

# March Newsletter 2010

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST SCHOOL - HYDES

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Dear Parents,

We began the Lenten Season with Mass on Ash Wednesday. Again this year, individual classes have signed up to attend the 8:30 AM Mass during Lent. The school, Grades 1 through 8, attend Stations at 2:00 PM on Fridays during Lent.

As you may already know, the faculty meets for prayer each morning. This year our special Lenten prayers are based on the gospel of Mark. Each day's prayer ends with the suggestion to "Spend some quiet time with the Lord." I pass this on to you and hope that you will heed the message. I believe it is important for each of us to spend time in reflection during this most holy season of Lent.

## **Progress Reports:**

Due to the snow days, we have extended the deadline for grades for trimester 2. All grades must be in the computer by Tuesday, March 9. Progress Reports will be distributed on Wednesday, March 17. **This is a change from the tentative calendar.**

## **Thank You:**

A big thank you to Mrs. Alcarese, Mrs. Golumbek, Mrs. Cassidy, and their committee for the wonderful welcome and refreshments they coordinated for our Open House days. They did a wonderful job. Even with some bad weather during CSW, everything came together to make the celebration a success.

## **Pastors and Principals Meet With the Archbishop:**

As of this writing, the Archbishop's Plan for Catholic Schools has not been revealed. On Wednesday, March 3, principals and pastors from the Archdiocese will have the plan explained to them. On Thursday, March 4, Archbishop O'Brien will hold a press conference to make public the plan for schools. Please be assured that as soon as I know the plan, I will be in communication with you. I ask for your continued prayers as we begin a new era for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese.

## **Tuition - FACTS:**

You will soon be receiving a packet of information concerning reenrolling or initial sign-up for the FACTS Tuition Management Plan. This plan spreads tuition payments over 10 months, June through March. It has worked well for us, and we will continue to use the FACTS Plan. The other options are to pay total tuition by June 1<sup>st</sup>, thus not using the FACTS Plan, or to pay by credit card through the FACTS plan, again on a monthly basis, June through March. These are the only options, unless other arrangements have been made with the office.

## **Tuition Assistance:**

If you are interested in receiving a tuition-assistance packet, please call the school office. We will be using the FACTS Tuition Grant and Aid application process again this year.

## **Library:**

Thanks to Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Schumacher, and all the parent helpers who helped make the Scholastic Book Fair, held during Catholic Schools Week, a huge success once again.

## **Family Fun Night:**

Once again, the parish is hosting a Family Fun Night. This year it will again be in the form of a Dinner Theatre and will be held in the Church Hall on Saturday, March 13. The Middle School Drama Club will

be presenting their play, and the Home and School Association will be responsible for preparing and serving the food for the evening. If you are interested in helping the H.A.S.A., call the President, Deb Golumbek.

### **Applause, Applause:**

#### Eighth Grade:

Area Catholic High Schools have recently sent letters of acceptance to our eighth graders. Some of our students applied to the recommended three schools; others applied to just one or two schools. We are proud to say that all 17 of our students were accepted into Catholic High Schools. Some were accepted into two or three schools. Please keep all of our eighth graders in your prayers as they and their families make the decision of which school to attend.

Special congratulations to Matthew Fazzini, who was accepted into the McMullen Program at Calvert Hall, and received a \$5,000.00 scholarship per year. Please join me in congratulating all of our eighth grade students for a job well done and let them know how proud we are of their acceptances and awards! Congratulations also to their parents and their teachers, who have put academic excellence a priority.

#### Catholic Bee:

The following students participated in the school Catholic Bee during Catholic Schools Week. Congratulations to all who participated in the classroom competition, advanced to the school competition and now, for some, on to the Knights of Columbus competition.

#### Middle School:

Grade 8: Scott Bohon, Bradley Robertson, Marisa Jara, John Paul Boddiford

Grade 7: Ben Lynch, Megan Chaney, Elizabeth Loundas, Sarah Swain, Mark Bauer

Grade 6: Andrew Brannon, Mary Cochran, Sarah Kujala, Katie Ferguson, Luke Rothenheber

Meghan Chaney placed first, Sarah Kujala placed second and Ben Lynch placed third.

#### Intermediate School:

Grade 5: Genevieve Simmons, Erin Dodson, Ryan Jones, Sean Bohon, Jordon Loundas

Grade 4: Conner Alcarese, Andrew Lynch, Courtney Mohn, McKenna Rukowicz

Grade 3: Ryan Molinar, Julia Banashak, Gabrielle Brady, Megan Dodson, Greyson Pearce

Ryan Jones placed first, Sean Bohon placed second and Erin Dodson placed third.

The winners of the Intermediate competition will go on to compete in the Knights of Columbus Catholic Bee at the end of the month. It will take place in the church hall. The winners of that Bee will move on to the state competition. We wish them well!

#### Alums:

If you know of some good news about our graduates, please inform the office. We love to hear about and report on our alums.

#### **Snow:**

If you have not already done so, you may want to register with <http://www.WBALTV.com> and <http://www.SCHOOLSOUT.com>.

Both sites will email you when Baltimore County and/or Harford County Schools have delayed openings or closings due to inclement weather.

### **Student Council News:**

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Valentine Mailroom this year. Over 960 valentines were delivered throughout the school.

We have received word from the American Cancer Society that they will no longer have schools participate in Daffodil Days. We will miss those beautiful flowers that were delivered right to our door.

### **Yearbook:**

It's time to order your 2010 yearbook! Cost is \$20.00 per yearbook and payment can be either cash or check made payable to Saint John School. An order form will be sent home the first week of March. To make our yearbook a true reflection of our entire school community, the Yearbook Committee would like to include photos of all classes in the yearbook. If you have any candid photos of your child or of events at Saint John School, send them in with the grade listed on the back of each photo. Please send in copies, as photos will not be returned. If you wish, you can also send in photos on CDs. Payment for the yearbook and photos can be sent to Yolanda Curtin, c/o Calvin, Grade 8.

### **The Light is On For You:**

Hopefully, you have seen the billboards around Baltimore or have heard the advertisements from Archbishop O'Brien concerning the initiative to open every church in the Archdiocese every Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 8:30, inviting people to come and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Saint John Church is no exception; so on Wednesday evenings from now until Easter, confessions will be heard in the church.

### **Social Action Club:**

The Social Action Club would like to thank everyone for your generosity in our "Pennies for Patients" project in which we collected money for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in Gabby LoPresti's name. The money has not been counted as of this writing, but we'll be sure to let you know as soon as we know.

The Social Action Club is planning a "Hats On Day" to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Everyone in school will wear a hat on Wednesday, March 3 in support of our dear friend, Gabby. The donation to participate is one dollar (or more, if you wish). The donation will be sent to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in Gabby's name. See you with your "Hats On" on Wednesday, the 3rd of March!

On March 10, the SAC will make posters and decorate boxes for our "Pieces of Home" project. This project involves preparing "care packages" to be sent to men and women serving in the military. We have been provided with a list of recommended items to help us prepare our care packages. More information will follow.

At our March 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, the SAC will fill the boxes for the "Pieces of Home" project and write letters to the recipients of the boxes.

### **Drama Club:**

We are on the home stretch. We have had some major issues due to snow and lack of rehearsals, but we believe that the show must go on. The next two weeks are crucial to the success of the show. If you are in the play, please remember that rehearsals are mandatory the next two weeks. If you want to attend the dinner and show, Saturday, March 13, the forms must be back in by March 6. It is a first come, first served basis and usually fills up quickly. We hope to see everyone there either Friday night or Saturday night. The participants have worked very hard and the play will be worth the trip.

**Spring Fling 2010:**

For the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, the Spring Fling will be taking place for the enjoyment of our parishioners and the surrounding community. Reserve the dates: **May 6, 7, and 8**. We could use lots of volunteers on any or all of those three days. Sign-ups will be available in April.

**H.A.S.A. News:**Gala:

Plans are right on target for the Gala celebration on March 6. Hope to see many of you for a night of fun and support for our school!

Executive Committee Nominations:

Nominations for new members of the Executive Committee will be held in the Spring. Please think about joining us. Believe it or not, we have been known to have a bit of fun every once in a while! If you have any questions about H.A.S.A. nominations, please contact Deb Golumbek at [dgolumbek@msn.com](mailto:dgolumbek@msn.com).

Market Day:

As always, thank you for your continued support. Don't forget to order for March, April, and May!

Have a great month!

*Jean Delcher*



# Parents *make the difference!*

Early Childhood – March 2010

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## Always practice preventive discipline to avoid problems

Disciplining your preschooler can be challenging and sometimes frustrating. However, you control your child's environment and her schedule. Managing these correctly can prevent many difficulties you might otherwise face.



To practice preventive discipline:

- Create child-friendly spaces. Preschoolers are active. They are often silly and boisterous. Result: Things in their paths are likely to break. Put breakable items away until your child is older. Things that can hurt her, such as knives and chemicals, should be stored out of her reach.
- Keep your child on a schedule. There are always exceptions, but you should stick to your child's schedule whenever possible. Your child needs to eat at regular times. A hungry child is a cranky child. She also needs to sleep at least 11 hours each night. A sleep-deprived child may be a child on the verge of a meltdown. Keep her rested and fed to have the best chance of keeping her happy.
- Know your child's temperament. Some kids are easy-going and flexible. They are happy to sit for long periods in a cart as you do errands. Other kids simply can't tolerate an afternoon like this. They can't sit still or they dislike transitions. Forcing a child into a situation that is all wrong for her temperament can be a disaster. Either avoid it for now or be prepared to make a hasty exit.

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### Building Attention Span

## Have a little fun to increase your preschooler's attention span

Young children pay attention longer to activities they enjoy. (So do most adults!) Find an activity your child likes that also engages his senses. Remember, watching TV is a passive activity. Too much can actually hurt, rather than help, attention span.

Instead, have your child:

- Create an art project. Drawing, painting, making collages and working with play dough are all hands-on activities that can grab your child's attention and encourage him to stick with a task.
- Listen to a book. You already know you should read to your child daily. But listening to recorded books is good, too. Choose a recorded book (your library has many) that is age-appropriate for your child. Set aside some quiet time to listen to it. After he does, have him tell you about the book. Ask him questions about it.
- Care for a living thing. When your child feeds or brushes a pet, he is focusing attention on it. Doing this daily develops a good habit. Even watering plants reminds your child that a living thing needs his attention.

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## Building Motor Skills

# Help your preschooler strengthen hand muscles with fun activities

Strong hand muscles benefit your child tremendously as he starts and progresses through school. These muscles will help him draw, cut, paste, and write--activities he will do every day for some years. Your child will make faster progress and have greater confidence if he can do these himself and without great difficulty.

Here are some ways to strengthen the hand muscles:

- Play with play dough for a few minutes every day. Modeling clay, if you are sure your child will not put it in his mouth, is even better for strengthening muscles.
- Cut with scissors on card stock or cardboard. Cutting through something thicker than regular paper makes the hand work harder.
- Bake with your child. Let him knead the dough and form it into shapes.
- Sew. Get a large plastic needle at a craft store. Choose one with the largest eye possible. Let your child practice threading a piece of string through it. Supervise this.
- Toss bean bags with your child. Put containers of different sizes on the floor and have him throw the bean bags into them, too.
- Play "pick up." Give your child a pair of kitchen tongs and some small toys. Show him how to pick up the toy with the tongs. Have him practice this. It can be tricky, so encourage and praise him for effort.

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## Building Responsibility

# Teach your kindergartner independence

As much as parents would like to attend kindergarten with their children--to make sure everything goes smoothly and comfortably--one of the biggest accomplishments in kindergarten is independence!

The best way to teach your child how to be more independent is to allow him to take on greater responsibility.

Encourage your child to:

- Prepare for school. He can probably handle many tasks, such as getting dressed, brushing teeth and putting on shoes (although kids this age often need help with tying). It helps to make a checklist for your child using words and pictures.
- Empty his backpack. Right after school--and before playtime--have your child check his backpack for various items, including homework, notes from the teacher, art projects and lunch box.
- Follow a homework routine. If your child has homework, it's the perfect time to begin developing good study habits. Have him work at the same time and in the same place each day.
- Pitch in with chores. Emphasize the importance of cleaning up at home and at school. A child who puts away books and toys at home, for example, may also care for these things at school.

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**Click here to view the  
March EC Activity Calendar**

# **Parents make the difference!**

## **Elementary School - March 2010**

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### **Discipline**

## **Remember the three keys to discipline**

Some parents think that discipline means punishment. But the best discipline helps your child learn what she did wrong--and how she can make a better choice in the future.

Here are three keys to effective discipline:

1. Stay calm. If you lose your temper, you've also lost the upper hand. Giving in to an urge to scream teaches your child that it's okay to lose control when she's upset.
2. Be consistent. It doesn't take long for your child to learn whether you really intend to enforce rules. Say yes just once to watching TV before school and you'll have a battle every morning. Don't set rules unless you will consistently enforce them.
3. Avoid criticizing. Just describe the behavior. "It was Jen's time on the computer and you wouldn't quit playing your game." Then remind your child of the rule and of the consequence.

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### **Building Character**

## **Teach your elementary schooler the importance of a work ethic**

Working hard and sticking to a tough task is a sign of strong character. As it turns out, it's also a great way to be successful in school. Students who keep at a task are more successful than those who quit at the first time of trouble.

Here are some ways parents can encourage effort:

- Tell a story. Talk about a time you had trouble learning to do something. How many times did you fall before you rode a bike? Let your child see that things haven't always come easily to you.
- Notice effort. When you see your child trying to do something, compliment her. Say, "I'm proud of how hard you are working on this project."

- Help your child see progress. Your child may be focusing on how far she still has to go. You can keep her motivated by helping her see how far she's come. "Last week, you could only run around the block. Today you were able to run over a ¼ mile."

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## Setting Expectations

# Your elementary schooler will live up (or down) to expectations

Your child will live up to your expectations. Or, she'll live down to them. That's the advice of Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg. He says there are several ways you can help children learn to feel that they can handle any situation.

Here are some tips:

- Help your child recognize that she has individual strengths. Not every child (and not every adult) is good at everything. But knowing that she is a great reader--or Soccer player--can help her feel more competent and confident.
- Don't overprotect. Yes, parents always want children to be safe. But if you are always stepping in to handle every tough situation, your child will assume it's because she can't do so for herself.
- Let your child make decisions. Even two-year-olds can decide if they want to wear the red shirt or the yellow one. As your child grows older, she should get to make more and more choices. But once she makes those choices, she needs to learn to live with the consequences.
- Let your child know you have faith in her. That doesn't mean you have to praise everything she does. But kids who know someone believes in them will grow up to believe in themselves.

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## Motivating Your Child

# Make reading more appealing to your child

Some children resist, complain or even refuse to sit down with a book and read. What should you do?

Make sure your child's skills are developing well, since reading struggles can affect motivation. Talk with your child's teacher about any concerns. Also ask which reading materials she recommends.

Meanwhile, to make reading more appealing:

- Set a good example. Show that you enjoy reading. Mention things you learn, stories that make you laugh and words that inspire you.
- Be positive. Help your child see himself as a "reader." Choose a special spot in his room, such as a cozy corner, for books and reading. Let him read familiar books to a younger sibling.
- Build interest. Read irresistible books aloud--with enthusiasm. This may encourage your child to choose other books by the same author.
- Visit the library. Take time to browse and ask the librarian for advice. Only take home books (or magazines, newspaper articles, comics, etc.) that are likely to capture your child's attention.
- Get creative. There are so many things to read, including maps, video game instructions, jokes and menus. Read in different places, too, such as at the park or at the breakfast table.

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**Click here to view the  
March EL Activity Calendar**

# Parents still make the difference!

Middle School - March 2010

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## Building Character

# Help your middle schooler develop leadership skills

Many people think of a leader as one who gives direction. To some extent, that is true. But real leadership--a desirable character trait--has more to do with listening, learning and being an example.

Your child can develop leadership if she is:

- Caring. Effective leaders care. They look for someone who could use help. And then they step up.
- Open to new ideas. Leaders know they don't know it all. They always listen to others.
- Organized. Leaders plan ahead. They know that leaving projects to the last minute usually produces poor results.
- Optimistic. Leaders prepare. They trust the people they work with. They are enthusiastic. They expect things to go right and because of their leadership, things usually do.
- Flexible. Leaders don't get stuck in the rut of doing everything the same way every time. They are willing to try new things.

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## Building Respect

# Impress upon your child the reasons for being respectful

You have probably talked many times with your child about how to treat others. But have you had a good discussion about why? Middle school students are ready for a higher level of thinking. So it is important that they know the reasons behind the action. Here are the reasons for being respectful:

- Respectful behavior is moral and ethical. It's the difference between right and wrong.

- Respectful behavior is fair. Rude and disruptive behavior is not fair. The person it is directed at does not deserve it. No one does. It is also not fair to the people around who are trying to teach and learn.
- Respectful behavior is rewarded. Your child will benefit from a reputation as a respectful, kind and polite person. Respectful people are often chosen as leaders. They receive greater responsibilities and freedoms. Why? Because it is already clear that they know how to treat others. They are the kind of people others look up to.

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## Focusing on the Future

# Look ahead to the next stage in your child's career--high school

Two-thirds of the school year is gone. Now a big transition looms for many middle schoolers and their parents. High school is six months away. Start preparing your child and yourself.

Expect your child to:

- Feel excitement about the opportunities high school offers. These include new friendships and more freedom. High school also lets students pursue a wide range of interests through extracurricular activities.
- Feel nervous. Standards for academics, behavior and independence are far beyond what most middle schoolers are used to. Then there's the size of high school--a school building and population that may be double what your child has now.

You can help if you:

- Tap available resources. Most middle schools give guidance about coping in high school. The high school, too, will likely offer orientation sessions for new students. Urge your child to attend.
- Talk to your child. Share some of your own high school memories. Discuss honestly the classes your child wants to take and how she will manage her schedule. Have her talk with current high school students about their experiences.
- Encourage your child. Starting high school is a huge milestone. Your child is growing up. Let her know you are proud of her and are looking forward to this new stage.

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## Encouraging Reading

# Vocabulary is the key to reading success in school

In middle school, your child must read at a different level than he did in elementary school. Texts are more complex and contain advanced vocabulary. A broad and deep vocabulary will help your child. A limited one may hold him back.

Your child can strengthen his vocabulary by:

- Reading. Your child should read every day. And he should read a variety of materials--novels, short stories, newspapers, magazines and websites. The more reading material your child takes in, the more words he will encounter. He should look up words he doesn't know or do his best to figure out their meaning through context clues.
- Talking. Make an effort to introduce new words when having a conversation with your child. This is a good exercise for everyone in the family. It may seem awkward at first. But it is worth making a habit of if your child struggles with reading.
- Practicing. Reading and hearing all these new words may not mean much if your child doesn't use them. Challenge him to use one or two new words a day. Contact his teachers and let them in on your efforts so they can help him put his words into practice as well.

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