

March Newsletter 2012

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST SCHOOL – HYDES

Dear Parents,

Lent is here again! As we begin this journey together, let's think about what Lent is. Lent is a special time. I ask you to take some time to reflect on this question – What difference does Jesus make? As believers, our life is blessed because we know the Lord's love, and we have His presence in our lives. When we think of Lent, we think of personal acts of discipline, but this is only one aspect of this season. We must be mindful that Lent is the time for Christ to work in us and through us. Through reflection on our strengths and weaknesses and on what is our personal image of God, we are able to answer the question. As Christians, we are told over and over again to trust in the Lord and put all our troubles and worries in His hands. How often our humanity takes over and our anxiety is pushed to the limits. My hope for this year is that we will all experience a life-changing Lent - one that will help us realize that Jesus does make a difference in our lives and that our anxiety can be eased when we place all in the hands of our God.

Progress reports:

Reports will be sent home on Friday, March 2.

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 1st, 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.

Parishioners of other Catholic churches are required to submit a letter, each year, from their parish stating their support of the parish and attendance at Mass.

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 10. The Middle School Drama Club will be presenting their play, and thanks to the Home and School Association who will be responsible for preparing and serving the food for the evening. A free-will donation is being asked of attendees, and all proceeds will go to the Drama Club. They are then able to purchase lighting and sound equipment, as well as scenery and props for the plays. If you want to attend the dinner and show on Saturday, March 10, the forms that were sent home must be back in by March 5. 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 are anxious to perform for their friends and family.

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 19 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.

Congratulations to Gabriella LoPresti, who was awarded a \$1,000 Alumnae Scholarship to The Catholic High School of Baltimore, and to Sarah Kujala, who was accepted into the first STEM class at John Carroll High School. Congratulations also to Andrew Brannon who has been awarded the Saint Mutien Marie Grant from Calvert Hall, each in the amount of \$4,375.00. Andrew also was accepted into Calvert Hall as a McMullen Scholar, and has received a \$5,000 Saint John Baptist De La Salle scholarship per year. We are bursting with pride for them! I ask that you join me in congratulating not just these three, but 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.

Middle School Honors:

The following Middle School Students have attained Honors for the second trimester:

Principal’s List

Grade 8
Andrew Brannon

Grade 7
Sean Bohon

Grade 6
Lillian Derickson

First Honors

Grade 8
Matthew Jones
Sarah Kujala
Anton Schultz

Grade 7
Spencer Blair
Tyler Page
Matthew Salvo
Genevieve Simmons

Grade 6
Chesca Basilio
Jessica Bauer
Caleb Bright
Charles Cannon
Alec Jara
Kayla Kozak
Courtney Mohn

Second Honors

Grade 8
Parker Day
Luke Rothenheber
Tara Tabassi

Grade 7
Jack Canon
Lily Ehrhardt
Skylar Ohl

Grade 6
Conner Alcarese
Kelsey Boyle
Joshua Elliott
Alexis Riley
McKenna Rukowicz

There are also five additional students who have attained honors but whose names cannot be posted on the Internet.

Science Expo:

The students in Mrs. Macek's Science classes, grades four and five, participated in a Science Expo at the beginning of Catholic Schools' Week. All of the students did a wonderful job, and each student was very articulate as they presented their findings to all the visitors, including parents and other students. Congratulations to both classes on jobs well done!

The winners were:

Grade 4

- 1st Place - Grace Larney
- 2nd Place - xxx
- 3rd Place - Margaret Jones
- 4th Place - Jacob Kozak

Grade 5

- 1st Place - Michael Salvo
- 2nd Place - Michael Suehle
- 3rd Place - Greyson Pearce

Knights of Columbus Basketball Free Throw:

Congratulations to our six winners in the Knights of Columbus, Long Green Valley Council, Free-Throw Contest. They are: Jeffrey Brady - Grade 8, Matthew Jones - Grade 8, Max Moxey - Grade 7, Parker Day - Grade 8, Kayleigh Dielmann - Grade 8, and Genevieve Simmons - Grade 7.

Parker Day, Kayleigh Dielmann, Matthew Jones, and Genevieve Simmons traveled to Delta, Pennsylvania for the Knights of Columbus District free-throw contest. All four did a great job. Special congratulations to Kayleigh for her first-place finish in the District. She is now eligible to compete for the State championship on March 10 at Archbishop Spalding High School.

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.

Student Council News:

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Valentine Mailroom this year. Once again, it was a big hit with the students.

Yearbook:

It's almost time to order your 2012 Yearbook! An order form will be sent home the beginning of March. Please make sure to look for it in your child's folder. To make our yearbook a true reflection of our entire school community, we would like to include photos of all classes in the yearbook. If you have any candid photos of your child at a school function or of events at Saint John School, we need your photos! Hard copies of photos can be sent with the name and class listed on the back. If you wish, you can also send in photos on a CD or a flash drive. Please make sure that all digital photos you send are saved as a JPEG file. Hard copy photos and photos on CDs or flash drives should be sent to Noelle Dichiera, c/o Greyson, Grade 5. If you have any questions about the yearbook, please contact Noelle at noelle.dichiera@gmail.com

“The Light is On For You”:

Come to the chapel any Tuesday evening during Lent for Evening Prayer, Eucharistic Adoration, and the sacrament of Reconciliation. Evening Prayer will begin at 7:00 PM with

Adoration following. Anytime during Adoration, you are welcome to come individually to the sacrament of Reconciliation. Each ministry in the Parish will attend one evening during Lent. Our turn for the school and the H.A.S.A. will be on Tuesday, March 20. Hope to see many of you there for the evening prayer.

Spring Fling 2012:

For the 18th consecutive year, the Spring Fling will be taking place for the enjoyment of our parishioners and the surrounding community. Reserve the dates: **May 10, 11, 12**. 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:

Announcement has been made that no "Gala" is planned for this year. Their hope is to schedule a parent end-of-year get-together social, not a fundraiser. Therefore, H.A.S.A. is asking that all families consider the "Race for Education" as the biggest fundraiser of the year, just behind Innisbrook Gift Wrap.

Race for Education:

Excitement reigns as the Race Committee completes all the preliminary work prior to the kick-off of the Race for Education. Anne McFaul and her committee have been hard at work soliciting corporate sponsors, setting up online network, ordering giveaways for the race participants and much, much more. I, for one, am looking forward to the race day coming up in April! More details will be sent home soon!!!

Scrip:

Beginning in March, we will be able to order gift cards each month. All orders must be into the office or to Mrs. Carrigan by the 15th of the month. Cards will take about 1 week to arrive in the school office for distribution. A flyer will be sent home each month as a reminder.

School Supplies:

Once again, the H.A.S.A. is sponsoring an online order program for school supplies. Each teacher will submit their supply list to the Association. They will be forwarded to a company that specializes in school supplies. Parents order the packet for their child's grade, and it will be delivered to the school just prior to the opening day. This will not be mandatory, but only offered as a convenience to the parents.

Executive Committee Nominations:

Nominations for new members of the Executive Committee will be held in the spring. Please think about joining us! If you have an interest in taking a more active part in the H.A.S.A., please talk with Mrs. Delcher or one of the Executive Committee members.

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 2012

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Teach your preschooler the importance of responsibility

Even though your child is still quite young, she is old enough to learn that there are some things people must do, even if they don't want to. This is called responsibility.



Here's how you can instill responsibility in your preschooler:

- Give your child an age-appropriate task. Your child cannot follow through on a job if she isn't capable of doing it in the first place. She cannot clean up the whole house. But she can pick up her toys and put them in the box.
- Make it clear that this job is your child's, not yours. "Every day, you must put all of your toys in the box. This is your job. If I have to do it, the toys will go up on the shelf where you can't reach them."
- Explain to your child. "I know it is fun to play. It isn't fun to pick up toys. But the toys belong in the box and not on the floor. If you want to play with them, you have to clean up when you are finished using them."
- Follow through on consequences. Put the toys out of reach if your child refuses to pick them up. Leave them there for one day, then get them back down. Remind your child again. "The toys are back, but you will have to pick them up when you are finished playing. If you don't, they will go away again."

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Building Math Skills

Start teaching your child math concepts now!

Is your preschooler ready to learn long division? Probably not! But most preschoolers can prepare to learn complicated math skills. This makes it easier to solve problems in the future.

Encourage your child to:

- Write and say numbers. "Let's count together. One, two"
- Count interesting things. "How many blocks are in your tower?"
- Find matching items. "Where's the matching sock?"
- Put things in order. "Can you line up these cups from shortest to tallest?"

- Notice patterns. "Your shirt has stripes. They go red, blue, red, blue, red, blue."
- Organize objects into groups. "Cans go in the pantry. Fruit goes in the bowl."
- Recognize shapes. "What shape is your plate? How about your cookie?"
- Measure in different ways. "You're 39 inches tall!" "We need a 1/2 cup of water."

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Expanding Your Child's World

A new season can result in new experiences for your preschooler

The changing of the seasons may be familiar to you, but it is exciting for a young child. There are so many new ways to use his senses. And a whole new set of possible activities opens up, as well. This is especially true now, as winter changes to spring.

Here are some ways to enjoy this new season with your child:

- Show your child the fun in a windy day. Go to the park and fly a kite together. Or put on oversize T-shirts and pretend to be kites as the shirts flap around you. Take note of what other things blow around in the wind. What are the flags doing? How about the trees?
- Walk outside with your child when the weather permits. What signs of spring can each of you find? Have a "spring scavenger hunt." Look for crocuses pushing up, buds on the trees and birds nesting.
- Explore the grocery store with your child on a day when you have to be indoors. Search for fruits and vegetables that are coming into season now. Choose one together. Take it home and prepare it for your next meal.

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Language Skills

Conversations help you prepare your child for kindergarten

It is always important to talk with your child. But when your child is about four, his language skills are exploding.

Having as many conversations as you can takes advantage of his new skills. And it also puts your preschooler on the best track to be ready for kindergarten.

Here are some new ways to talk to your child:

- Use more complex words. Instead of telling your child, "I'm happy," try saying, "I'm delighted!" Say it with a big smile on your face and he will likely get your meaning. And you have just expanded his vocabulary.
- Introduce concepts. Your child can now understand more about time, for example. He knows everything does not happen right now. Use the words yesterday and tomorrow. With a calendar, show him next week or even next month.
- Use figures of speech. "You are being as quiet as a mouse!"
- Continue reading to your child daily, and talk about the story, setting and characters in the book.

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EC Spring Activity Calendars**

Parents make the difference!

Elementary – March 2012

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Spend time with your child when there's no time to spare!

There's no question that time with children is vitally important. It's been said that children spell love T-I-M-E.

Still, the truth is that many parents would agree that on some days, they hardly have time to brush their teeth. So where can a harried parent find the time to spend with a child?



Here are some ideas:

- Plan some one-on-one time. Your child should know that there will be some time during the week when she gets your undivided attention. Seeing "Mom and Sydney" on the calendar for Saturday will help your child make it through a particularly tough week at school.
- Do things together. Invite your child to help you while you are cooking dinner. You'll get time together--and helping in the kitchen could become your child's favorite chore.
- Make the most of short fun breaks. Time together doesn't always have to be planned, and it can come in small chunks. You're working on a report for work. Your child is doing math homework. Say, "Let's work until 7:00 and then take a 10-minute break together."
- Let your child know she's on your mind. If you can't be there, send your child an "I love you" email. Or write a note and tuck it in her lunch.

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Building Character

Researchers say grit is key to school success

What do spelling champions and West Point cadets have in common? It's a quality known as grit--the ability to stick with something even when it's hard.

These days, researchers say grit is important. People who persist when a task gets challenging are most likely to be successful. To build grit:

- Teach your child to focus on how good it will feel to finish a tough task. "You did your homework. Now you can relax and enjoy yourself."
- Emphasize starting. People with grit don't put off unpleasant tasks. So help your child develop the habit of getting started. "You work on homework and I'll clean these drawers. Let's see what we can finish in 15 minutes."
- Stress effort versus ability. Tell your child that success requires dedication and effort as much or more than intelligence.

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Developing Thinking Skills

Build key critical thinking skills with planning and reflecting

As an adult, you make plans all the time. You plan the meals you're going to prepare before you head to the market. You plan how you're going to fit everything into your busy day. Then after you've carried out your plan, you look back to see what you might have done better.

Those skills of planning and reflecting turn out to be critical thinking skills for children. It turns out that children who learn the essential skill of planning, which is thinking ahead, end up with stronger reading skills. Then as they further refine their plans (and later reflect on what they did), they develop a richer vocabulary. That, too, is helpful as they learn to read.

Sometimes, parents think that planning and making choices are the same. While a plan does require choice, it is more than just selecting from some options. Planning involves making choices based on a desired outcome. Choice A is more likely to work than Choice B. Planning also involves thinking about possible problems and ways to avoid or overcome them.

So let your child make plans. "How could we walk to Madison's house?" Ask questions that may help your child consider potential trouble spots. "Where's the safest place for us to cross Main Street?" Then carry out the plan soon after. Later, reflect on how well the plan worked. You'll be helping your child develop skills that will help her think through any problem.

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Developing Thinking Skills

Help your elementary schooler develop good reading habits

What do good readers have in common? There are certain things they do before, during and after reading assignments. You can help your child develop these habits!

Encourage your child to:

- Think about the text before reading. What clues does she notice? What do the titles, pictures or headlines tell her? What does she already know about this subject? What does she think she'll learn?
- Check comprehension while reading. Your child should ask, "Does this make sense?" "What information am I missing?" If she's confused by a word or idea, she should read it twice. Still confused? Keep reading, and then go back. Its meaning may become clear.
- Make connections after reading. Your child should summarize the story or information using a graphic organizer, such as a story map. Did her predictions come true? Were her questions answered? If not, she should reread or find answers elsewhere.

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EL Spring Activity Calendars**

Parents still make the difference!

Middle School – March 2012

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Your Child and You

Take time to share memories from your middle-school years

Do you remember being 13? Unless you were a very unusual child, there were some difficult times. You might have felt clumsy, nervous, misunderstood or unpopular. It's important that you talk about these times with your child.

Some college professors do something similar to this with their classes. They ask students who want to be teachers to write about how they felt as middle school students.

Why bring up these old feelings? The feelings actually help the new teachers see into the hearts and minds of the middle schoolers they will be teaching. The new teachers agree that this helps them find common ground with middle schoolers.

It works for parents, too. It's likely you will be closer to your child and more understanding if you can remember having had similar experiences.

So the next time your child seems upset, share a story from your middle-school years. Your child may be more willing to open up if she thinks you can relate to what she is saying.

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Fitting In

Help your child figure out how to connect with classmates

Your child just uttered those dreaded words: "I don't fit in at school!" What should you do? First, don't overreact. Instead, take a deep breath and get the facts.

If you discover your child is being bullied, you must intervene and tell the school. Bullying is too serious a problem to be chalked up to "kids being kids."

On the other hand, if he feels like an outsider simply because he doesn't know how to jump in and participate with his peers, here's how you can help him overcome this:

- Explore his likes and dislikes. Your child is maturing, and his interests are surely expanding. Maybe there's an activity or sport that appeals to him now, even if it wasn't on his radar screen before.
- Find out what's available. Once you've discussed his interests, see what school clubs or teams might be a good fit. "You love graphic design and working on the yearbook could be a way to meet other kids who like it, too."
- Look beyond the school. Volunteer organizations, community theaters and county recreation leagues are excellent places to meet other kids and make friends. If your child finds his niche in one of them, he may feel more confident and less like the "odd man out" in school.

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Talking & Listening

Middle schoolers need parents to be present and available

When she was a toddler, your child required lots of hands-on parenting. But now that she's in middle school, does she still need that level of attention?

Absolutely. The only difference these days is that you may need to be more hands-off--although present and available--as you help her navigate the choppy waters of adolescence. And one way to do that is to talk to her and listen to her.

To keep the lines of communication open with your child:

- Share your values. Let her know how you feel about loyalty, honesty and responsibility. Your core values will likely form the foundation for hers.
- Offer guidance, not judgment. Help her learn to make smart decisions by discussing the various ways she might handle a certain situation. And be open-minded. Don't make her feel like your approach is always right and hers is always wrong.
- Acknowledge your differences. She isn't a miniature version of you, and her childhood isn't a replay of yours. Keep in mind that your child's experiences in middle school could be vastly different from what you remember.
- Be affectionate. Tell your child often that you love her and believe in her.

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Computers & Internet

Boost your child's online reading skills

In today's world, your child cannot be a complete reader unless she is also proficient at reading online. You may think surfing the Internet is a waste of time. (Sometimes it is!) But many of the jobs your child will prepare for as a student will require good online reading skills.

When reading online, your child should use:

- Thinking skills. When your child does an Internet search, her search will bring up a variety of websites. She should ask herself: "Is this site relevant to the schoolwork I am doing? How relevant? Do I know who created this site? Is the author trustworthy?"
- Learning styles. Visual learners can see photos, charts and graphs to illustrate the written text. But the multimedia nature of websites is good for other learning styles, too. Your child may be able to click on an audio file to supplement the text. And since using the Internet requires using eyes and hands together, it is good for engaging hands-on learners.
- Predicting skills. Most sites include links to other sites of relevance and interest. But your child shouldn't just click without thinking. She should ask, "Why am I being asked to click to this other site? What information will it give me? Will it help?"

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