



St. Francis School

December, 2011



Pastor's Message

Christmas at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School is celebrated as the birthday of Jesus. The joy we feel at Christmas, the decoration of lights, the giving of gifts to loved ones, the beautiful carols only have meaning if we truly believe "that God so loved the world He sent His only begotten son" (John 3:16). Children from a Christian home and in a Christian school often comprehend the fullness of the Christmas message better than adults. To really understand Christmas you need an innocent spirit, a hopeful attitude, and a loving heart.

Good Samaritans

The Good Samaritan Award is given to a child who shows concern for his/her classmates.

November Good Samaritans are:

K-2 Elena Launi

3-5 Alexander Bailey

Three-Year Old Preschool

Happy December! I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. The Christmas spirit is filling the 3 year old preschool class! We're learning all about Advent, the birth of our Savior, expressing and recognizing numbers and our continuing reciting and recognizing the letters of the alphabet. We are excited for the Preschool Christmas Program on December 19th and our classroom Christmas party with our gift exchanges on the 20th. We've sent home a newsletter for all the parents and ask that everyone read everything we send home with your child. Thank you to all of our parents. Your help with the classroom is greatly appreciated! We also want to wish Happy Birthday to our very own classmate, Owen Giesey! He turns 4 years old on December 22. Our class also wants to extend wishes of a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone!

Four-Year Old Preschool

So many exciting things are going down in the preschool room this month. We are working very hard on our Christmas performance. It is going to rock! Our performance will be on December 19th at 6:30 in the church. Please have your child in the classroom by 6:15, dressed in their best Christmas clothes. We will begin at 6:30 sharp, so please be on time!!

We are also looking forward to our Gingerbread House Day on December 7th, at 10:15. The morning and afternoon sessions are invited to attend. Please ensure that your child has someone to decorate their house with, if you are not able to attend, such as Grandma, Grandpa, Aunts, Uncles, or friends. Our homeroom parents have worked so hard organizing everything for us. Thank you so so much! Our themes for the month are Reindeer games and Christmas Cheer. We will have several fun lessons, crafts, and snacks to accompany our themes. Please take a few moments to peruse the hallways and check out the kids' environmental print activities. They really enjoyed being able to "read" so many words. It was such a fun theme.

Our December birthday belongs to Ayden Arthur on the 30th. Happy birthday, big guy!

I hope everyone enjoys the Christmas season and remembers the real reason we celebrate. I look forward to our long Christmas break and when we return, we will delve into several new activities, such as perfecting our name writing and SHOE TYING!!!

Kindergarten News

As we enter the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season Kindergarten takes time to reflect on the true reason for the season. We had a special delivery from the North Pole! His name is Elfie and he reports all our good deeds to Santa Claus. December is not all fun and games as we continue to push forward in our phonics and mathematics. The class is also looking forward to starting our Solar System unit. Warm Christmas wishes to all and thanks to everyone who helps make our classroom celebrations a success.

School News

The children are busy practicing for this year's Christmas Play written and directed by Father Pat. We are sure to see some great performances on December 15th. We appreciate all the parents who volunteered to be members of the stage crew.

We hope everyone is able to eat a delicious breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 3rd from 9-11. All proceeds will go to the Children's Choir.

Please join us on Saturday, December 10th at 1pm as we proudly march through St. Albans in the Christmas parade. Everyone should meet in the gym at 12:30pm.

The children were very generous in their donations for needy children through their participation in Operation Christmas Child. It is heart warming to see the spirit of giving in our families and students, and satisfying to know that we helped so many.

Thanks to the success of the Book Fair, and the hard work of Annette Boothroyd, we were able to purchase three document cameras. The new cameras will go in the 1st, 4th and 5th grade classrooms. Thanks to everyone who supported the Book Fair.

Congratulations to Adam Boothroyd for winning the St. Francis Spelling Bee. Adam will compete in the Kanawha County Bee in January. In the event Adam is unable to attend, runner up Haylee Mateo will compete.

Congratulations to the Lopez family for winning the Choir Dessert of the Month Contest. Each month Mrs. Erickson prepares mouth-watering desserts for the lucky family. Thank you Mrs. Erickson.

Our beloved Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Spence, will retire after the holidays to care for her newborn grandson. We will surely miss her, but will look forward to seeing her from time to time. Mrs. Kelly Oxley will be the new Administrative Assistant, and Mrs. Patty Bisbocci will be a cook, so please help them feel welcome.

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Best Dressed Award

Each month the class with the highest percentage of uniform compliance receives an ice cream party. The class that wins for November is Fifth Grade!

K	95.3%
1	91.6%
2	95.0%
3	97.6%
4	90.6%
5	100%

DEVELOPMENT

Last gift card order is to go in Mon. Dec. 5. This is a great way to shop for the holidays and support our school at the same time. Remember if you haven't signed up for SCRIP gift card program, do so. By participating in this program your family can earn credit towards tuition. Also, the gift card book is stocked for the holiday season- If you need a last minute card chances are it is in stock and can be purchased from the school secretary.

Please review all Yankee Candle orders to ensure that all orders are correct and without missing or damaged items. Replacement order will be submitted Wed. Dec. 7. Thanks to everyone that participated!!!

Car magnets are for sale in the school office for \$7.00.

St. Albans Christmas Parade Saturday, December 10th Meet in the gym at 12:30pm

First Grade News

Thank you first grade families for your generous donations for Operation Christmas Child! The students filled several boxes with toys, crayons, soap, toothpaste, and several other items. Please keep Christ's Kitchen in mind when you are going through your children's coats, hats, gloves, etc. that they have outgrown and when you are shopping. I know they truly appreciate any items to help those in need!

The students are having fun reading the story, "Did You See Chip?" They are doing a terrific job taking turns playing the different characters in the story. Their favorite part is playing the dog, Chip! It is amazing to hear the progress the students are making with their reading skills. Reading nightly will greatly improve their reading skills! I appreciate all of the extra practice you are providing at home!

In math, the first graders are learning to add and subtract two. They are also reviewing doubles and adding and subtracting one and zero facts. They will begin measuring line segments with rulers, adding two digit numbers, and counting money. They are also continuing to practice counting by 2's, 5's, 10's and 100's and identifying odd and even numbers.

To enhance our social studies lessons we have been visiting the scholastic news web site. These interactive lessons are connected to our weekly scholastic news magazines. In the last issue, the students watched an informative video on Thanksgiving. They are looking forward to the next lesson and video.

Healthy Tip...

Family meals are a comforting ritual for both parents and kids. Children like the predictability of family meals and parents get a chance to catch up with their kids. Kids who take part in regular family meals are also:

- More likely to eat fruits, vegetables, and grains
- Less likely to snack on unhealthy foods

In addition, family meals offer the chance to introduce kids to new foods and to act as a role model for healthy eating.

Second Grade News

I hope everyone had a wonderful and relaxing Thanksgiving break! December is going to be a very busy month for second grade. In math, we are continuing to work on our addition facts, as well as learning new concepts, such as measuring by feet, congruent shapes, counting coins, and line segments. The students are writing their first paragraph in English. It is a two-point expository paragraph and they are doing a wonderful job with their writing. We will also continue to classify sentences as well. I hope the phonics "study guide" I sent home is proving to be helpful. We have not reviewed everything on the paper, but we will be covering it as the lessons progress. The children have been studying about the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation in their religion books. They will soon be celebrating this sacrament. It will be scheduled when we return from Christmas break. Please return the form by December 9th, if necessary. I will be sending home more information as the day approaches. I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas! Happy holidays!

Third Grade News

Greetings from third grade! The class is busy learning parts for Father Pat's annual Christmas play! They have been working hard on their acting skills and doing a fine job! They will also do their Readers' Theater play, "Beauty and the Beast" before the holiday break. In math we will cover fractional parts of a set, identify perfect squares, subtract 2-digit numbers, and write numbers to one thousand using words. We will study verb tenses and cover the next writing trait, Sentence Fluency, in English. Thank you for discussing and returning your child's monthly journals. They are getting to be great writers! The third theme in reading will be finished before the break, and the Theme 3 skills test will be given. The class will continue studying matter in science. They will observe physical and chemical changes, measure physical properties, and learn what determines the three states of matter. Advent assignments will continue this month. We are preparing the way for the coming of Jesus at Christmas. Also, the different kinds of prayer will be studied. We want to wish each and every member of our St. Francis family the most peaceful and blessed Christmas ever! God bless you all!

Fourth Grade News

Wow, seems like I just wrote the November article! Time is going by quickly, and fourth grade is very busy. All of the students are involved in and are preparing for the Christmas play. A list of costume suggestions will be coming home shortly to assist you in getting your student prepared for his/her role. The students and I are excited that a few of our classmates are learning to altar serve. May God Bless them in their service. Advent is here and we are preparing the way for the Birth of Jesus! We are still discussing the Ten Commandments as well. We are working on Drawing Conclusions, Comparing and Contrasting, Summarizing, and Predicting Outcomes in reading. We have also been enhancing our vocabulary level with Wordly Wise. A few of the students have already reached their AR goals and many are well on their way to achieving them. In math, we are multiplying, dividing, working with decimals, fractions, and learning about the associative and commutative properties. We would like to thank Mrs. Bowman for preparing a wonderful Halloween party for us. She sure did have many fun activities and yummy treats! We wish you and your families a Blessed and Peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year! God Bless You Always!

Fifth Grade News

'Tis the season for play practice! In getting ready for the big Christmas Play on December 15th, the students have been practicing daily with Father Pat. As the lines are getting memorized, the students are getting very excited about the event! Due to the time spent on practice, I wanted to let parents know that my main focus this month is strictly Math, Reading, and Writing. Recently I've noticed the students have been struggling with Math homework. Therefore, I decided to continue to allot twenty minutes a day in class for homework, but the students will be paired with a peer. Opposed to there being one of me and eleven students to assist, theory shows students learn best from each other. Even if your child is the one who happens to be strong in a particular math concept, this method of "peer tutoring" will benefit your child just as much as a child who is still working on mastering the concept. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to come!