
Home & School Newsletter

January 2010

Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2010! I hope you all enjoyed your holidays and are getting readjusted to everyday schedules and activities. There are so many exciting events and activities in store for St. Dennis families in the next few months – here are just a few....

- ★ [Catholic Schools Week](#) – This wonderful celebration of our faith kicks off on January 31. Jubilee Choir (4th and 5th grade students) will perform at 9:00 mass, which will be followed by an open house of the school and refreshments in Fellowship Hall. Stay tuned to the school website for a complete listing of the exciting activities planned throughout the week!
- ★ [GIFT](#) – January 31 and February 1. Motivational speaker Mark Yaconelli & entertainer Ken Lonquist will share their thoughts and experiences with us and we enjoy another chapter in Life Stories. Remember – GIFT fees are included in your tuition, so be sure to register now – there is no additional cost for school families!
- ★ [Teacher Appreciation Night](#) – What an amazing way to wrap up Catholic Schools Week! On Friday, February 5, Home & School will sponsor a delicious catered Mexican buffet, cash bar, music and dancing in the Parish Center. EVERYONE (adults only, please) is invited and strongly encouraged to attend. All proceeds collected for this event are gifted to the St. Dennis teachers. Please see the website or contact your class rep for additional details.
- ★ [Trivia Knight](#) – Save the date! On Saturday, March 6, test your knowledge of all things trivia in an evening filled with fun, laughter, and friendly competition. This team event is the fundraiser that doesn't feel like a fundraiser! Back by popular demand for its third year, tables are selling fast so get your reservations in TODAY. Contact Jason Westphal (Jason_westphal@yahoo.com) or your class rep for additional details.

There are many other events taking place in the coming months – remember to stay tuned to the website for important dates, and as always, please feel free to contact your class rep with any questions.

Cheers to an exciting 2010!

~Jenny Turk

Classroom News

4K

The teachers could not believe how big the kids looked after Christmas vacation.

The k-4 kids have a parakeet named Skye in their classroom. They can take him home any weekend to stay with their family.

They just made new take home bags for all of their work that they do. They used many of their preschool skills to decorate it.

We are excited to see all of the cool things that happen during Catholic Schools Week. Parents-there are many opportunities to help out for this great week.

Nicole Quandt
4K Class Rep

Kindergarten

The kindergartners are in full swing; practicing writing their first and last names, reading, and lots of snowsuits, boots, and snow fort building/winter play. For the kindergarten class, no time was wasted; not two weeks after winter break, kindergartners were bringing home papers with their first and last names proudly written, although cute and slanty, across the tops and bottoms of assignments and projects. In addition, the kindergartners are starting to work with word families/short vowel a, c+ at = cat, and the beginnings of reading are in full bloom. There is nothing better the excitement a child has as they realize they are reading. On the whole, the kindergartners are busy! But no fear, time is made to put snow coats, pants, hats, scarves, mittens, somebody else's mitten, and boots on. And this happens a few times a day! Mrs. Mitmoen and Mrs. Pavlick are brave women during the winter months!

Jessica Feit

1st Grade

Happy New Year!

This month started with the introduction of the "Reading at Home Club". What a great opportunity for us to build our kids' confidence and love of reading and to help lay a foundation of daily discipline for the homework they will be getting in the years to come. That daily discipline will also help them in studying for the new weekly spelling test.

In Math, our kids are beginning to work on geometry. Sister Eileen has asked that we continue to use flash cards to help your child learn the addition and subtraction facts to ten. It's hard to believe that the end of the first semester is only a couple weeks away.

Catholic Schools week is also quickly approaching. This is a really fun week for the kids! Be sure to watch for updates on the daily activities.

Short and sweet this month. :) Stay warm!

Jenny Metcalf
1st Grade Class Rep

2nd Grade

Hope that everyone had a safe and happy Christmas season! In second grade, Mrs. Hanson has just started a new Math Homework incentive. I had the opportunity last Friday to help in the classroom and during this time, the students were able to design their own football jersey's. There were many Packer, Viking and Farve jerseys among the bunch, but several students made their own creative design as well. These jersey's will be used to record the minutes spent each night on math practice. The students have developed their rewards for number of yards gained (15 minutes = 10 yards). Mrs. Hanson wants the students to practice their basic math skills while they move onto their geometry unit.

The class is also starting a new unit on Forgiveness, which will help each student learn how to forgive. The first three lessons will teach about the concept on inherent worth.

Lastly, the parents of all second graders are having an evening out at Jovian Taphaus this Saturday, January 16th for 8-12. After several successful Mom's nights out and the initial Dad's night out, we thought it would be fun to get both Mom's and Dad's out together. Hope to see you there!

Also, anyone interested in Trivia Night please start forming your teams and get your reservation in ASAP! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Thanks,

Beth Jennissen
2nd Grade Class Rep

3rd Grade

Second semester is just around the corner. It is hard to believe that we are now on the downward slope of the school year.

Hope all of you enjoyed the craft your child made for you on craft day. It was an afternoon filled with smiles, laughter and excitement for Christmas. You can view pictures of craft day on the school website.

The third graders wrapped up the semester with another trip to Belmont. Last month the class worked together with residents on a Christmas craft and participated in some Christmas caroling together. This brought great joy to both the students and the residents as they clapped and sang along with smiles that could bring a tear to any bystander's eye. It was a trip that I will not soon forget. Along with the other parents and staff, I was very proud of all the students in the class. I think they recognized that day, that they can make a difference large or small in another person's life. And a simple smile and hello can make another person's day.

The Christmas concert was another huge success. The third graders performed with great enthusiasm. Both theirs and Mr. Curley's hard work was evident. Pictures of the concert have been uploaded to the school website. DVD's are available for \$3.00.

In the classroom, January Book-It goals have been set. If all students reach their goal this month they will be rewarded with a pajama day. In Math, the buzz is multiplication!

The month of January will wrap up with Catholic Schools Week. February will start with Teacher Appreciation Night on February 5th. This is a perfect night to give praise and thanks to the wonderful staff and faculty at St. Dennis. It's a fun way to get to know those who spend 40 hours a week with your child(ren). See you there!

Please continue to check the website for updates.

May the rest of winter bring us mild temperatures!
Kate Larsh

4th Grade

It's back into the swing of school after a long Christmas break! Can you believe we are nearing the halfway point of this year?!

Before we left for break we were treated to a great Christmas program directed by Mr. Curley! The fourth graders put on a wonderful show, as did Ms. McNally as the "Cold Meiser!"

Now Ms. McNally asks that the kids get back to focusing on schoolwork, especially more consistent use of the assignment notebooks. Parents are asked to check assignments and sign the student's notebook every evening.

The fourth graders will soon be asked to work more independently and read directions on their own. They will also have some extended assignments to keep track of. The assignment notebooks help with these tasks.

Ms. McNally would also like to see neater work and assignments done in cursive, unless otherwise instructed, on loose-leaf paper only. Please help your children turn in neat work and provide loose-leaf paper for assignments. Ms. McNally says many of the students are already doing these things and she appreciates their efforts. She hopes everyone can adopt these good habits.

Recently the fourth graders began learning all about the different saints. They were asked to choose a saint, find out information about them and their lives, and write about them. Ask your fourth grader what saint he/she learned about.

Coming up January 31 is the start of Catholic Schools Week! There are many fun- and faith-filled activities planned for the week and the kids really look forward to celebrating their Catholic school! It is very important that you CHECK THE SCHOOL WEBSITE at www.st-dennis-school.org for itineraries, forms, volunteer opportunities, permission slips, etc. This info will be coming soon.

The Jubilee Choir (fourth and fifth grades) is going to sing at the 9 a.m. mass on January 31 to kick-off Catholic Schools Week. We hope your son or daughter is available that day/time. If so, please call or e-mail me. I'll then let Bob know who he can expect to be there from Grade 4.

I will try to send reminder e-mails but please remember to check the website regularly for information about Catholic School Week. If by chance anyone doesn't have a computer or internet access (although I don't think this applies to anyone in grade 4 because I have an e-mail address for every family), please contact me and I will be glad to provide hard copies of materials.

Don't forget to save Friday, February 5 for the Teacher Appreciation Dinner in the Parish Center, a fun conclusion to Catholic Schools Week - for the grown-ups! All parents are encouraged to attend. Stay tuned for more details on this and the entire week.

Also, mark your calendars for Trivia Knight, Saturday, March 6. This has become a fun St. Dennis tradition and a great fundraiser for our school. Watch for more details, also on the website.

Happy 2010!

Janet Masters, Class Rep
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5th Grade

6th Grade

Please join me in congratulating our very own Ms. Romaniak for being chosen as the Diocese Outstanding Educator of December 2009. She was chosen for this award out of more than 600 teachers! We are so lucky and proud to have such a great teacher. She is truly deserving of this award!

The 6th graders are having quite an eventful January! In addition to St. Dennis basketball and the numerous extra-curricular activities so many of them are involved in they are keeping quite busy in school.

In Science they just turned in their books on either the rock cycle or the water cycle. They were awesome and very creative! The kids also just found out that they will be Ms. Maxson's official leaders of the garden! She will be explaining some of their jobs, but one of the most important is that they will be leaders in a "winter sowing" experiment. They will be responsible for 5 or 6 younger kids and will help during this winter/early spring time preparation. It should be a lot of fun!

In Computer class the 6th grader's final 2nd quarter projects on Internet Safety are complete. Look in the hallway for their projects and see if you can answer the questions correctly! They are also being graded on backing-up files to their flash drive, evaluating an Internet game and on what they have learned about Internet Safety and PowerPoint.

Next Quarter they will be using the website, http://www97.intel.com/en/TheJourneyInside/ExploreTheCurriculum/EC_IntroductionToComputers/ to learn correct computer terminology and how computers work. They will also be doing hands on activities like cleaning a computer, finding out how much RAM and disk space a computer has and unplugging and replacing all the cables into the correct ports on a computer. This may be a bit of a challenge if they are in the same class with 7th and/or 8th graders as the older students will be working on making movies.

The 6th grade is involved in a research project in Spanish class. Each student is writing a paper on a Spanish speaking country or Mexican State. They will also be drawing a flag of their country/state. Third quarter they will learn verbs in Spanish and how to conjugate them. This will be the 3rd part of speech that they will be learning. Soon they will be writing simple sentences! By 4th quarter, they will begin their first textbook, so things are progressing really well

In social studies the sixth grade has wrapped up a unit on Ancient Egypt with some phenomenal projects. They did an excellent job! They are now studying Ancient Greece.

Mrs. Laessig wants the Sixth Grade parents to know that the Forensics program is for 6,7, & 8th grade students who have and maintain a "B" average. There is no charge to the students because the Registration Fee is paid by the Home &

School Organization.

It is too late now to join but keep next year in mind. There is usually a school meeting at the end of October. Practice is one day a week after school and the students attend two city-wide meets at the end of January and February. It is a great experience for these students particularly those who are shy to speak in front of a group.

This will be the first year the class joins in the Annual Middle School Ski Trip to Cascade Mountain on January 29th. Everyone is very excited about it. Pray for good weather!

Catholic Schools Week is coming up January 31st - February 6th. This is always a lot of fun and something the kids look forward to every year. Thank you to the committee for all of your hard work on this. For the parents, CSW ends with a Teacher Appreciation Dinner on Friday, February 5th. Keep checking the website for information on this fun evening.

And, speaking of fun evenings, Trivia Knight is back! It is being held Saturday, March 6th with the doors opening at 6:15. The cost is \$140 for a table of 8. Watch the website for registration information.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Elder

7th Grade

8th Grade

Eighth graders will begin their last semester at St Dennis in a week. It is hard to believe that nine years are almost over. Students and their parents are making decisions about high school. Can college be too far away?!

Ms Van Horn reports that the eighth graders are whole-heartedly enjoying the Donuts and Conversation which takes place once a month after 8:00 am mass. Half of the class serves donuts and coffee to mass-goers, and get a chance to talk to the parishioners who financial assistance makes St Dennis School a reality. It is truly Generations of Faith in action.

In their art class with Ms Pitz, the students are formulating lesson plans they will teach during class. This gives the students an opportunity to think more in-depth about what they are doing and helps improve communication skills as they try to educate their classmates.

Colleen Wilson
8th Grade Class Rep

Upcoming Events

January 31-February 6 – Catholic Schools Week

February 2 – Market Day pick up

February 5 – Teacher Appreciation Night

March 6 – Trivia Knight

April 17 – Variety Show

Home & School Board 2009-10

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Home & School Extended Board 2009-10 (At-Large & Class Representatives)
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Julie Kachel
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New At Large members always welcome!