



Saint Mary School News

December 2008

248.545.2140

628 S. Lafayette Ave.

Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

Celebration Corner

We would like to thank Nancy Hanes, Barb Pietron and Michelle Suchyta for a very successful Candy Cane Outlet. The students enjoyed the opportunity to shop for their families and friends.

We celebrate the well attended and most successful Breakfast with St. Nick. The crafts, pancakes, socialization, magician and the special visit by St. Nick were all excellent. We extend a big thank you to Theresa Neu and Jackie Conlin for chairing this event and Dan Conlin for the cooking. Also thank you to all those who helped make this a special event for our children.

Thank you to all who helped with the Giving Tree by bringing in gifts for the families we sponsored. A special thanks to Ms. Gaby, Ms. Sarah and Ms Heather for chairing this kindness project. May God Bless the generosity of all who participated and brought hope and joy to those families.

We also celebrate the wonderful Christmas Concerts from both the Pre-school and K-8 grades. Thanks to Mr. Pyrek for his guidance and direction that made the K-8 grades concert possible as well as the Pre-school staff that made their Christmas evenings so memorable.

E-mail: st.maryro@comcast.net

Web-site: www.st-mary.org

Fax Machine: 248.545.2303

Principally Speaking...by Greg Carnacchi

These are certainly trying times that can cause all of us to be fearful. However, there is comfort and joy that comes from the gospel of Luke. "Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch

over their flock. The angel of the Lord ap-



peared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to

them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord." (Luke 2:8-11)

As difficult as the trials we face can be, there is assurance in the angel's message, "Do not be afraid". We have knowledge of the good news that God has given us the greatest gift of all...his only Son for our salvation.

Our faith is strengthened by His wisdom and the feelings that follow are peace, hope and joy. The students and families of St. Mary Catholic School experi-

enced and shared this peace, hope and joy by participating in the Giving Tree. The generosity and outpouring of care was overwhelming. The families we adopted will have a blessed Christmas and know the peace, hope and joy of God being with them.

It was so wonderful to see the reverence and sacredness of our students as they prepared for the beautiful sacrament of Reconciliation as well as their participation in other Advent activities. God's hand is certainly at work in calming our fear.

May God bless each of you during this Christmas season!

Merry Christmas

And

Happy New

From

The Staff of Saint Mary Catholic School

Preschool—Mrs. Hancasky, Mrs. Dylenski, Mrs. Bala

December has been a wonderful month in the preschool! We started by learning about Advent. We learned that just as people have many busy tasks and activities to do to get ready for



Christmas, we also have to get our hearts ready for Jesus by obeying our moms and dads, by sharing and playing nicely with others (even our siblings!) and by remembering to use kind words. Each preschooler made an Advent wreath to mark the weeks until Christmas.

We have spent a great deal of time this month and last, practicing the songs for our preschool Christmas celebrations. Both evenings were wonderful! The preschoolers were all smiles as they sang to a Fellowship Center packed with parents, grandparents, siblings and friends! We send many thanks to all of the parents who provided refreshments and to “Mr. Jim” and “Mr. Dwight” who set up the Fellowship Center for us!

We wish all of our St. Mary families every blessing during this most holy of seasons. We are looking forward to a 2009 filled with joy, hope, peace and love.

Kindergarten— Mrs. Withee

December finds kindergarten busy with the themes of Transportation, Rhymes and Jesus. We study different sight words with each new theme and we have already learned a total of approximately fifty new sight words—which include color words and all our friends names.

As we wind down 2008—may your Christmas be filled with the joy of Jesus and may your New Year be rosy and bright.

First Grade—Ms. Farrell

First grade is bustling with activities and preparations for Christmas. During Advent, we are working on calendars that have a different daily job or kindness activity to help us open our hearts to Jesus. Everyone is very excited about the upcoming Christmas concert and we have been practicing our songs. We are making many different craft projects including presents for our parents. And somehow, we are actually doing our “normal” schoolwork.

Parents, take the time to enjoy the season and see it through the eyes of your child, the innocence, the beauty, the magic...cherish it...

Second Grade—Mrs. Stanko

Second grade can't wait for the upcoming Christmas season. We're busy making “secret” projects and helping our school by being green at the same time. We are using recycled cereal boxes. Shhh! Don't tell. But DO TELL the world that the Lord is coming: BE KIND—Libby; TRY TO DO YOUR BEST IN SCHOOL—Ruby; PRAY FOR OTHERS—Makayla; LISTEN AND RESPECT YOUR MOM AND DAD—Gram; TAKE CARE OF GOD'S EARTH—Matt; and from the rest of us: PEACE AND GOODWILL!

Third Grade—Mrs. Smith

This month we are preparing our hearts for the birth of Jesus by discussing ways to improve our thoughts, actions and words. We have also made Advent planners and promises to remind ourselves to spread the wonderful news of Jesus' birth to others.

I know this time of year is busy for everyone. However, I hope that we all are able to take several moments and step back, take in the goodness and wonders that God has put before us and



give thanks to Him for his graciousness. The third graders and myself would like to wish all of you and your families a wonderful Christmas and a blessed New Year.

Fourth Grade—Mrs. McNish

Happy Holidays from fourth grade! We have ended this year with expository writing, forces and motion, possessive nouns and the core democratic values. In the new year we are looking forward to verbs, direction writing, ways to worship God, electricity and symbols of our country. We hope everyone has a restful break!

Fifth Grade—Mrs. Sak

Advent has filled our thoughts and prayers this December. We have been preparing for the coming of Jesus on Christmas Day. We spent the first two weeks of Advent learning about the Sacrament of Penance. We discussed ways to do a better job at home and at school. On Wednesday, December 10, we had a Reconciliation Service with Fr. Ken. Our theme was, “We are God's creation in earthen vessels”. God is our potter and with His help we can be better people.

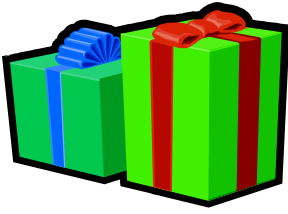
In Science a variety of models of fish, amphibians and reptiles have appeared in Room 203. The fifth graders have been studying animal adaptations. They made lion fish, sharks, an eel, a clown fish, puffer fish, frogs, newts, salamanders, alligators and a nice selection of snakes. They've learned how animals have adapted to catch prey and protect themselves. They've had a lot of fun on these projects.

In Social Studies we've been busy learning about the explorers and the colonization of North and South America. We're also working on mapping skills.

Have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sixth Grade—Ms. Kassab

Next week begins a very important week for the sixth grade. Gift time!



The sixth grade has decided to play Secret Santa with each other. Each day they will act

as Santa and give a small gift to their secret person. On Friday they will reveal themselves to their secret person and give their last gift away. God's love for others will be shared through each student's participation.

I hope you have a wonderful Christmas and the New Year will bring many blessings to you and your family!

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Martin

Don't you just love preparing for Christmas? The middle school students have been actively participating in assignments geared toward the holiday. The seventh grade wrote their Advent activities on an ornament that decorates the writing tree in the hallway, and then they colored pretty Christmas lights for our cork strip.

The eighth grade has been translating

Christmas Carols to improve their vocabulary. Perhaps you've heard the song "Ecstasy Toward the Orb" or "The Slight



Percussionist Lad"??? You might know them by their former names..."Joy to the World" and "The Little Drummer Boy"! Come see the 'new and improved' lyrics in the hallway!

May each of your families have a blessed holiday!

Seventh Grade—Mrs. Peterson

The sixth and eighth graders are just

finishing up their unit on public speaking. The sixth grade had to do a demonstrative, persuasive and book talk speech. The eighth grade had to complete a book talk, persuasive and informational speech. I have seen great improvement with each speech. When we return in January, we will begin a new novel. Have a wonderful holiday season.

Eighth Grade—Mrs. Irwin

December has been a busy month. We are anxious for Winter Break and we can all use a little R&R. Here are a few items on the eighth graders Christmas list:

I-Pod Touch, I-Pod Nano, Blackberry Storm, Digital Camera, Twilight Series, Sega, Ugg Boots, Flat Screen TV, A Boys Varsity Winning Basketball Season/CYO Championship, Jordan Shoes, Scholarships, X Box 360 and a Shopping Spree.

On their more spiritual list they are asking for:

Family Time, Jesus, Peace, Improved Economy, Love, Faithfulness, Self-control, Patience, Kindness and Equality.

And most important God's Guidance as they make their decisions on what high schools to attend.

The eighth grade wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Blessed Holiday and a Happy New Year.

Library—Mrs. Carnacchi

Our second and third graders have begun a study of Caldecott Medal winning books and their illustrators. The Caldecott Medal has been awarded annually since 1938 and honors the artists of children's books. For third graders, this is a continuation of a unit we started last year in the Library. However, this year, Mrs. Tomlinson and I are "team-teaching" this unit to both second and third graders. During Art class, Mrs. T. will share with these students the different types of art techniques used in a particular Caldecott-winning title. The students will also try their

own hand at creating art work that utilizes these techniques. In Library class, I will concentrate on the literary elements of that same title by reading the story to the class and involving them in various activities that will help them to do some higher level thinking. Right now, these students are studying "Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears" an African folktale by Verna Aardema, which won the Caldecott in 1968 for its illustrators, Leo and Diane Dillon. Mrs. T. and I are excited to be working together on this endeavor and look forward to sharing with your children many great books and artists.

I failed to mention one of our parent volunteers that helped with Book Fair last month. Thanks (and apologies) to Sarah Becker, mom to Logan and Lexa, for all your efforts during the Book Fair.

Blessed Christmas to all and a peaceful New Year.

Art—Ms. Tomlinson

We are in full production mode here in the Art room. Kindergarten happily made their little "salt ceramic" snowmen (or women). First grade created Christmas pillow cases with fabric crayon and paint. Second and third grade continue with their study of "resists". This is one of the techniques used by Caldecott winning Artists Leo and Diane Dillon. They are masters of line, form, pattern and design...(and of course so are we). This study is in conjunction with Mrs. Carnacchi in the library. "Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears" is a favorite with the children and it is wonderful to be able to combine our lessons. Fourth grade is working on pinch pots. The middle school (including fifth grade) has been learning about the Impressionists, specifically Monet. We are looking at the works of S. Dali as well. It is my hope that you will have a chance to see the exhibit at the D.I.A.

A blessed New Year to all and may God bless you.

Candy Cane Outlet

THANK YOU to all who helped make this year's Candy Cane Outlet a success. This event couldn't happen without all the volunteers who shop one-on-one with the youngest students. All the kids had a great time shopping and appreciated the new merchandise selection. (And the PTG has some funds to work with now!) We'd also like to thank all the teachers and Mr. Carnacchi for their cooperation, as well as the parents who took time to fill out the gift lists. MANY THANKS!

Nancy Hanes, Barb Pietron and Michelle Suchyta

P.S. Nancy and Barb want to especially thank Michelle for volunteering to take over next year and working with us this year—we passed on all the knowledge, experience and advice that we could think of! Please consider co-chairing this event with her next year—just think, she already knows what she's doing! As for us, after six years of running Candy Cane Outlet, the first week of December will now seem strangely quiet and uneventful.

Scrip News

A huge thank-you to all those families that have tried Scrip for the first time! We hope you have found how easy it is to use and that you will become "regulars" to this weekly program. Of course, we also thank ALL the families that have supported the Scrip fundraiser since it began last year. If you still have questions about how Scrip works - at no cost to you—we would be glad to help. You can e-mail us at stmaryroscrip@hotmail.com.

Thanks to all the **Kroger** shoppers who faithfully re-load their Kroger cards. When our Kroger "re-loads" reach \$5,000, Kroger sends St. Mary a check for \$250.00. If you would like a Kroger card, please let us know via the Scrip order form or e-mail us and we will be glad to get one for you. Kroger cards are \$5.00 and are re-loadable at the Kroger Service Desk. Just remember to re-load BEFORE you check out. We also offer Scrip cards for **Hollywood Market**, **Holiday Market**, **Hiller's**, **Oakridge**

Market and Westborn Market.

Don't forget that when you use Scrip gas cards at the pump, you receive the "cash" price. We have all your favorite **gas stations** so take a look at the order form and give Scrip a try.

Merry Christmas from St. Mary Scrip

Preschool Registration

A Preschool Open House for current St. Mary families and parishioners will be held on Friday, January 23, 2009 from 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m. Registration materials will be available at the Open House or from the preschool after that date. We will begin taking preschool registrations from current St. Mary families beginning on Monday, February 2, 2009. We encourage you to take advantage of this preferential enrollment week, as our classes have filled very quickly in the past. Parishioner registration will begin on February 9, 2009 with Open Registration beginning on February 23, 2009. Feel free to contact Gaby Bala for more information at 248.545.2140 ext. 230 or gmbala@wideopenwest.com.

Oakland County Health Division

Frostbite Facts

Frostbite is damage to the skin and tissues caused by extreme cold. Frostbite can affect any part of the body, but the hands, feet, nose and ears are at most risk.

Preventing Frostbite...

- * Factors that contribute to frostbite include extreme cold, wet clothes, high winds and poor circulation. Tight clothing or boots, cramped positions, fatigue, certain medications, smoking, alcohol use and diseases that affect the blood vessels can cause poor circulation.
- * When spending time in the cold, wear mittens, several layers of clothing, two pairs of socks, a scarf, a hat that covers the ears and a wind-proof, water-resistant outer layer.
- * In a severe snowstorm, find shelter early and increase physical

activity to keep the body warm.

Symptoms of Frostbite...

- * There will be a "pins and needles" sensation followed by numbness.
- * Frostbitten skin is hard, pale, cold and has no feeling. When skin has thawed, it becomes red and painful. With more severe frostbite, the skin may appear white and numb.

First Aid for Frostbite...

- * Move the victim to a warmer place and remove any constricting or wet items.
- * If immediate medical help is available, take the victim to the closest emergency department.
- * If immediate medical help is **not** available, use re-warming first aid. Put affected areas in warm (not hot) water—or apply warm cloths to affected ears, nose, or cheeks repeatedly—for 20 to 30 minutes. The water temperature should be 104 to 108°F. Circulate the water to aid warming. Severe burning, pain, swelling and color changes may occur during warming. Warming is complete when the skin is soft and sensation returns.
- * Apply dry, sterile dressings to the frostbitten areas—keep fingers and toes separated.
- * Move thawed areas as little as possible.
- * Call 911 if normal feeling does not return or new symptoms develop.

Remember...

- * DO NOT thaw out a frostbitten area if it can't be kept thawed. Refreezing may make tissue damage worse.
- * DO NOT use direct heat (such as a radiator, campfire, heating pad or hair dryer) to thaw the frostbitten areas. Direct heat can burn the tissues that are already damaged.
- * DO NOT rub or massage the affected area.
- * DO NOT disturb blisters on frostbitten skin.