



2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

September got away! Blink and it's gone! The good news is, all is going very well at St. James School and 2009-10 is off to a very good start. I'm hoping that you have all been around our building to see all the progress we have made in so many ways. The building looks like it has never looked before, with so many improvements in lights, ceilings, new paint, new lockers, etc. The building is clean and bright and filled with happy kids! Many of you were able to be with us as we showed off the new parish hall during our Booster Pancake Breakfast! We had hoped to have it 100% finished, but didn't quite make that. Now, it is 99% complete, but we are just awaiting the arrival of our stage curtains, room dividers and the LCD projector. We have had many, many compliments on the project and we look forward to many wonderful events making use of the new stage, lighting, sound and projection systems! Your children will love performing for you throughout the year! We will be having a grand celebration to dedicate the Hall to honor our generous donors, particularly Dante and Linda Amidei! We'll keep you informed about all upcoming celebrations.

We also want to tell you again how much we appreciated your presence at our Back to School Night! It is so very helpful to be able to meet our new parents, and to share with everyone our hopes and dreams for the new school year. We want to know you and to be in contact with you on a regular basis, as only with ongoing communication can we do our best job! Please contact us at any time if you have questions or concerns!

So many exciting things are happening. The teachers are getting more and more familiar with our **interactive white board technology (Smart Boards)** and we know that the students are going to love this exciting new method of teaching/learning! We believe that St. James is an outstanding school, with absolutely State of the Art technology and wonderfully talented and dedicated teachers! Please share all this news with your family, friends and neighbors!

Many, many thanks to those of you who have volunteered to be Super Tutors in our new **Rowland Reading program**. We are just getting prepared for the Super Tutor training sessions which are provided for us free of charge through the generosity of Pleasant Rowland and the Rowland Reading Foundation. The teachers are loving the new program, we are confident that our students will benefit tremendously from using this outstanding program.

I am also pleased to tell you that every student at St. James is learning a **foreign language!** Miss Johanna Cortez, our new preschool teacher, is now teaching Spanish to all of our students, except Madame Payton's angels, who are learning French! Miss Cortez is excited about being able to teach Spanish to her own preschoolers, as well as all the students in K-8!

Let's Play Some More is another exciting program which we are now offering to our preschoolers! Did you know that the children can now stay with Madame Payton **all day**, three days a week. She is ably assisted by Miss Angela Leske and Mrs. Mary Cameron. Please call us if you would like more information on this exciting new program!

On the spiritual side of things:

This Friday, October 2, our students will be joining children from all around the Archdiocese and around the country to celebrate a day of Eucharistic Adoration, during which time the teachers and students will spend some quiet time in Church, in the presence of our Eucharistic Lord. We will concentrate on praying for peace in our world. Mrs. Judy Cullen is preparing a prayer service, and there will be time for personal, quiet prayer.

Children are actively requesting prayers for family members and friends by making use of our new prayer mailbox located outside of the office! It is very heartwarming to see little ones (and bigger ones, as well) standing at the table and carefully writing out the name of the person for whom they would like to pray! Know that you all are in our prayers daily!

Our 6th, 7th and 8th grade students will be taking a trip to **Springfield, Illinois**, our state capital and home of President Abraham Lincoln, on November 16. This is always a fabulous opportunity for the students to learn about state government (the positive things, I hope!!) and about the history of Illinois, the Civil War and the life and times of one of our greatest presidents! This is a very memorable occasion for all of our students. Taking the three upper grades allows us to keep the price per student as affordable as possible. All will benefit tremendously from this trip!

I am grateful to PAFA for all the work they are doing to help support our teachers and our school. The August Block Party/Ice Cream Social was a wonderful occasion, attended by many of our families. It was the perfect time to meet our new students and their Moms and Dads and to allow our newcomers to feel more comfortable on the first day of school! We also hope that many of you will be able to join us for the Cellar Gate party this weekend. All proceeds will directly benefit our children. PAFA is trying to schedule a variety of events which will be enjoyable, not only for school families, but also parishioners and friends who enjoy social events and want to support our school financially. All are welcome. Please come, if you can, and bring a friend or two!

Lastly, I'm grateful to all the parents who have entered their children's information on our Option C website. It lessens our office workload tremendously when parents are willing to enter information.....!

Enjoy the beautiful month of October!

Sincerely,

Mary Kay Tschanz
Principal

St. James School Newsletter



OCTOBER 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 2 First Friday Mass 8:20 a.m.
- 3 P.A.F.A. Cellar Gate 7-10 p.m.
- 5 Blessing of the Animals 3:15 p.m.
- 6 Confirmation Mtg. 7:15 p.m.
- 7 PAFA Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Library
- 9 PAFA Halloween Costume Closet Parish Hall after school until 4:00
- 12 NO SCHOOL PK-8 Columbus Day
- 13 Reconciliation Parent Mtg. 7:15 p.m.
- 14 Board of Specified Jurisdiction - 7:00 p.m. Library
- 16 NO SCHOOL PK- 8 Festival of Faith
- 18 Annual Fall Festival 2:00-4:00 p.m.
- 21 PAFA Special Lunch, K-8
- 21 1:00 PM Dismissal K-8
- 26 Red Ribbon Week
- 30 Halloween Parties K-8, 2:15-3:00 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD TO

NOVEMBER:

- 4 PAFA Meeting 7:00 p.m. Library
- 6 First Friday Mass 8:20 a.m.
- 10 Veteran's Day Prayer Service
- 11 NO SCHOOL PK-8
- 11 Board of Specified Jurisdiction 7:00 p.m. Library
- 13 Springfield Trip—6th, 7th, 8th
- 13 End of First Trimester
- 15 Confirmation Rite of Enrollment-Mass 9:00 a.m.
- 16 Picture Retake Day 8:30 a.m. Library
- 20 Report cards sent home
- 22 Book Fair, Bake Sale
- 23 12:00 dismissal K-8 Parent Teacher Conferences
- 24 No School-Conferences K-8
- 25 PK-8 NO SCHOOL
- 26 PK-8 NO SCHOOL-Thanksgiving Day
- 27 PK-8 NO SCHOOL

Tuition Reminder—Monthly & Quarterly Tuition due on October 15th.

2009-2010 Preschool Enrollment Begins

The Board of Specified Jurisdiction has established the following as the order in which families can begin to enroll for classes, and the appropriate dates:

- Begin on Oct. 5 - Currently registered K-8 families**
Begin on Oct. 13 - Currently registered Preschool families
Begin on Oct. 19 - Parishioners of St. James / Immaculate Conception / Great Lakes Catholic Chapel
Begin on Oct. 26 - Non-Parishioners

A letter will be mailed to all PK-8 families explaining this process. The following **must** be brought to complete the registration for your child: *Birth Certificate, \$100 Deposit – to be put towards the 2009-2010 fees, Baptismal Certificate (if applicable).*

Please tell a friend, a neighbor, or a relative about our wonderful preschool program. We invite you to come and observe our classes. The following are offered:

SEEDLING ANGELS (children who are 3 by September 1, 2010):
2 Day AM Classes (Mon. / Wed. or Tues. / Thurs.)

BUDDING ANGELS (children who will be 3 by September 1, 2010):
3 Day AM Classes (Mon./Wed./Fri. or Tues./Thurs./Fri.)

BLOSSOMING ANGELS (children who are 4 by September 1, 2010):
3 or 5 Day AM Classes – 8:30 – 11:00 a.m.
3 or 5 Day PM Classes – 12:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Classes do fill quickly! Should you choose not to sign up at this time, please be aware that your first choice of class may not be available at a later time!

St. James Preschool Open House
Tuesday, October 20
9:00 a.m.

We nurture your child in Christian love and foster an awareness of being a child of God.

Our curriculum offers your child daily activities to awaken curiosity for exploring, observing, creating, and in the process develop a love for learning.

Through role-playing, your child will acquire real life skills such as independence, respect for others, conflict resolution and compassion.

Your child will truly be academically prepared for kindergarten.

Sunday Mass Attendance

Please bring your child(ren) to Mass/Service every Sunday. We all need to pray for peace in this world. If your own church is more convenient, that is fine too.

Masses at St. James Church are as follows:

Saturday at

5:30 pm

Sunday at

7:00 am

9:00 am (Liturgy of the Word for Children)

11:00 am

12:30 pm (Spanish)

Virtus Training

Thank you so much to all the parents who attended the Virtus Training on September 30 at St. James. **All volunteers** must also complete the criminal background check, sign the Code of Conduct and Complete the CANTS form from DCFS. All these forms can be found on the Archdioceses Website under Protecting Children. Just click and follow the directions for each form. Required forms should be completed given to Julie Leske in the office Register on-line at www.virtus.org.

In order for you to volunteer in the classroom, chaperone on field trips or help during the school day, you must bring your certificate to the office.

You are invited to the St. James Fundraiser

at

CELLAR GATE

524 Sheridan Road, Highwood

Saturday, October 3rd

7-10pm

Serving appetizers and wine.

\$40/person

You many pay at the door.

Sponsored by PAFA

*Proceeds from this event benefit
the school enrichment programs of St. James.*



Attention All Ghosts and Goblins

Share and Shop at the
Halloween Costume Closet

Consider donating your gently used Halloween costumes to PAFA and we will sell them to raise money for school enrichment programs. Even if you don't have a costume to donate you are welcome to shop!

Costume Share:

- Kindly bag any and all parts together so that we don't lose pieces in the process of organizing. If there are parts missing please make a note of that and place it inside the costume's bag.
- Drop off your bagged costumes in the designated box right outside the office.
- Donations will be accepted up until Friday October 2nd.

Costume Shop will be open on Friday, October 9 after school until 4:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Prices \$5.00—\$15.00.

First come, first serve!

Contact Maura Hagestad with questions,
mhagestad@hotmail.com 773-368-4480



Lunch Reminder: Students who receive FSP lunches during the month must pre-order the monthly PAFA Special Lunch or bring a lunch from home on those days.

Something for Everyone—Parent Involvement Program

Thanks to those of you who are already volunteering your time and talents. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to complete the volunteer form that was sent home at the beginning of the year. We want to give everyone the opportunity to be involved in their child's school. Your form will be forwarded to the respective chairpersons. Please feel free to call the event chairperson and volunteer your time and talents. We can always use your help... setting up, manning tables, cleaning up, making posters, etc.

Every family is asked to share 20 hours. This was explained through the summer mailings and orientation days as well as the Parent Night meetings. All families will receive a letter in December reflecting the number of points earned to date. ***Please don't forget to turn in your tracker sheet by November 13th. Thanks to those who have already turned it in and have completed their hours!***

Blessing of the Animals

As it has been a tradition at St. James, we will have a blessing of animals on **Monday, October 5 at 3:15 p.m.** in the courtyard. We invite all of our families to bring your pets for this annual blessing. St. Francis was a wealthy merchant who renounced his material possessions in favor of leading a life of poverty, preaching and service to the poor. His love of all of God's creatures is legendary. From this we draw the tradition of asking God's blessings upon our animals and pets.

Student Council *Affy Tapple* Sale

During the month of October, St. James Student Council will sponsor our annual *Affy Tapple* Caramel Apple Sale. There is no obligation to participate unless your family wants to enjoy a very special Autumn treat. Order forms will be going home soon. You have the choice of purchasing apples with plain caramel or caramel with nuts for \$1.25 each.

Student Council *Sally Foster* Sale

Sally Foster orders will be accepted up to Friday, October 2, 2009. Please make checks payable to St. James Student Council.

Required Forms DUE

Physical Forms

All new students and those entering PK, K and 6th grade must have a physical on file by **October 9.**

Eye Exam Forms

All CURRENT Kindergarteners, must have a completed eye exam form on file by **Oct. 9.**

Dental Forms

All CURRENT Kindergarteners, SECOND and SIXTH GRADERS must have returned their completed dental forms from their dentist. If you have not, please do so immediately.

Emergency Forms

Please return completed emergency forms to the office as soon as possible. This information is used to contact the parents if a situation arises ie. a child is sick.

Children's Choir



Mrs. Carol Kiwala, our music teacher, is excited about our St. James School Children's Choir. Practices will be scheduled during the lunch period.

The choir will sing at school Masses and at other events during the year. It would be great to showcase the students whenever possible. Please encourage your children in Grades 4-8 to sign up!

Morning Prayer &

Weekly Masses

Please join us each morning as student in Grades K-8 start out their day together in prayer in church.

We will also be celebrating Mass every Wednesday (except when we celebrate First Friday Mass). Morning prayer begins at 8:18.

Building Entrance

We would like to remind everyone that the **church courtyard entrance** is to be used **ONLY by people with strollers or wheel chairs.**

The **Main Entrance** located in the East courtyard should be used by all others. *For the safety of the children, please follow these procedures.* Thank you in advance.

Board of Specified Jurisdiction

The St. James School Board of Specified Jurisdiction asks that all of our families help us market our school by spreading the word to neighbors, co-workers and friends. The best marketing is word of mouth. Thank you in advance for your assistance. The school board meets every second Wednesday of the month in the Helen Mocogni Alumni Library at 7:00 p.m. All parents (PK—8) are welcome and encouraged to attend the meetings.

Box Tops/Campbells Soup Labels/Cell Phones/Printer Cartridges/ Tyson Project A+

Keep collecting these items and bring them to school. Our school will receive credit from the companies. Thank you!

Attention!

The City of Highwood has informed us that road construction will be taking place in the City of Highwood on Green Bay Road from Prairie Avenue to Ashland Avenue beginning Monday, October 5, 2009. Although we do not anticipate any road closures, there may be delays due to one lane traffic flow. Please be advised there will be flaggers on the road to direct traffic and ensure the safety of commuters.



The project is anticipated to be completed by the first week of November.

Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Tim Imler
Division Administrator
Division of Funding and Disbursement Services

SUBJECT: Elimination of GY 2010 funding for the Parent Guardian Transportation Reimbursement Program

This memorandum is being sent as formal notification that a fiscal year 2010 appropriation was not awarded for the Parent Guardian Transportation Reimbursement Program authorized under Section 29-5.2 of the Illinois School Code.

The lack of FY 2010 funding will prevent the State Board from paying any Parent Guardian Transportation claims filed for the 2008-09 school year. These payments are normally made in December of each year. In the event that funds are restored this fiscal year we will promptly pay the 2008-09 claims that were submitted.

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this memorandum please contact the Division of Funding and Disbursement Services at 217-782-5256.

NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Also included with this newsletter is a letter which I encourage you to send to Governor Quinn and State Superintendent Chris Koch, protesting the budget cuts which are affecting our Catholic Schools and Catholic School parents so much. Please take the time to send these letters!

September 29, 2009

State Superintendent Chris Koch
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North 1st Street
Springfield, IL 62777

Dear Superintendent Koch:

I write today on behalf of the St. James, Highwood, school community to express our deep concern regarding the significant cuts to the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) Fiscal Year 2010 budget. In this budget, forced by the legislature's inability to fund specific line items, ISBE reduced the funding of the Transportation Reimbursement Program and the Textbook Loan Program to zero, while cutting 75% of the ADA Block Grant and 33% of the Early Childhood Block Grant.

These programs are not only vitally important to Illinois' students and families; they represent the only programs benefiting the entire educational system by offering assistance to both public and nonpublic schools. Nonpublic school parents are taxpayers, sending their full share to the state for public education funding while paying out-of-pocket for the education of their children. That these programs benefiting our schools and families faced a disproportionate burden of necessary budget cuts is both tragic and unfair.

ISBE's decision to completely de-fund the Illinois Textbook Loan program is particularly upsetting. The efficiency of this program's operations, and the unquestionable good it serves by helping to ensure that both public and nonpublic school students are learning from the most up-to-date educational materials should have ensured its continuation at some level. ISBE's decision to reduce this program's funding to zero is not only damaging; it should be unacceptable.

The General Assembly has recently recognized the importance of the Textbook Loan Program by doubling its funding in Fiscal Year 2007. There must be some room to continue this vital program at a reduced level until the state's fiscal condition improves. Certainly, any objective analysis of this program in regards to others funded by ISBE will concede the point.

We urge you to take any action possible to relieve the pressure of these budget cuts in the current fiscal year, and to honestly re-evaluate the importance of all four of these programs in next year's budget. Our schools and families, in conjunction with the Catholic Conference of Illinois (CCI) and the Illinois Coalition of Nonpublic Schools (ICNS) will strongly advocate for the restoration of these funds, now and in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

September 29, 2009

Governor Pat Quinn
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Quinn:

I write today on behalf of the St. James, Highwood, school community to express our deep concern regarding the significant cuts to the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE) Fiscal Year 2010 budget. In this budget, forced by the legislature's inability to fund specific line items, ISBE reduced the funding of the Transportation Reimbursement Program and the Textbook Loan Program to zero, while cutting 75% of the ADA Block Grant and 33% of the Early Childhood Block Grant.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

SAVE THE DATE! St. James School Bake Sale, Book Fair November 22, 2009

STUDENT COUNCIL

The St. James Student Council elections took place on Friday, September 11. The 2009-2010 Student Council Board is as follows:

President – Stephanie Ciocchetti
Vice-President – Bailey Gilmore
Secretary – Shaney Penberthy
Treasurer – Brittany Schanzle
Photographer—Caroline Kucera

Congratulations to the new board. Many students will be involved in the projects and events that the Student Council will sponsor throughout the year! We thank all of them for sharing their talents!

Respect Life Month

Starting in October we are asking the students to again take part in a special fundraiser called the "Baby Bottle Project". We had a parish-wide drive last year that successfully raised funds for the pro-life work of The Women's Centers of Greater Chicagoland. As a crisis pregnancy center the Women's Centers counsel women in crisis pregnancies with kindness and respect helping them to decide to choose life. The Women's Centers also help women financially by helping them pay for food purchases at Dominick's and Jewel. They help women by providing nice clothing, diapers, car seats, high chairs, and so much more. The Mass is celebrated everyday at the Women's Center with prayers said for the women and their babies every day in the chapel. The Women's Center is approved by the Archdiocese of Chicago and is in full accord with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our children and families to join with St. James parishioners to support "life". A Baby Bottle will be given to each family. Please fill it during the month of October - Respect Life - month. Thank you for participating in this worthy cause. We appreciate whatever change you can give!

We ask that you return the bottles my Monday, October 27th.

GOT MANNA !

Thank you to all who are purchasing their gift cards through Manna.

Over 70 stores offer gift certificates to the school at various discounted rates. The school sells these certificates to school families, parishioner, and friends at the face value. The school earns a profit from the store. *Participating families get DOLLAR for DOLLAR!* The certificates are just like cash and can be used for weekly grocery shopping or as gifts.

Consider placing a Standing order and receive 2 hours towards your Parent Involvement Hours. Earn tuition credit—When a family's orders have **netted** the school more than \$200, any profit over \$200 is split between the school and family and put towards their tuition.

Volunteers

We want to thank all of our great volunteers for sharing their time and talents. We truly couldn't do what we do without our volunteers.

Please remember to always sign in at the office and wear a name tag when you are in the building. If you will be volunteering, we ask that you park your car on either on Palmer Avenue or on North Avenue (West of Funston).

**World
peace
begins at
home!**

Booster Club Pancake Breakfast & Raffle

Thank you to all who attended the annual St. James Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, September 13. Your support benefited the athletic program at St. James School. The winners of the raffle were: Dom Baracani, Judi Luepke, Esther Linari, Sue Brugioni, Paul Mueller, Mrs. Ugolini, Mrs. Cabri, Mr. Baker, Mary Pasquesi, Rebecca Schanzle, Jon Bacci, Michel Family, Alex Lomeli, Mike Combs, Jodi Bradford, Hannah Paquette.



Daylight Savings Time

Turn your clocks back one hour on
Saturday, October 31

ATTENTION PARENTS!

This monthly newsletter will be available on our website each month. To help us reduce the number of copies printed, we are asking that our families will go out to the website to get their copy of the newsletter each month. An e-mail informing our families when the newsletter is available will be sent out to those who have provided us with their e-mail address.

If you are not sure if we have your correct e-mail address, please fill out the form below and return it to the office or send on e-mail to stjameschool@comcast.net with your request.

Please confirm that you have the e-mail address below in your records. Please send me an e-mail reminder when the newsletter has been posted.

FAMILY NAME: _____

E-Mail: _____

Annual Fall Festival Fun for the entire family

Join us for
"FUN ON FUNSTON"
Sunday, October 18th
2:00—4:00 p.m.

**\$6 PER PERSON OR
\$4 CHILDREN 12 & Under**
(Tickets at the door will be
\$8 Adults/\$6 children 12 & under)

**Pumpkins, mums, arts
and crafts for kids,
and so much more!**



Please look for flyer to come with your child. The flyer will have RSVP form which you will need to return to school. Volunteers needed!

Hope you can attend!

Honeywell Instant Alert System

We hope that you have all signed up to be contacted through the Honeywell Instant Alert System at <https://instantalert.honeywell.com>. We encourage all of you to take advantage of this opportunity, as we will be utilizing this system for most of our school-to-home communication. This will insure that you will be notified in the fastest possible way as the information you provide to the system will be used to make contact.

Instant Alert for Schools is an essential tool for notification and communication. Within minutes of an emergency, school officials can use Instant Alert to deliver a single, clear message to the students' parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone, e-mail, pager or PDA in any combination. The system can also be used to notify you of a school closing due to inclement weather. It's an equally effective way to keep you informed of everyday activities, such as event times and locations as well as schedule changes.

If you haven't signed up already, please do so immediately. If you have any questions about this system, please call the office.

Parking Lot—Drop Off/Pick Up

Please remember that these procedures are in place for the safety of our students.

- Supervision begins at 8:05 a.m.—We ask you to not drop your children off before 8:05 a.m. If you arrive before this time, please have your children wait in the car with you until the bell rings at 8:05 a.m.
- Cones, closing off Funston Avenue, are set out at 8:00 a.m.
- Students are not allowed in the building before 8:05 a.m. unless they are signed up for Before Care. *Please realize this rule applies even if there is inclement weather—rain, snow.*
- Please turn left onto Llewellyn when leaving the parking lot.
- No parking in the middle section of lot during morning drop off.
- Do not park on Llewellyn opposite the St. James Parking lot entrances
- Be sure to explain these procedures to anyone else who will be dropping off or picking up your children.

Classroom News

PRESCHOOL

Preschool Motto: "Learning to play—Playing to Learn"

**"Nothing you do for children is ever wasted."
Garrison Keillor**

The Seedling and Budding angels in Ms. Cortez and Mrs. Detje's class have bonded and are enjoying playing together. October will bring new experiences for our preschoolers. We will learn the big words visible and invisible when we discuss and sing about our Guardian angels. We will even role play the life of St. Francis and take care of God's creatures.

For Fire Safety week we will walk to the Highwood Fire Station to visit our friend Jason and his dog Siren.

Oh no, what will happen when we mix red and yellow finger paint? Will it make an orange pumpkin appear? We are all excited to dress up for our Halloween party on the 30th.

The Blossoming angels will discover the letters Ff, Pp and Hh this month. We will become frogologists for the letter Ff and frolic with our pretend frogs and observe their life cycle.

For the letter Pp we will become famous painters and paint à la Pablo Picasso style. For the letter Hh we will discuss Halloween Safety. A real policeman from the Highwood police station will come to visit us and teach us safety. Maybe he will let us explore his cool police car and try his handcuffs on.

We will have a fun, but not too spooky, party for all of our little goblins on Halloween.

Madame Payton, Ms. Leske
Ms. Cortez, and Mrs. Detje

KINDERGARTEN

October will be truly boo-ti-ful in the St. James Kindergarten!

In our SuperKids Reading Series this month, we'll be meeting **Alf**, who loves to go camping, and **Doc**, who enjoys looking at pictures in her family's photo album. We'll also meet **Golly the Dog**, who loves gardening. And as we make friends with these new SuperKids, we'll be joined by fellow SuperKids Oswald and Cass, whom we met just recently.

We'll also be exploring animals and St. Francis, the patron saint of animals. And we'll be doing "Appleseed Math" (counting the number of seeds in our apples) and, of course, doing a cooking project featuring apples. We'll also have fun with acorns, which we will count and sort and use to fill our Estimation Station Jar.

We will soon begin to decode words like "sad", "glad" and "dad," and we will continue to work on forming our letters properly.

October will also feature a unit on leaves and how they change colors. Do you know the difference between an oak leaf and a maple leaf? And we'll study fire safety, and have a special visit from a real fireman!



This month we'll start attending prayer services with our Buddies. Before our first Prayer Service, we'll visit the church to find special symbols of God's love.

We'll have a unit on bats. We'll discuss how they're nocturnal, and how they help us by eating mosquitoes and other insect. Look for a bat to come home with you as a fun art project for you and your Shining Star to create and bring back to class! For Math we'll estimate how many candy corn pieces are in our candy jar. We'll also have fun with jack-o-lanterns and all things spooky. I hope the children will keep Mrs. Pohl and Ms. Palma from getting too scared!

At the end of October we'll have an especially exciting day. On Friday, October 30, we'll walk to the nearby nursing home, where we'll bring crafts we have made and sing songs for the residents. Then we'll return to the classroom, and after lunch it will be time for our Halloween Party! And don't forget—Everyone's welcome to attend.

Our Shining Stars will certainly be beaming brightly this October. Won't it be fun!

Mrs. Pohl

THIRD GRADE

The 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade students are very excited to be taking a field trip to Fort Sheridan to learn about and observe erosion and endangered plants in our own area. This is part of an ongoing educational program that we began last year with Openlands.

The 4th Grade students have also just made Native American home models for different tribes who lived in the U.S. to culminate our studies of Native Americans. We will now move on to study the explorers.

The 3rd Grade Math students are working to memorize their multiplication facts while they perfect their two and three digit addition and subtraction skills. In Reading, in addition to their reading anthology, Third Graders are loving and laughing, reading Superfudge. We are also spending loads of time decoding new words.

In Religion, we are studying the early life of Jesus. We studied the early temples and made pictures showing Jesus in the Temple. We also made Faith Flowers with mustard seeds. Come and see all our hard work hanging in the hall.

The Third Grade has a very special traveling Bible, that goes home with a different student every night. After reading a story with their family, they present it to the whole class the next day. The kids are VERY anxious to take the Bible home, so if you have a child in Third Grade, can you please make sure that you send it back the next day?:(

Classroom News

Accelerated Reader Motivational Program:

What is Accelerated Reader?

Accelerated Reader (AR) is a computer based, reading management and motivational system designed to complement existing classroom literacy programs for grades K-12. *AR*'s goal is to motivate students to read using an individualized goal/point system. Students choose books or short stories to read from school and/or the public library's collection of books for which there are *AR* tests. Students read at their own pace and document when and how much they read using the "Student Reading Log."

AR software provides comprehension tests featuring five to 20 multiple-choice questions. The technology presents test scores, points earned, and keeps records in order to help teachers and parents manage and track a student's attempt to reach his or her goal. The test gives immediate feedback in terms of the number of points earned based on the point value assigned the book and the number of correct answers on the test. For example, for a book worth 10 *AR* points, the student would receive 10 points for a score of 100 percent, 9 points for 90 percent, and so on. However, the student must score at least 60 percent to earn any points.

St. James is fortunate to have this online subscription which with the Rowland Reading program is creating a culture of reading achievers and reading success stories. St. James has established their own unique incentive program. All students in grades K-8 have been divided into 10 teams and each team has been assigned a teacher/coach. Each teacher is represented by a race car on our all school race track found in our main hallway. Teams are eager to reach benchmarks of 50 books at a time. Students are very excited about this program and are reading extensively.

Ask your child about the *AR* program at St. James and what they are reading. There is a consensus among key federally funded organizations charged with evaluating educational products that Accelerated Reader is fully supported by scientifically based research. Moreover, these organizations agree that *AR* is effective in improving students' reading achievement!

The SMART Company commitment to education:

Strongly believing that one educator can make a difference in a student's life, SMART has been supporting educators by providing innovative products and services since 1991.

Educators were the first to take an interest in SMART's interactive whiteboards, immediately seeing their potential as instructional, professional development and student collaboration tools. Since then, that initially small group of educators has grown into an international community spanning 75 countries. There are now hundreds of thousands of teachers and students who use SMART solutions daily to help make classroom lessons more engaging

and effective.

The Office of Catholic Education, working with the SMART Company, has offered a Seed program to all the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Schools have been given the opportunity to bring into their classrooms the SMART technology for four months and then if they choose, to purchase items for half the original amount. St. James is one of the few who has taken full advantage of this opportunity. Currently our teachers are learning to use four interactive whiteboards, four student response systems and two document readers.

Teachers from around the world have testified to the successes of this cutting edge technology. Most believe that SMART board interactive whiteboards and the SMART student response systems allow students to be more actively involved in their learning. Students focus on class discussions and they are much more visually stimulated. Teachers can differentiate instruction in order to reach learners of all modalities. This innovative technology keeps students motivated and documentation proves it helps students to achieve better test scores with a true love for learning.

RCIA

Dear Parents,

Each year our parish begins a new RCIA program in the fall. In the Catholic Church RCIA means "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" the practice that was restored after the second Vatican Council.

Who can be part of RCIA?

Anyone who wants to become a Catholic.

Anyone who is baptized Catholic but has not received the sacraments of Eucharist & Confirmation.

Anyone who was baptized in another Christian faith and would like to become Catholic.

When/Where will sessions be held?

In the evenings once a week from September to Easter Vigil in April.

What are sessions like?

They include prayer, scripture, discussion, learning about Catholic faith and traditions.

If you are interested or need more information, please return this letter with your name, cell phone, home numbers by Thursday, October 1st to the Religious Education Office or call Mrs. Cullen at 847-432-2570 by October 1st.

Thank you!