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The Voice of the Southside

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Wednesday, February 1, 2017

Vol. 8, No. 50

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 Psalm 84:11



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A SPECIAL SALUTE TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK

Roncalli grad still a great role model

By **Al Stilley**
 Senior staff writer

Cole Toner has returned to his apartment in Tempe, Ariz., where he is enjoying his first offseason after a promising rookie season with the Arizona Cardinals.

Toner, a 2012 graduate of Roncalli, stands as the Southside's only active player in the NFL. The 6-5, 300-pound offensive lineman is even more toned and physically fit than he was in his playing years at Harvard University.

He finds it somewhat surreal that family, friends and fans can buy a No. 61 Cole Toner replica Arizona football jersey at www.azcardinals.com.

"That's a pretty cool accomplishment at this point," Toner said.

Toner recently returned to his roots for a couple of weeks to be with parents Angie and Dave Toner, friends and former Rebels teammates. He attended a couple of basketball games and worked out at Roncalli, where he talked with former coach Bruce Scifres and made time to be interviewed by *The Southsider Voice*.

Toner realizes his legacy at Roncalli and to future student-athletes.

"I had several role models growing up at Roncalli," Toner said. "It's a role that I gladly want to fill for the kids. The players who were there last year took hold of the program and made it work (2016 state title). I'm really proud of those guys and what they accomplished."

Toner said he watched via Livestream the Rebels' 4A state championship win against Northview during the Cardinals' road trip in Atlanta.



Cole Toner

He was drafted by the Cardinals in the fifth round. He was the first offensive lineman from Harvard to be drafted since 1998 (six-time Pro Bowl lineman Matt

See "Role model," Page 2

Nativity celebrated 100 days of school



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Nativity's kindergartners and first-graders celebrated their 100th day of the school year Jan. 25. They marked the occasion by learning all about the number 100 through various activities.

Kindergartner Olive Verstijnen made a wreath that featured 100 crayons.



Kindergartner Joel Elrod sports his 100th-day crown.



Donning their 100th-day hats, first-graders Ethan Richardson (left) and Gavin Nill work on their 100s number board.

Monastery continues to serve

By **Bob Kelly**
 Southsider Voice correspondent

Over six decades ago when the Sisters of St. Benedict from Ferdinand, Ind., approached Archbishop Paul C. Schulte of Indianapolis about founding a monastery in his diocese, his dream of having a home for the elderly became a reality. That dream also blossomed into the formation of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, which not only serves the sisters but the entire Southside.

The Ferdinand community had grown to 500 sisters before 113 of them transferred to Beech Grove and established a monastery and academy for high school girls in addition to a home for the aged.

Our Lady of Grace Academy was a pillar on the Southside for high school girls until declining enrollment forced it to close in 1978. The Benedictine sisters used their faith to rally and change the scope of the secondary education-focused facility to a place that enables many people to energize their faith.

The monastery started out on grounds of 35 acres, and today the sprawling campus covers 50 acres, which is also home to the St. Paul Hermitage and the Benedict Inn & Retreat Conference Center.

See "Monastery," Page 12



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SISTER MARY LUKE JONES
 Sisters Theresine Will (left) and Heather Jean Foltz (right) assist a resident at St. Paul Hermitage.



Sister Sheila Marie Fitzpatrick (seated, far right) and students spruced up the Benedict Inn's new Peace & Nature Garden.

Sharing her faith with students, teachers

By **Bob Kelly**
 Southsider Voice correspondent

Rebecca Stone had a childhood reminiscent of many youths who were raised in the Catholic faith; now she wants to share that bond with teachers, students and others in the Greenwood community of SS. Francis & Clare of Assisi School.

The 2005 graduate of Indiana University Bloomington was ready to use her education degree when she landed her first job at Pope John XXIII Elementary School in Madison, Ind. She was hired by Sister Anna Rose and stayed for two years before moving on to St. Mary's Catholic School in North Vernon, Ind., which was the home and site of her first eight years of education.

It would be those years in education right out of college when she would use her strong Catholic faith to guide her in the classroom and again in the future. It was a tough decision for her to leave

those at Pope John XXIII, but it was the strong pull of her Catholic faith that steered her back to where it all began and where she would be a teacher in the same school with her mother and sister.

"I always felt drawn to Catholic education," Stone told *The Southsider Voice*. "Anyone who serves in Catholic schools makes many sacrifices. We do not do it for the money, but instead we look at our job as a ministry and an answer to a vocational calling. We are rewarded leaps and bounds by blessings other than money. For me personally it was about answering God's call to teach within Catholic schools."

This year marks the 10th year for SS. Francis & Clare, which opened its doors with an enrollment of only 34 students. Today, it boasts more than 500 in one of the fastest-growing areas in the

See "Faith," Page 12



SUBMITTED PHOTO
 Riley Hickson, a fourth-grader at SS. Francis & Clare of Assisi School, and Assistant Principal Rebecca Stone work together to practice multiplication skills.

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The Southsider Voice salutes

CATHOLIC EDUCATION

During National Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 2017

Catholic schools offer excellence



Gina Kuntz Fleming

By **Gina Kuntz Fleming**
Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Archdiocese of Indianapolis

As a lifelong Southsider I had the privilege of attending two quality archdiocesan schools from first grade through my senior year. The friendships developed, the lessons learned and the experiences had serve as the foundation upon which I am now equipped to serve the community as an educational leader and a faithful citizen.

My story is not unique – it is shared with hundreds of thousands of other graduates of our Southside Catholic schools

With many strong private, public and charter school options available, one might ask what makes our schools exceptional. Each has its special niches, yet they share four major commonalities:

- **Shared mission and Catholic identity** – These schools recognize that each person is made in the image and likeness of Christ. Their doors are open to all who desire a quality Catholic education regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status.

- **Academic excellence** – Our schools' focus remains on the growth and achievement of every young person we serve. Recognizing parents as the first educators, Catholic schools partner to help youth grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually and

physically. With ISTEP+ scores higher than state averages at every grade level and continued excellence illustrated by other measures of performance (such as IREAD, SAT, and ACT), our students are challenged and supported as we maximize their capacity in preparation for college, careers and heaven.

- **Quality leadership/governance** – Our schools appreciate the value of local autonomy while having the broader support of archdiocesan offices and the network of Catholic schools. With lay leaders from the community serving on school boards and commissions in an advisory capacity, these school leaders are provided supports intended to directly impact youth in positive ways.

- **Operational vitality** – Given the commitment to excellence and rigor, these Catholic schools responsibly approach personnel, financial and operational decisions in a way that puts children first and fortifies longterm viability for generations to come. Their cost per student, on average, is significantly lower than that of public and charter sectors, and the youth and families they serve are the direct beneficiaries of the resources secured.

To learn more about a Catholic school in your area, visit <http://oce.archindy.org/>.

Role model *(Continued from Page 1)*

Birk) and the first player from the Southside since A.J. Eads of Greenwood.

Toner also revealed that the pressure to perform on the football field has intensified at each stop from high school to college to the Cardinals.

"The camaraderie is way different because of the different ages of the players and they have separate lives," Toner said. "There's definitely more pressure on each player because this is your living."

"Everyone is a freak in the NFL. The conditioning is different and your preparation is intense. You basically live, breathe, eat and sleep football."

His study habits at Roncalli and Harvard helped him to overcome the demands of pro football. At Harvard the Crimson utilized a hurry-up no-huddle offense. But as an offensive lineman for Arizona he had to learn a different offense, all new plays with each play called in the huddle, different techniques, and adapt to new coaches.

"This is a tough game mentally. At least I wasn't thrown to the wolves."

Toner earned his spot on the Cardinals' roster after a successful preseason. He was ranked as the top preseason guard by Pro Football Focus, an analytics online site. The Cardinals were deep in offensive lineman, but Toner finally played in late-season games at Seattle and Los Angeles.

Summing up his path, he simply concluded, "Playing in high school was tough, college was tougher, but this is really tougher."

At Roncalli, Toner was a team captain as a senior and earned first-team 4A All-State honors.

He started 34 games at Harvard, where he selected to The Associated Press' FCS All-America first team and All-Ivy League first team and semifinalist for the academic William V. Campbell Trophy.

Arizona is a good fit for Toner. He visited the Phoenix/Tempe area several times with his parents, and his dad's sisters live there. He would have preferred being drafted by the Colts, but calls Arizona his second home.

Toner's parents went to all his Harvard home games and extended that trend to the Cardinals for six home games and two road games.

"I had several role models growing up at Roncalli," Toner said. "It's a role that I gladly want to fill for the kids. The players who were there last year took hold of the program and made it work (2016 state title). I'm really proud of those guys and what they accomplished."

– Cole Toner

Roncalli Celebrates Catholic Education



- ◆ The Class of 2016 earned over \$32 million in college scholarships.
- ◆ Over 60% of the RHS Class of 2016 graduated with an Academic Honors Diploma or higher.
- ◆ Roncalli awarded more than \$1.9 million in need-based tuition assistance to RHS families for the 2016-2017 school year.

- ◆ In the past 24 years, Roncalli students have collected more than 1.6 million canned food items for the poor.
- ◆ The Class of 2016 completed over 64,100 hours of community service during their four years at RHS, with every Roncalli student performing more than 150 hours of community service prior to graduation.



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Roncalli's cast of "Annie" received a standing ovation.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RONCALLI

WORDS FROM OUR STUDENTS

Elana Matlock, senior

I have attended a Catholic school for the majority of my educational career, and I can positively say that it has impacted my life.

By attending Roncalli my faith has grown. Roncalli is a warm and welcoming place to everyone. There has not been a moment these past four years that I have said I do not like Roncalli.

While it may be required to attend religious classes, everything I have learned has been thoroughly explained. There are people who say they feel like their faith has been forced on them throughout their educational career, but for me, Roncalli has allowed me to grow in my faith. It has made me discover myself and God.



Elana Matlock

Grace Albertson, senior

As I reflect on my years of education, a major component of my academic and spiritual success is the result of my Catholic education. Not only was I challenged to thrive in my studies, I was challenged to love, to serve and to grow.

The memories of my time at St. Mark do not revolve around getting perfect grades or middle school squabbles. I remember going to soup kitchens or being a sacristan. I can still remember washing the chalices after Mass every Friday. And when we finished the other two sacristans and I would slowly turn off the lights in the church and stand in awe of the beauty of our faith and the warm feeling of God's presence.

Above everything else, I appreciate the love that was given to me by my teachers. Religion reached further than just learning the Commandments and reading scripture. From art class to social studies, the love my teachers had for their students was evident.

Attending a Catholic high school has exposed me to diversity. Surrounded by classmates from all walks of life, we differ financially, racially and religiously. I will always be thankful for these differences and how they helped me shape the way I see the world.

I look back at my Catholic education with fondness and appreciation and am excited to pursue a degree at Roncalli as well. I never thought this would be happening, but God has been working during my life, and I am at peace knowing the brightness of my future that is attributed to my past.



Grace Albertson

Mariesa LaRosa, senior



Mariesa LaRosa

There is something incredible about a classroom full of bowed heads in prayer before a class begins. There is something incredible about beginning the day with Christ in his Eucharistic form through a morning Communion service. There is something incredible about the transformation of a high school gymnasium into a sacred place of worship for 1,200 students. There is something incredible about Catholic education.

After 12 years of Catholic schooling, I often forget that it's not necessarily nor-



The Rev. James Brockmeier celebrates Mass.



Vignesh Nathan (left) and Luke Dow sort canned food items that were collected for the needy.

mal to ask a teacher to openly pray for the special intentions that I hold close to my heart, to attend a Mass during a study hall, nor to open a Bible in class to study the Gospel of Luke.

Picturing high school voided of these normalities is nearly an impossible task. The gift of Catholic education is invaluable. With it, I don't merely learn how to evaluate trigonometric functions nor how to analyze Shakespearean literature; I learn how to love. Christ is at the core of my education, and because I am immersed in his presence, he makes it easy to spread his love in my daily actions. In each class, religiously based or not, I grow to know him, to love him, and to serve him.

I am so grateful for the amazing gift of a Catholic education. My education is more than just the ability to say an "Our Father" in front of the class or to wear a crucifix around my neck. It is the gift to journey with Christ each day, and that alone is something incredible.

Thank you ...



Bob Kelly

A special thanks to account executive Bob Kelly and Editor B. Scott Mohr for their work on this exclusive section.

Kelly, a graduate of Ball State University School of Journalism with an emphasis in public relations, has written for many Indianapolis-area publications, including *The Indianapolis Star* and *The Indianapolis News*. For nine years he was the owner and chief writer for www.sportschronicle.net, a website dedicated to covering high school sports at area parochial schools.



B. Scott Mohr

Mohr, who earned degrees in journalism, political science and accounting from Indiana University, was a longtime associate editor and writer for *The Spotlight*.

Also, thanks to all of the advertisers and schools for their participation.

Congratulations to all of our Southside Catholic schools for helping our young men and women achieve their potential in academics, athletics and the arts.

— Kelly Sawyers
Southsider Voice publisher



Luke Jones recites the petitions during an all-school Mass.

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Bill Davis,
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Roncalli Salutes All-State Choir Performers



Congratulations to Roncalli High School choral members, Cassie Petroff, Maggie Schoening, Natalie Stigall, Adam Wolf, Chris Figueroa and Micah Attai, who performed with the Indiana All-State Choir in their annual concert in Fort Wayne. This is Roncalli's largest number of All-State singers in the past 10 years. Being selected to this group is one of the highest honors a choral student can earn. Special congratulations to their teachers, Mr. Joey Newton and Ms. Laura Horcher!



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF CENTRAL CATHOLIC
Eighth-graders Merissa Purvis (left) and Nanci Monroy dissect a pig's heart during their science class.



Behaving like good children should are Kirstyn Johnson, Diana Garcia, Mauricio Aguilar, Irael Valezquez, Lourdes Soberanes-Aguayo, Camila Gutierrez and Paris Rodriguez



Brayan Lopez-Aleman and Paola Mariscal Silva smile for the photographer.



Working on a class assignment are Zlatan Soto-Perez, Kenny Calvillo and Jose Islas.

Strengthening its role as a Catholic school

By **Bob Kelly**
Southsider Voice correspondent

Former Archbishop Joseph Tobin laid down a new foundation for Central Catholic School just over a year ago by linking it with the Notre Dame ACE Academies. So far, it's been a match made in heaven.

ACE Academies, a comprehensive model of urban school transformation focused on Catholic schools in states with publicly funded school choice, provides a Catholic education of the highest quality to as many children as possible in underserved communities.

ACE faculty and staff work closely with school and diocesan leaders in Indianapolis to increase academic achievement, boost enrollment and strengthen the school's Catholic identity by enhancing school leadership, curriculum, instruction, professional development, financial management and marketing.

The ACE Academies were founded in 2010 as a response to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' call for a "new model of sponsorship and collaboration" between Catholic institutions of higher education and parish schools. The first cluster of academies was established in Tucson, Arizona.

In 2012 the Diocese of St. Petersburg invited Notre Dame to partner with two schools in the Tampa Bay area. In 2015 the Notre Dame ACE Academies network launched a partnership with the Diocese of Orlando, and one school from the Diocese of Palm Beach and five schools from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis joined the network in 2016.

Last summer more than 20 staff members from Central Catholic took a trip to South Bend to learn about the initiative. "We had the opportunity to meet with people from the University of Notre Dame to see what our role is in the program," Principal Kelly England said.

"The first thing we did as a staff was to discuss why we do this work and what we truly believe about our role in

Catholic education. From there we came up with a list of things we want to accomplish. Being an inner-city school we know we now have more resources due to this partnership."

To achieve the goals it set, Central Catholic follows a set of principles for its program. The five core values of the ACE Academies are seek, persist, excel, love and serve. Staff members of Central Catholic identified a set of root beliefs that serve as the foundation for all they do. Those beliefs include: We believe that all are created in the image and likeness of God. We believe that every minute matters. We believe that excellence happens on purpose. We believe that there is strength in unity. We believe that every child has a unique capacity to learn, and we believe that we are called to be saints.

"We were able to put down what we believe as a group, and that proved to be a powerful tool and valuable experience for all of us," England said. "If we have to sit down with a parent for any reason, we explain our reason for action and refer back to the list of root beliefs to guide us."

England said the five core values are rooted in the Gospel and that they are incorporated into class instruction.

She went on to explain how the partnership with Notre Dame is helping the school. "It allows us to rebrand ourselves at Central Catholic School. The first two schools that joined the ACE network are in Tucson, Ariz., and are still part of the network today. You can see where they were and where they are today.

"Our work and ministry is not without its challenges, but we believe that together we can accomplish that which previously may have seemed impossible," England said. One day in the not-too distant future, a new school will join the network and will measure itself by the progress made by Central Catholic. "We learn from the other schools in the network and will continue to have more and more to offer the current Academies and those that join us in the future."

Why I love my school

By **Jacqueline Lopez-Cruz**, *first-grader*

I love talking about God, and I love math and reading. I love my friends. I like to write and, I like art. I love our wonderful school that God gave me! I love my Catholic school.



Jacqueline Lopez-Cruz

By **Oscar Mendoza**, *first-grader*

My teachers rock! I love when we get to write stories, have religion, when we get to have physical education and we learn about Martin Luther King Jr. an his family. I love Central Catholic. It is a wonderful, precious place.



Oscar Mendoza

By **Litzy Hernandez**, *third-grader*

I love Central Catholic because we get to go to church and sing in choir and read at Mass.

I love having art with Mrs. Mendes; she has great projects for us. Music is my favorite because we have the best music teacher: Miss Schot. And we get to have P.E. and bring show-and-tell. We also have Los Posades (a Christmas skit where Mary and Joseph go on a procession around the school while looking for lodging at the time of Jesus' birth) and the living rosary.

On field day we go outside for a while and them come back in for lunch. We also wet a sponge and pass it over our heads and try to have the most water in a bucket.

I love the chocolate fundraiser and the walkathon and everything.



Litzy Hernandez

By **Nicole Garcia-Andalon**, *second-grader*

I am lucky to go to a Catholic school. I like to go to Mass. It feels good to get closer to God and serve others. It is beautiful.

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Holy Name

Principal: Sister **Nicolette Etienne**

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What a Catholic education means to Holy Name students

By **Ava Elsener**, seventh-grader

Everyday I remind myself how grateful I am for the things I have. I tell myself that God comes before anything else in my life. I learned this from my Catholic school.

Going to school here is a daily reminder that this is such an amazing opportunity. Most children don't get to attend Catholic schools. That's why I'm constantly thanking God and my parents. My school is my second home. I always feel safe here. My friends, teachers and staff members are my family. God put me here for a reason: He wants me to be able to grow deeper in my faith and experience this amazing atmosphere.

Twice a week we attend Mass at school. It's a way to bring us together through God. Five days a week I get to go to religion class.

Overall, my Catholic school means a lot to me ... too much to describe.

And like Sister Nicolette quotes from Mother Theresa, "Do small things with great love."

By **Brooke Wolford**, second-grader

A great thing about a Catholic school is that we go to Mass. We have religion, and I have so much fun. We have sacraments like First Communion. On Thursdays we go to adoration. I am thankful that I go to a Catholic school!

By **Clare Diez**, fourth-grader

Just like our beautiful school quilt says, "There's no place like Holy Name!"

First of all – and most importantly – we have a religion education. We are all grateful to have Father Bob as our priest and Sister Nicolette as our principal this year. Each day they teach us and bring us closer to God.

We are also glad to have Mrs. Newton, who teaches us more about God and takes us to adoration on Thursdays. In the morning, we pray the "Hail Mary" and say the "Pledge of Allegiance," as well as the "Holy Name Pledge."

Secondly, we have great teachers and students who are friendly and kind. At the end of the school year we always have the Squirrelle Awards for our teachers.

We have other events every year as well: our thanksgiving luncheon and play, Christmas concert and field day.

There are thousands of reasons why Holy Name is such a wonderful school. Go Giants!



Ava Elsener



Brooke Wolford



Clare Diez

By **Dean Rizzi**, first-grader

I learn about God at Catholic school. I get to go to Mass with the whole school two times a week. My teacher loves to share about our faith. I get to spend time with Father Bob and Sister Nicolette in my classroom.



Dean Rizzi

Luke Monroe, eighth-grader

Attending a Catholic school means I get to go to Mass every Tuesday and Thursday. We also pray every day in the morning and at the end of school.

I feel truly honored to go to a Catholic school. The teachers are amazing. They teach amazingly, and they teach us more about God. Teachers that really stand out about teaching God to me are Mrs. Allen, my religion teacher, and Sister Nicolette, my former religion teacher and my principal now. They have taught me to love everyone and to love God.

Sister Nicolette would always say, "So that in all things," and we would respond "God may be glorified." I truly believe in this because we should be doing everything to make God happy. And all of the teachers here make sure that everyone is doing things that God would like us to do.



Luke Monroe

By **Cris Vodney**, fifth-grader

I love it here! The teachers are fantastic! I can't decide my favorite teacher. I've made so many friends here: Andrew, Ben, Camren, Noah, Owen, Quinton, Eli, Nick Houtz, etc.

We are learning about Jesus' human and divine nature. My favorite part of Holy Name is the sports events like the end-of-the-year eighth-grade kickball game and the teachers versus eighth-grader in volleyball.

The clubs are so much fun to be a part of. I'm in the play "Charlotte's Web." Choir is so much fun. We sing in the choir loft every Tuesday and sometimes Sunday. We go on field trips like to the ArtsGarden and town hall. We also sing at the famous Christmas concert, and we have a musical.

Holy Name Church is over 100 years old. We have trunk-or-treat, which is when you trick-or-treat at school and people decorate the trunks of their cars and the kids get candy! It's a ton of fun. Also during the fall we have the Oktoberfest. There are bouncy houses, games, prizes, food and rock concerts.

And while doing all that we still praise our savior, Jesus Christ.



Cris Vodney

By **Patrick Tiernan**, fourth-grader

My education is important, but being in a Catholic school is the best!

Catholic Schools Week is special to me because we grow closer to God. Every Tuesday and Thursday we go to Mass. Our priest is Father Bob. Like always, God is in our presence at church, school and at home.

All Catholic schools have religious education during school, which is awesome. We also go to adoration on Thursdays during our religion class. This is important to me because it is a quiet time to be with God.

We are happy to have a religious education because of these things: We grow closer to God; we go to Mass every two days; we have a religious education; and because God is always in our presence. Happy Catholic Schools Week!



Patrick Tiernan

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOLY NAME
Holy Name's annual Christmas Concert is steeped in tradition.



Pioneer day is celebrated at Holy Name.



John Sullivan (from left), Isabel Beerbower, Emma Wilson and Paige Stuck pray while visiting the Shrine of St. Mother Theodore Guerin.

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Here's why Nativity students are thankful for their Catholic education

By **Ella Mayer**, fifth-grader

I have a special gift, and it is one of the best gifts I have ever received. The knowledge I learned from this gift will help me the rest of my life. This gift is my Catholic school.

Attending Nativity means building a great relationship with God. We attend Mass every week. At Mass we have a nice pastor who is good with kids. We always have the middle school choir that sings songs and a great pianist who plays the piano beautifully.

We also have great service projects. Our fifth grade was in charge of collecting items for babies and mothers last month. Before a grade begins its service project, a symbol of the year's theme is passed to that grade at Mass.

We have great, helpful teachers who put students first. This community feels like a family. We wear uniforms that make us equal and unified. I really like our uniforms. Our challenging work makes us work hard to be successful.

Having the privilege of going to Nativity has been a blessing so far. I hope you enjoyed this article about my experience at Nativity.

By **Page Boyle**, fifth-grader

What if you went someplace and it made you feel super special? That is how I feel every day. Nativity makes me feel connected to God in these ways.

I get to attend Mass every week. The whole school comes together to worship. We get to celebrate the coming of Christ. We get to learn about God.

My school has helpful teachers who put their students' needs before theirs. The teachers are super friendly and Christ-like. They always say hello to me in the halls. They are good listeners. They support and help me on my journey towards Christ.

I love Nativity because it feels like a family. This year I was new and everyone was nice to me. The teachers are easy to talk to and helpful.

There are many extracurricular activities like cheerleading, basketball, student council and band. My school gives many options for each person.

That is why I love Nativity.

By **Rosie Duncan**, fifth-grader

A Catholic education means that I can get three F's without getting into trouble. What are the three F's?

The first F is for faith. My faith continues to grow each day with the Lord. Having religion allows me spiritual growth.

The second F is for family. Going to a Catholic school we are one big family. Our family grows each year with new members who share in the same values.

The last F is for friends. Having the same friends at a Catholic school allows for a lifetime of memories.

With the three F's at Nativity, it sets my foundation for life.



Ella Mayer



Page Boyle



Rosie Duncan



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NATIVITY

If you ask Alexis Kabat (from left), Grace Toth or Rylee Pruitt what their favorite thing about school is, they might say recess.



Olivia Mendoza, Ethan Richardson, Brooklyn Wethington, Logan Arney, Charlie Mockaitis and Rylee Pruitt enjoy reading about Clifford the Big Red Dog.



Logan Neyenhaus takes delight in collecting letters for U.S. troops.

By **Grace Daming**, fourth-grader

Attending a Catholic school is a privilege and a blessing. I love going to a school that allows me not only to learn academics but also about God. At Nativity we share our beliefs; we are always positive, and we have a variety of school activities.

The first thing I love about my Catholic education is that we all share the same beliefs. We are always allowed to pray. I love that we pray to start and end each school day.

The second reason I love Nativity is that everyone has a positive attitude and lots of school spirit. No one is ever bullied, and everyone is welcome. We help each other and try to be great role models. We are all friends, which is amazing and awesome.

The last reason I am blessed to go to Nativity is that there are a variety of activities and sports.

Being a Catholic School student is something that I will be forever grateful. I wish everyone had the chance to attend a Catholic school.

By **Elijah Buening**, eighth-grader

I am glad to be a Catholic and go to Nativity. I am able to pray and celebrate the Catholic holidays. If I were not Catholic, I would not have the friends I do. I would not have been able to celebrate some holidays, and I would not be able to pray the way we do. I love to be able to worship our Savior. I can act Christ-like and love others.

Christmas is a really important holiday for Catholics. We celebrate the birth of Jesus and his life. Some people just think it is gifts and food; to us it is something a whole lot bigger. We also celebrate Easter. This is when Jesus died for us and our sins and then rose. We are not sad that he died because he wanted to for the sake of humanity.

I can also pray to God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. These three are known as the Trinity, and we can worship them for watching over us and keeping us safe. We can pray to them to heal somebody, help somebody get better or even wishing for everybody to have a good day. Any prayer we pray to them is going to be heard. We can do this in a Catholic school.



Grace Daming



Elijah Buening

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

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Eternal hope strengthens us
Everlasting love surrounds us

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What a Catholic education means to eighth-graders at OLG

By Lexy Markowicz

I have spent the first 11 years of my education at a Catholic school. My Catholic education means a lot to me because it helps me strengthen my faith while giving me the best education I can receive.

Every day I look forward to religion class so I can learn more about how the church came to be.

Next year I will attend Greenwood High School. I have never been at a school where I don't pray throughout the day. OLG has taught me that whatever happens, God is always with me and will help me through anything.

At a Catholic school, teachers not only care about your grades but they care about your relationship with God. The class sizes are small so teachers can get to know you. They go out of their way to help us finish projects, grow closer to God and mold us into great Catholics. Teachers encourage us to pray in class at least three times a day.

I don't know where I would be without my Catholic education, but I know I wouldn't be as happy as I am being able to talk every day about God with my peers.

My Catholic education has made me a better person and has set me up to be Catholic for the rest of my life.



Lexy Markowicz

By Ella Rasche

I have spent my whole life in a Catholic school, and it makes me happy to learn about God every day.

My Catholic education means a lot to me. It means that I have a purpose, and that purpose is to learn about the goodness of the Lord. My teachers help me grow in my faith, and learning about my faith has changed my life.

A Catholic education allows me to have amazing role models – like my religion teacher, Mrs. Samuelson – who I wouldn't have anywhere else. The way she talks about her connection with God is admirable. I hope that someday I will be that strong in my faith.

My Catholic education has changed my life, and it means that I get to talk to God through prayer every day. I thank God for everything he has given me and everything he has done for me. I love having God as the center of all that I do.

Attending OLG has made me a better Catholic and a better person. After I graduate I will always remember what having a Catholic education has done for me.



Ella Rasche



PHOTOS COURTESY OF OUR LADY OF THE GREENWOOD SCHOOL

Sister Marceline Mattingly (right), a 101-year-old Sister of Providence, visiting with kindergartners on their 101st day of school at Our Lady of the Greenwood. Sister Marceline was accompanied by Sister Ann Casper from the Motherhouse at St. Mary of the Woods.

The school was started in 1954 by the Sisters of Providence. The children said they are grateful for the sisters' legacy.

By Connor Mahoney

I have attended a Catholic school for six years and a public one for three. Having both experiences, I have learned to value a Catholic education because it encourages me to grow in my faith.

By having religion class I deepen my faith in a personal way. My religion class includes reading the Bible, participating in Mass and learning about God's influence on my life. Unlike a public school, this environment supports discussion of the Catholic faith in today's world.

Praying at school strengthens my faith. Some classes begin with prayer. We also pray at school every morning before our day begins. I never prayed with others at a public school. Having prayer during school helps me feel God's holy presence.

My Catholic school stresses shared morals and values of our faith. One value we share is being kind to your neighbors; another is family. Most of our morals and values come from the 10 Commandments.

Being at a Catholic school educates me to learn and grow through God. After all, I wouldn't be able to write about God if I didn't go to a Catholic School, which has blossomed my faith.



Connor Mahoney

By Josh Wormann

I have been at OLG for all of my education. After a decade at a Catholic school I know I am a better person and a better Christian because of the great teachers, staff, priests and sisters, and God is always at school.

The teachers and staff truly care about each student, and they want us to learn a lot and become closer to Jesus Christ.

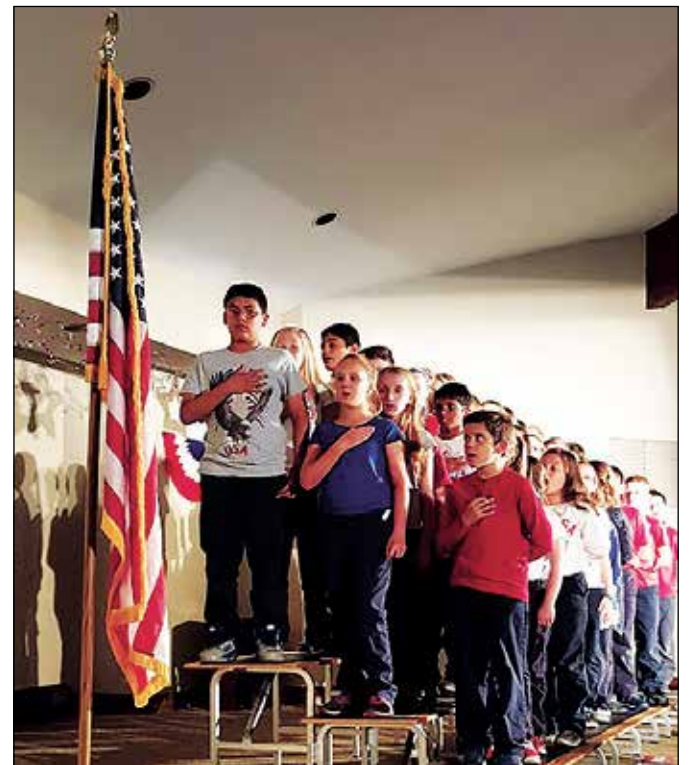
Talking openly about your Catholic faith is a big part of OLG. At public or other private schools you oftentimes are not able to share your faith much. Sometimes people of other backgrounds may even be offended by what you say.

At OLG you are able to talk about your faith no matter what, and we have a great religion class. We learn about Bible stories, which connect stories with things in our faith.

In religion class we focus on our faith by praying and doing an examination of our conscience, during which we answer questions and find out how we can live life more like Christ did.



Josh Wormann



Fifth-graders present a Veterans Day program.

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By Abi Adkins

I am blessed to go to SSFC because I get to learn about Jesus and have fun at the same time.

One reason I like Catholic education is the kind teachers. I like the teachers because they're not just my teachers but my friends. The teachers help me with many things.

Another reason I like Catholic education is learning about Christ. Learning about Christ is important so that we always know someone is with us. Christ is always with us in our hearts.

Catholic Schools Week is important to me because we get to have fun. Sometimes during the week we wear our pajamas and slippers to school and we bring toys.



Abi Adkins

By Nico Amodeo

I am blessed to go SSFC because I am getting a quality education.

The Catholic Youth Organization is really fun because of sports. I play basketball, track and football. Basketball is fun because we learn it from a teacher. Track is fun because we get taught by a fun teacher. Camp counselors are really fun.

The teachers are really fun at SSFC. They give us treats if we do good. We learn a whole bunch of stuff. My math teacher is really fun. My other teacher is fun; she teaches writing and grammar.

Faith in action is fun; we get a uniform. When we have it we help people. The way we help people is by giving food to a pantry. We also give clothes to the poor. We are really helpful to a lot of people.

Catholic education is important because you learn a lot more and you learn faith and religion.



Nico Amodeo

By Andrew Barkley

SSFC is really very precious to me, and so are my teachers.

It all started when I had my first day of kindergarten. I was nervous and happy. Miss Weber was my favorite teacher since Day 1. Now my teachers love me. Some of them helped me with sacraments. All those sacraments I did mean a lot to me. When I did Communion in the second grade my friends and I had a congratulations party.

Baptism was long ago, and I don't know anything. Mass is very good since we do Mass twice a week.

We have special days someday, for example, field day. I personally love special days. Faith is combined with special days.

I hope you know how I feel about Catholic education. Farewell.



Andrew Barkley

By Savannah Beck

I'm blessed to go to SSFC because the school is Catholic and I'm Catholic.

I like SSFC because they have specials. I can play a recorder in music, make an ornament in art and learn a new language in Spanish.

I like my teachers because they are nice and kind. They help me learn; they love their students.

I like Mass to get to pray to God. I can sing in Mass. You can serve at Mass and read with your class. Catholic education is important because you will learn more about your faith.



Savannah Beck

By Shalynn Cravens

I am blessed to go to SSFC because I feel safe here.

Faith in Action means a lot to me because I get to help and serve my community. I also help people not to be homeless, poor, sick, cold or hungry anymore. I help them to live better.

Mass means a lot to me because I get to pray for people. I get to sing, and I am going to be in choir next year. I also get Communion.

Leading Mass means a lot to me because I get to read, serve the gifts and hold the banner.

A Catholic education is important too because I need to do good in the future.



Shalynn Cravens

By Rose Eckhart

There is so much to learn at SSFC.

CYO sports are important because you learn new sports, and you can make new friends. Normal sports are boring. If you win the championship no one would care. If you play for your school every one would have a forward attitude toward you.

Mass is when you praise Jesus Christ, and that is why I love Mass. Mass is when you sing out. There is no limit. Mass is special because you participate in the learning of God.

Jesus is the person that saved me from sin. I care about my family, and Jesus makes it happen. Jesus is important because it is almost Christmas, and it's time for his birth.

A Catholic education is important because there is only one God, and if you don't think that, that's not true.



Rose Eckhart

By Sophia Lewis

I like SSFC because I can pray whenever I want. I picked Faith in Action because I love to help people in need. I like to make people smile, and I like working together and learning.

When I help others I get this warm feeling inside me. You probably do too. Do you? Helping others is what you should do because it's the right thing to do. Everyone should love to make people smile because that is what makes other people smile.

Working together is what people all around the world do. We do this because we all love to work together. We all love Faith in Action because it is the right thing to do.

A Catholic Education is important because we need to keep this world alive with faithfulness.



Sophia Lewis

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Drake Lally says the rosary.

Why I like my school



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. BARNABAS SCHOOL

The essays below were penned by (from left) Whitney Meinerding, Joey McCoy, Ava Nelson, Maddox Novotney and Zane Kale.

I walk into my school every morning knowing that I am safe and cared for.

At St. Barnabas I know how much my school looks out for everyone of us – from the preschoolers to me, a sixth-grader, and all the way to our school leaders in eighth grade.

Our school is a family where we are free to share our thoughts and listen as well.

Whitney Meinerding, sixth-grader

Every day I look forward to coming to school. It is not just a place to learn; it's a place to grow.

Through my education I have the privilege of going to Mass and sharing my love of God with my peers. Feeling one with God after receiving him makes me feel special in his eyes. Joining my peers in song in choir is something I am excited to participate in every week.

Sharing my joy at Mass with my school community is one of the many great parts of a Catholic education.

Ava Nelson, sixth-grader

Going to a Catholic school is a huge part of my life. It is a privilege to be able to express our faith on a daily basis in an environment where it is encouraged.

As a school we have service projects that allow us to help those who are less fortunate. In religion class we have discussions that help us better understand our faith. We do service hours to help us grow as part of the church and the community.

Zane Kale, sixth-grader

St. Barnabas is a special school because we can find God in our hearts here. I learn more about Jesus. I get to do the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. We show our faith. I pray with my class every day.

Joey McCoy, second-grader

I like going to St. Barnabas because I like going to Mass and learning more about Jesus.

I get to do canned food drives, St. Nick stockings and the walkathon. I am excited to celebrate the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist.

I am so thankful that my teachers and priests help me learn more about Jesus. I love going to St. Barnabas School.

Maddox Novotney, second-grader



Rosie Elsener is all smiles when it comes to getting a Catholic education.



Deric and Morgan Vaught spend a little father-daughter time together.



Doug Bauman (back, second from left) a teacher at St. Barnabas, won the St. Theodora Guerin Excellence in Education Award for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

He seen with his wife, Julie (to his right), and their daughters, (from left) Annie, Betsy and Lily, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and Archdiocese Superintendent Gina Kuntz Fleming.

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What a Catholic education means

By **Olivia Swearingen**, sixth-grader

I'm so lucky that every day I get to come to school with a smile on my face. I get to grow in my faith with God and Jesus. I couldn't imagine going to another school where I couldn't learn about my religion.

At St. Jude we don't just go to school as friends; we go as a family. Every Wednesday we go to church and sing to God as one huge family. We gathered in our school gym and prayed to God on St. Jude's feast day. The teachers always help students who are having trouble with their school work. All of the teachers are great.

As one happy sixth-grade class, we do many things together. We pray together and play games. We have each other's backs, and we always have words of encouragement for those who aren't having a good day.

I've been going to St. Jude for seven years, and I've been able to learn so much. I thank my parents every day for sending me to the best Catholic school ever!



Olivia Swearingen

By **Jackson Koehler**, seventh-grader

There are lots of things that make Catholic schools really special. Whenever you come to school everyone is smiling. Everyone is helping each other and being respectful. When I walk through those doors every morning at 7:30 I see my family. At St. Jude we are all family, and that's what make Catholic schools special.

We practice our faith openly every day. We pray in the morning, before lunch and at the end of the day. We go to Mass every Wednesday to talk to God and receive the Eucharist.

We have a program called Faith in Action. We are taught to follow the golden rule, to be respectful to other people and put others first. Every week a classroom does something nice for someone else in need. We donate money to charities, and we make cards for people in nursing homes and in hospitals. We really put our faith into action.

This is what makes Catholic schools so special.



Jackson Koehler

By **Lauren Sulit**, sixth-grader

Going to a Catholic school is a great and rewarding opportunity for students and teachers. It creates a safe and happy environment to learn about Jesus. Knowing about Jesus can help students to become kinder, more forgiving, and it helps them to center God in their everyday lives. Catholic schools shape kids into an example of love in Jesus' image.

The whole school gets an opportunity to go to Mass to learn about Jesus and receive the Eucharist. He sacrificed his life for us so that we could live a happy life and go to heaven.

We have a program called Putting Others First, which helps to encourage every student to become a disciple of Jesus through service.

We are fortunate to have religion class. We learn that Jesus gave so much for us, and we also hear about stories that show how we should be faithful to God.

Catholic schools help enhance students' minds to stay focused on God. Going to a Catholic school has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. God is the center of life, and all students can realize this in a Catholic school.



Lauren Sulit

By **Grace Vavra**, eighth-grader

When people ask you what you learn in school, you usually say math, science, English, social studies and literature. But that's just an above-the-surface answer if you go to a Catholic school.

If you are fortunate enough to go to a Catholic school, you get to say things like, "I get to learn about my faith and how Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins." I used to go to a public school, but attending a safe, inclusive, judgement-free school has changed my life.

I came to St. Jude when I was in fourth grade, and the amount of support I felt when walking in for the first time was absolutely unreal. They accepted me with open arms and all the love they had to offer. While I could go on forever talking about all the perks of St. Jude, I think the best thing about this blue ribbon school is that everyday we get to learn about our religion.

I feel lucky to have had such an amazing middle school experience. St. Jude has been nothing but wonderful to me. I have made amazing friends, made amazing memories and learned amazing things. I couldn't be more thankful.



Grace Vavra

By **Hadyn Ball**, sixth-grader

Going to a Catholic school makes me feel privileged. Even though my brother, sisters and I have to work really hard, it is worth it. Going to a Catholic school is like training hard to be an athlete. To be an athlete you have to put forth lots of effort to reach your goal.

With all of the work that is put forth, there are benefits, which include a good education about our religion.

Because students go to school together and share a common faith and religion, the community (my friends) is much closer than it is in other schools. Since my friends go to the same parish as me, my mom and dad are friends with their parents.

We have the opportunity to pray the rosary together, play sports with our school friends and other good things, such as caroling and helping out at St. Vincent de Paul.

My school is doing more than just preparing me for a job. It is preparing me for my entire life.



Hadyn Ball



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. JUDE
Eighth-graders Alexa Kruse (left) and McKenzie Liegibel, members of St. Jude's National Junior Honor Society, sort food items that were collected for the needy.



Second-graders posed for a picture before delivering flowers to residents at Rosegate Assisted Living and Garden Homes.



St. Jude eighth-graders are seen with a cross created by the entire school.



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St. Mark

Principal: **Rusty Albertson**

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Why I like St. Mark

By **Mya Galbreath**, *fourth-grader*

In the classrooms at St. Mark when the teachers ask us a question, our hands shoot up in the air like rockets. In church when Father Todd asks us a question about our faith and God, everybody's hands are in the air wanting to answer the question. And in the gym when our coaches ask us questions about the game, our eyes light up and our hands go up because we all know the answer.

Students are given lots of after-school activities. Some of the sports are volleyball and kickball. They give us a chance to get all of our energy out and to laugh and have fun with our friends.

At Christmastime we get to play a part in the story of Jesus' birth and proclaim the good news of God. Students in Grades 5-8 can be in band.

St. Mark offers a challenging education to everyone to improve their knowledge. The teachers help us a lot with our homework and school work. Almost every morning Mr. Albertson, the principal, comes into the classrooms and gives us a pep talk.

The classes can be incredibly easy and incredibly challenging at times. But the classes can help you get ready for the life to come.

The most important thing here at St. Mark is our faith and becoming stronger in it. There are a lot of role models for the students: our teachers, Father Todd, Deacon Tom and Mr. Albertson. They help us grow stronger in our faith by teaching us what Jesus did, by telling us what we can do to become a better Christian, and they encourage us to go to Mass every Sunday. We go to Mass twice a week when we are at school.

By **Dante Herzog**, *fourth-grader*

At St. Mark we get a great education. We also learn about God and Jesus. We hear Father Todd preaching about the good news of Jesus.

We learn from great teachers like Mrs. Merkel and Mrs. Farrell. They are awesome. They always help us when we need it. The students are excited when we do activities in math and other subjects. We learn about math, science, religion, social studies and language arts. We have Chromebooks that we can play educational games on. We love learning with friends and great teachers.

St. Mark provides many after-school activities like basketball, football, kickball and much more. We always have a great time playing with our friends. We always play as a team and encourage each other, and everybody works hard.

My school also has a Spell Bowl team that competes in spelling competitions. The coaches always are so nice and make sure you're OK to play. Our Catholic Youth Organization sports are the best!

At St. Mark we go to church twice a week. On Tuesdays we do the rosary, and on Fridays we sing songs during church. We love hearing the good news of Jesus from Father Todd and Deacon Tom. They are the best you could ever ask for. They are so nice and caring. They're always there when you need them.



Mya Galbreath

By **Emma Fegan**, *fifth-grader*

I love our school because of the students and my friends. When I first came to St. Mark everyone was so nice and welcoming. One of the best things about St. Mark is that it's a bully-proof school. If someone does get bullied, the principal or teacher will immediately solve the problem so it does not happen again.

Another reason why St. Mark is such a great school is because of our teachers and principal. If a student needs extra help, sometimes the teachers provide tutoring after school. Our principal, Mr. Albertson, gives every student a high five when they come into school.

We also have a bunch of fun activities like the spring musical, the Christmas play and Catholic Schools Week. The musical is done by the sixth- through eighth-graders and our music teacher, Mrs. Bruner. The Christmas play is done by the second- through fifth-graders and Mrs. Bruner. Catholic schools Week is when we have dress-up days every day.

St. Mark has a lot of sports, and I play kickball, volleyball and basketball. Our school is known for its good sportsmanship and awesome coaches. Our older girls basketball team won the CYO city championship last year.

The best reason why St. Mark is such a great school to go to is because of our faith. We go to church regularly.



Emma Fegan

By **Edison Larkin**, *fifth-grader*

St. Mark is extraordinary. Catholic schools have always been good to me because we are allowed to learn about our faith and pray.

One reason I like Catholic schools is because the staff and teachers are always nice to everyone even if you have differences. The teachers really challenge us to make us better. If you're not doing your best, the teachers know you can do better so you will get some extra help so you can do better.

Something that makes our school amazing is our principal, Mr. Albertson. He comes to everyone's classroom every day. I love Catholic schools because he and the teachers care enough to stop bullying at our school.

One big part of St. Mark is our faith. Catholic schools let us pray. Another big part of St. Mark is our priest and deacon. Deacon Tom talks to us about the sacraments. Another reason I love Catholic schools is that we get to go to church twice a week, sometimes three times a week. We always listen to Father Todd's or Deacon Tom's amazing homilies. We sometimes get to be part of Mass when we bring up the gifts or have a reading.

Extracurricular activities like basketball, football, wrestling, volleyball, kickball and band are another reason why St. Mark is great. I love Catholic Youth Organization sports because you can pretty much always play with everybody in your class. I think friends are a big part of St. Mark because if you're having a bad day, they will always cheer you up. When you're not playing as well as your other teammates in gym they will support you.



Edison Larkin




PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. MARK



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St. Roch

Principal: **Joe Hansen**

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Learning values, life lessons

Lachlan Borders, *fifth-grader*

The lessons and values I learn at St. Roch Catholic School are important. At the beginning of the year I visited the anti-bullying rally and learned to show empathy to people who are having a hard time or are being treated badly.

When I was in the fourth grade I learned to respect people, people's property and anything sacred. Once I witnessed an argument at recess and saw someone come up and help them sort things out. I thought it was cool, and I now look up to that person.

I have learned a lot about God this year and to respect all of his creations. In second grade I learned about J.O.Y, which means that Jesus comes first, then others and then you.

Every day I am blessed to go to this school and get a good education. I was taught to be grateful for everything I have. I say a prayer before every meal and thank God for everything. This is the most important lesson for me.

When I first came to this school I thought I would just learn math, spelling and all the other subjects, but as I grew I learned that this school would teach me lots of life lessons. I love this school, and I know I will grow up and have a successful life.



Lachlan Borders



The Bollywood and drumming classes united to perform during the arts for learning block.



Fifth-graders perform science experiments. PHOTOS COURTESY OF ST. ROCH

A caring and loving school

Cecilia Keiner, *fifth-grader*

When you walk up to our school you see an old brick building, but when you go inside you see love and care from every student and teacher.

My second-grade teacher taught us J.O.Y, meaning Jesus, Others, You, and she said that would always bring you joy. She was right because I use this every day.

There is one more thing that brings me great joy ... that is how the teachers work so hard to make this place look magical. They all strive to learn just as much as us, and they take time to separately help each one of us.

We also strive for love and care from our fellow students. We have anti-bullying rallies, and we keep signs all over school telling us to stop bullying and be kind. This school is filled with wonderful lessons. One of my teachers would always remind us to respect the Bible and its teachings. We all followed that advice and still do.

Another thing I truly love is that Mr. Hansen, our principal, and that Mrs. Wilson, our assistant principal, come to every room in the school every morning.

This school is so wonderful,; it amazes me every day.



Cecilia Keiner



Geography Bee runner-up Cole Cothron (left) and champion Dominic Pittman.



St. Roch's third-grade kickball team won the city championship.



St. Roch was named a Four Star School by the Indiana Department of Education in 2015. The banner was rolled out during Grandparent's Day in 2016.

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Mentored by Mary Ann Chamberlin, Nicole Snyder and Siana Fox, St. Roch Grade School's junior Spell Bowl team won its fourth state championship in the past five years in November at Purdue University's Loeb Playhouse.

Team members are (front, from left) Bridget Agresta, Abigail Snyder, Nicko Greene, Luke Hansen, Annette Hernandez, Olivia Sigler, Kate Lucid, Evan Schaub, Izzie Littell, Jonathon Snyder; (back) Principal Joe Hansen, Eva Fox, Celeste Gorbali, Bailey Davis, Caitlin Pooler, Erica Eads, Nathan Noone, Xavier Wilson and Chamberlin.

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A brief history of St. Roch

By **Joe Hanson**
Principal

St. Roch is a small urban parish originally staffed by Franciscan priests. In 1997 the Rev. James Wilmoth was appointed pastor. The school was started in 1924 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Corondelet. From an original enrollment of 46 students, the school grew as population moved farther away from the city. In 1958 construction was completed on a large addition to the school. In 1972 St. Roch became the first parish in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be staffed by an all-lay faculty. Today's enrollment is 302.

The physical structure has not greatly changed since 1959. A new computer lab opened in 1998 and in 1999 a new gabled roof was added to the 1959 addition. All classrooms are equipped with interactive Smart Boards, and middle school students use Chromebooks. The Parish Life Center, complete with a gymnasium, was added in 2000. The church was renovated and it is now considered the "jewel of the Southside." In the summer of 2011 the school's lower level was renovated and renamed Mother Guerin Hall. This area was the original place of worship.

A commitment to academics is stressed with activities such as Academic Olympics, Spell Bowl, speech and Quest for Excellence academic competition. St. Roch won its third Spell Bowl state championship in the last four years in 2016.

St. Roch continues to grow and meet the challenges that come its way. The school's resource department continues to shine, ministering to students with language and math learning difficulties as well as autism. With a strong faith and a commitment to Catholic education, the school will thrive as it works to meet the needs of its students.

Catholic Schools Week activities

- Jan. 30, students, who were allowed to wear their pajamas to school, were presented commemorative T-shirts.
- Jan. 31, students created items for the saint-themed bulletin board, all-school Mass and a skating party.
- Feb. 1, longtime employee Ronnie Schmolli will be honored after retiring after 54 years of service to St. Roch and Marian University; teachers and support staff will also be recognized.
- Feb. 2, teachers will swap classrooms, all-school Mass at 9 a.m.
- Feb. 3, all-school Mass at 9 a.m.; former world champion water skier Kristi Overton Johnson will share her testimony on her journey to discover Christ.

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Monastery *(Continued from Page 1)*

For more than 60 years the hermitage has offered 24-hour care to the aged and infirm. The center, which opened in 1981, hosts spiritual retreats, classes and other programming for people of all ages and faiths looking to deepen their relationship with God.

Sister Mary Luke Jones told *The Southsider Voice* that the primary work of the monastery is to pray for the people of God. "The sisters join together three times a day to recite the Divine Office, the official prayer of the church," she said. "In addition, we have sisters working in several other ministries, including teaching, nursing, pharmacy and library work. St. Benedict says all work is holy when done for the honor and glory of God.

"All of us meet thousands of people through our ministries, young and old, Catholic and Protestant. We have sisters from 30 to 90 years old who entered the community from Colorado, Massachusetts, Illinois, and Missouri as well as Indiana.

"St. Benedict tells us to receive all people as Christ, from the youth making a high school retreat to those at the St. Paul Hermitage who need special care."

The hermitage and the inn are undergoing renovations to improve the services offered by the sisters. The improvements have been made possible by the monastery benefactors. The inn has 44 new bedrooms, office space and a new conference room. Renovation at the hermitage is providing new bedrooms, office and reception areas, a beauty shop, rest rooms, a physical therapy lab, enhanced dining, a library and a party room.

Schulte said he had a vision to build a facility that would take care of the elderly. Instead, he planted a seed of faith that has sprouted over many decades to where it now serves many people and will continue to be a pillar in the community he envisioned over six decades ago.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SISTER MARY LUKE JONES
Indianapolis Archbishop Paul C. Schulte and Mother Clarissa Riehl break ground to begin construction of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in 1955.



Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center.



Sisters at Our Lady of Grace Monastery pray together three times daily.

Faith *(Continued from Page 1)*

state. It was a close call that Stone ended up there six years ago, or one can say it was another intervention why she ended up at the school.

"I interviewed at St. Malachy in Brownsburg and then later that day went on to my interview with SS. Francis & Clare," Stone said. "After great discernment I graciously accepted the position at SSFC."

Fate intervened again when Stone was encouraged to attend Butler University, where she would go back to school to earn a master's degree in administration. Two years ago she was offered a position in administration as an assistant, and after receiving encouragement from many staff

members she accepted the position that she has today.

"It was difficult because I love the classroom," Stone said. "A position opened up much sooner than anyone anticipated. Now I help families on a much larger scale, and I love this new role. I use my faith in God to guide me every day.

"I have the opportunity to share my Catholic faith daily with students, staff and the parish at SSFC. My position is challenging in a new way, but I still continue to rely on my Catholic faith as I reach out to others in the school and guide them. I work in the church and for the church because this is my family, and it is my life."

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