

Much activity has occurred since the last posting on the website . . .

The Sacrament of Reconciliation was available to our students during December and all classes attended the parish liturgy on December 8th – the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

In Advent our students studied about the birth of Christ. The younger grades viewed DVDs and listened as catechists retold the story of the Birth of Jesus. The middle grade students increased their knowledge of the Feast of the Incarnation by reading the Bible, receiving instruction, and completing worksheets to strengthen their knowledge.



Students returned to classes in January and, following a time of instruction, celebrated the Christmastide as a community with a game of BINGO. They enjoyed the prizes and the treats that were provided. It was a ‘first’ game for some of the kindergarten and first grade students, but the middle grade students were pleased to help them. This was an opportunity for all of the students to celebrate together in the school cafeteria.

PROGRESS!!!

Mid-term Progress reports were distributed. Attendance at classes has been very high and students have shown great cooperation and interest in their learning. They are very respectful and thoughtful.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Students who attend the second grade classes at the St. Stanislaus Religious Education Program and St. Stanislaus School received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday, February 9th in the Basilica. The children presented a prayer service in which they sang, read the Prodigal Son parable, and offered prayers. Pastor Fr. Joseph Bayne, OFM Conv., addressed the children and parents. During the service parents accompanied their child to the confessor and introduced him/her. Gratitude goes to the catechists, confessors, and music teacher who made this such a special event. A special word of thanks also goes to students in grades 6 and 7 who have helped the second grade.

Parents can be very pleased with the manner in which the Reconciliation Service was conducted. Following the service, a reception to celebrate the reception of the sacrament was held in the school cafeteria.



PARABLES

MATTHEW 13:44, 25:14-30, 13:2-9, 18-23

Grades 3-5 have recently learned more about how Jesus taught by telling stories that had special meanings. These stories are called parables. While students have heard these stories in the past, they now use Sacred Scripture and various activities to relate the messages to real life situations.



WHAT IS THE MASS? WHY SHOULD CATHOLICS ATTEND MASS WEEKLY?



On February 2nd, Fr. Paul Miskiewicz, OFM Conv. began to teach the Meaning of the Mass to students from Grade 3-7. This instruction on the Source and Summit of our Catholic Faith will continue in March. Hopefully, these teachings will increase student participation in weekly Mass celebrations.

GOSPEL VALUES - PUT INTO ACTION

The importance of caring for one another is a theme that runs through the entire religious education program. We are to put our *Faith into Action*. Students in the younger grades listen to stories about values of respect and caring and watch “Brother Francis” DVDs by Lighthouse Catholic Media. In the beginning of each DVD presentation, children’s voices are heard asking Brother Francis what he is going to teach them today. These lessons are then applied.



The Kindergarten and Grade 1 students received help from the students in Grades 6 and 7 to put together a Valentine booklet with photos of saints who have shown us how to live. The students in Grade 3-5 made Valentine greeting for the residents of the Soldiers Home.

TIME WITH GOD

It is the practice of catechists and students to begin each session with prayer. For most of the students, this special practice takes place in the school library in what is known as the ‘reading pit’. The environment is prepared with sacred symbols of a cross, or photo of saints or the rosary placed on an appropriate cloth. Several small LED candles are lit. Students sit in a circle and know that this is a special time which calms their spirits and places them in a posture of speaking with God. Students from kindergarten on offer many intentions that they want to be remembered in prayer. Catechists also take students to the school chapel for prayer and/or instruction.

WHY IS A CHURCH A SPECIAL PLACE? WHAT CAN YOU TEACH ME?

Fr. Joseph Bayne, OFM Conv. gave the second graders a tour of the Basilica and introduced the Sacred vestments and vessels used in worship. Students were very attentive and learned much – especially about those Sacred Vessels that they do not usually have the chance to see up close: – Chalice, Ciborium, Monstrance. It is our hope that students share what they learned with family members and that the knowledge they learned helps them understand more when they attend Church services.



CALLED TO PROTECT

In accordance with the Diocese of Springfield Policy, the *Protection of Youth Curriculum* has been taught to all classes. Students in grades 1 – 6 were instructed in the *SEED Program* (Safe Environment Every Day) and grade 7 students were taught the *Called to Protect Program*. The instruction for each level was accompanied by worksheets. A packet of information including references and resources on the topics pertaining to safety will be given to parents in March.



And, now we prepare for the **Liturgical Season of Lent...**

**PRAYER
FASTING
ALMSGIVING
PERFORMING CORPORAL AND SPIRITUAL ACTS OF MERCY**