is not just the time and gas saved, it is in the program itself. Students who attend the Café begin with a healthy snack of fruit, cheese, vegetables and a drink, and have time to complete their homework. Teacher help is available if needed. After snack and homework, kids enjoy some relaxation or exercise with the Wii, do art, play games, or will be taken outside to the park when weather allows. Athletes can change into practice clothing, and will be walked over to the Gym in time for practice. You may sign up your Hornet athlete and siblings for just one sport season, or for all. Pricing is by season. For more information, call Mrs. Furtwangler, program director, or see the After School Café information in your registration packet.

Spanish Phrase of the Week—La Frase de la Semana en Español

Each week Mr. Faber introduces a Spanish Phrase of the Week on morning announcements. We would like to share these phrases with you in the event you may start hearing them at home.

March 8-12	¿Adónde vas?	(Where are you going?)
March 15-19	Lo siento	(I'm sorry)
March 22-26	¡Hasta luego!	(See you later!)

CD Player Needed for Physical Education Class



We are in need of a CD player in the gym for physical education class! If you are able to donate one, please bring it to school. The kids will thank you.

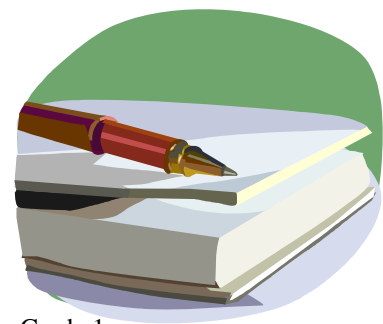
~ Ashley Grothe, PE Teacher

GRPS Student Art Show

Please bring your young artists to the Grand Rapids Public Schools' Student Art Show at the UICA (Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts)! The artist reception is on Tuesday, March 16 from 6-8pm. Please come to the reception and congratulate our St. Thomas young artists! The show will be hanging from Tuesday, March 16, through Monday, March 22. The UICA is located at 41 Sheldon Blvd SE, in downtown Grand Rapids. Admission is free. See you there!

~ Mrs. Jessica Seitz

SAINT THOMAS PUBLISHING CENTER'S NEWEST STUDENT AUTHORS



Ben Bridge	The Adventure	Lake	Grade 1
Owen LaVoie	The Awesome Colors	Lake	Grade 1
Noah Simonait	The Cat and the Dog	Lake	Grade 1
Timmy Lambert	The End of the World	Michels	Grade 3
Cassidy Triestram	The Amazing Rescue	Michels	Grade 3
Elena VanDokkumburg	Babies and the Planet Saphone	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Tommy Mikolay	Tikicowzilla	Michels	Grade 3
Alina Gumbko	The Fuffball Family	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Caroline Pinter	Crumbs the Cookie Mouse	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Issac Liang	Battle for Gold	VanDyke	Grade 4
Lizzie Murphy	The Untold Story	VanDyke	Grade 4
Gabe Skinner & Blake Henry	Dream House	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Jacob Vrugink & Keegan Greene	Calvin & Hobbs	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Olivia Strickland	The Terrible Monster of the Depths	Michels	Grade 3
Jenna Wolf	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Julia Caruso	The Christmas Argument	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Jenna Wolf	"Roy G. Biv" a.k.a. The Colors of the Rainbow	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Lucas Chalfoun	The Snowman	Donohue	Grade 1
Thomas Doyle	The Griffins	Donohue	Grade 1
Mia Stott	My Snow Day	Donohue	Grade 1
Aubrey Tomac	Carl's Night Out	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2
Aubrey Tomac	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Baxter/Tietema	Grade 2



Saint Thomas LIBRARY



March is READING MONTH. *Continue to push yourselves, students, to read more. Several new and donated books, both picture and fiction alike were added last week. Please look for new titles as more will be added in the coming weeks.*

Mrs. Michel's Class—Olympic Gold Medal Winners!

Mrs. Michel's third grade class won the "Be an Olympic GOLD Medal Reader" Contest. Congratulations to her class and to all of our students who challenged themselves to read more.

A Special Thank You to our Awesome Volunteers

A special thank you to Maureen Jones for your help in reviewing our collection, collaborating in determining our needed areas of growth and purchasing new books. Many hours of research, reading and running to book stores have been given. Also, thank you to Sharon Aulbach & Lisa Wolf for coving our new and donated paperback books. We are always in need of people to cover books. Please contact Jeanne Walch if this is an area where you can offer your gift of time.

Special Library Guest

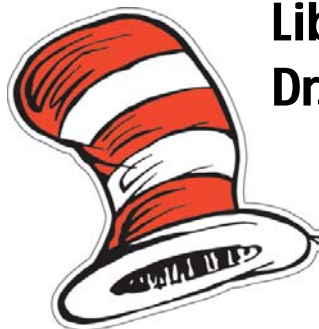
St. Thomas had the privilege of having special guest and 1984 Los Angeles Olympic medalist, Brian Diemer, read to our students Friday, February 26 in our library. This was such a treat and a very fun way to end our last two weeks of GOLD MEDAL READING!



Volunteers Still Needed

We are still in need of parents and even our own 8th grade students (great way to earn those service hours) to assist in shelving our books and shelf reading (making

sure books are in order on the shelves). This is a VERY flexible area for you to offer your gift of time. Please see Jeanne Walch for more information.



Library Honors Dr. Seuss' Birthday

To honor the birthday of Theodore Geisel, a.k.a. Dr. Seuss, all of our library books written by this well known children's author and that famous red & white striped hat are on display in our library!

March Displays Feature a "Touch o' Green"

During the month of March, the library hall display case will feature a collection of all things Irish. Included are: Irish china, books, clothing, pictures and unique displays of Irish prayers.



Return Library Books Before End of Quarter

Remember, all library books must be turned in before the end of a quarter or report cards will be held. Thank you!

Saint Thomas Library Info



Coordinator:
Jeanne Walch

Contact Info:
jeannewalch@comcast.net

Please have students return their books *on or before* the listed due date. No new books may be checked out until all previously checked out books are returned.



"We Are CC" 2010 Celebration and Auction

The We Are CC Celebration and Auction is **THIS SATURDAY, March 13, 2010**. This year's event will be held at the gymnasium at Catholic Central. Tickets are \$35 each. Purchase your tickets at www.wearecc.org or in the main office at CC. Don't forget your raffle tickets! Buy a chance to win a \$5000 tuition credit at Catholic Central (\$75 each or 3 for \$200) redeemable when your student enrolls at CC. If you have questions, please call 233-5816.

Community Events and Special Offers

ADD/ADHD and Your Child

CLC Network will sponsor a parent seminar "ADD/ADHD and Your Child" with Robert Bulten, M.D. and Doug Bouman, Psy. S. **TOMORROW, Thursday, March 11, 2010 from 7 to 9 p.m.** The seminar will be held at the CLC Network office (4340 Burlingame Ave. S.W., Wyoming, MI 49509). Admission is free but seating is limited.

Free Civic Performance

Grand Rapids Civic Theatre's Traveling Troupe will be singing and dancing Katherine Paterson and Stephanie Tolan's lively adaptation of Beatrix Potter's, *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*, to a charming score as written by Steve Liebman. This performance will be held free of charge in Grand Rapids Civic Theatre's Meijer Majestic Theatre on the following dates:

Saturday, February 27 at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, March 13 at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, March 20 at 11:00 a.m. and Saturday, March 27 at 11:00 a.m. These performances are general admission-no ticket required.

Please Save Your Boxtops for Education!

The Student Council is sponsoring a drive for "Boxtops for Education" coupons which are located on many product packages. Boxtops may be sent in to your child's homeroom. Student Council representatives will bring the boxtops to our monthly Student Council meetings, and the class with the highest number of boxtops will be awarded a prize each month! Each of these boxtop coupons is worth 10 cents, and while that doesn't sound like much money, this year we have collected over \$700 in coupons! The money that we receive will go into a special account to add technology, materials and other items for our students.



Get a Free Carbon Monoxide Alarm

Carbon monoxide is the leading cause of unintentional death by poisoning in the United States. 450 Americans are killed by carbon monoxide each year, and more than 15,000 others are rushed to the emergency department with severe symptoms. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that is the byproduct of incomplete combustion and often comes from malfunctioning furnaces, water heaters, or other appliances.

To help keep families safe, the Healthy Homes Coalition was recently awarded a FEMA grant to install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors for families with young children. Eligible families must reside in the cities of Grand Rapids, Kentwood or Wyoming, and must have a full-time resident child 5 years of age or younger. Supplies are limited to only 300 homes! The carbon monoxide alarms retail for more than \$40 and the smoke alarms retail for \$20 - but we **INSTALL** them for free! To request an alarm, call (616) 241-3300 or email info@healthyhomescoalition.org. For more information, visit www.healthyhomescoalition.org/carbon-monoxide.

St. Paul Basketball Shooting Contest

St. Paul the Apostle School is hosting a Free Throw and 3 Point Contest for 4th -8th Graders on Saturday, March 20th beginning at 9:00am. You may register online at stpaul3on3.com.basket

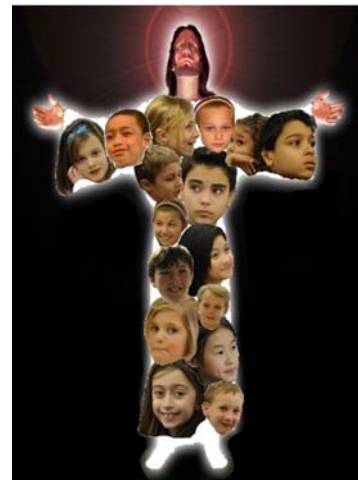


BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

Front: Cole VanDyke, Rory Fitzgerald, Michael Strickland,
Owen LaVoie, Elijah Shiel
Back: Grace Jermstad, Emma DenBraber, Caitlin Mullen,
Isaac VanBragt

Front: Charlie Muraski, Elena VanDokkumburg,
Grace Rellinger, Jenna Wolf, Nicholas Lourido
Back: Timmy Lambert, Dani Dull, Olivia Jepsen,
Audrey Patterson, Jim O'Neil

“We Are One Body in Christ” 2009-10 Saint Thomas School Theme



Front: Elizabeth Rott, Maggie Kane, Aubrey Tomac,
Elizabeth Murphy
Back: Connor Knapp, Michael Jepsen, Brooke Nicholson,
Caroline Gell

Each issue we proudly recognize those students who have been selected by their teachers, peers, or others working or volunteering at the school as having demonstrated Christ-like actions or virtues in keeping with our school theme.



Presents

A Father and Daughter Dinner Dance

Egypt Valley Country Club

7333 Knapp NE, Ada

Saturday, April 17th, 2010

6:00pm - 10:00 pm

\$45.00 per couple and \$12.00 for each additional daughter

Limit \$70.00 per family

Attire is modest, semi-formal to formal (please, no denim or body glitter)
Girls aged ten (or current 4th graders) and older and their fathers are invited to attend

R.S.V.P. by April 13th

Please send payment to:

Mary Faber

29 Fruitwood Court NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Phone 791-0486

Please make check payable to Challenge, NA

Space is limited, so we are unable to accept registration or payments at the door.

Please detach and return bottom portion

Father's Name _____

Daughter's Name _____ Total: \$45.00

Daughter's Name _____ Add: \$12.00

Daughter's Name _____ Add: \$12.00

Daughter's Name(s) _____ Add: \$1.00

Address _____

Phone _____ Total Check Amount: _____

With whom do you prefer to sit? _____