

December 1, 2009

While the Advent Season is one of expectant waiting, first and foremost, it is a period of spiritual preparation. This fact must not be lost in the hustle and bustle of the upcoming holiday season! Our secular society continually tries to entice us into the commercialism of CHRISTmas. However, our focus at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School is to teach our children that the true meaning of CHRISTmas is love; God's love so great as evidenced by the birth of His only begotten son.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Because the Sacrament of Reconciliation is so important in spiritually preparing us for the coming of our newborn king, I am thankful to Mrs. Cameron for organizing our school reconciliation service. She is currently in the process of securing a date. But, rest assured that all students (Grades 3-12) will have the opportunity to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to CHRISTmas break.

The Advent theme of preparedness will also be the focus of the Junior/Senior Retreat on December 10th. Please pray that our 11th and 12th Grade Students experience a day of reflection and prayer worthy of this holy season.

The true meaning of CHRISTmas is being demonstrated in so many ways this year at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School that I find myself overwhelmed when trying to list them all!

Thank you to our Christian Service Staff Committee (Ms. Johnston, Mrs. Klenke, Ms. McKay, Mrs. Parker and Mrs. VanBoxell) for organizing the collection for the All Saints Catholic Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. Letters were sent home last week listing, by grade, donation items. If you have misplaced your list, it is available online in our Christian Service Section of the school home pages. Please take your children with you when you shop for these items and get them involved in selecting and purchasing them so that they can experience the joy of giving!

Thank you to Ms. Brownell and my significant other for organizing the Military Mailathon and CHRISTmas ornament projects. Thank you to Mrs. Szarek for organizing the Macy's Make-a-Wish Project and Mrs. Cameron and Mrs. Swalec for coordinating the placemat program for the Senior Alliance in Wayne. Thank you to our Nathional Honor Society Students, under the direction of Mrs. Senneville, for once again running the annual Winter Clothing Drive. Our children are busy actively living their faith and, as their principal, I could not be prouder! It is quite evident that we take our mission statement to heart.

Enter to learn. Go forth to serve.

Speaking of a proud principal moment – Last Saturday, eight of our students competed in the annual Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee. Drew Dykowski (4), Noah Crosby (4), Dominic Becraft (5), Sarah Waligora (6), Joanna Gerberding (6), Sarah Drogheo (7) Brianna Becraft (7) and Nina Badalamenti (8) studied the extensive list of words for weeks and their hard work paid off! In the first division (Grades 4-6), Drew Dykowski was 3rd runner up, Sarah Waligora was 1st runner up and **Joanna Gerberding won the entire competition!** In the second division (Grades 7-8), Sarah

Drogheo was 3rd runner up and Brianna Becraft was 1st runner up. It was a fantastic showing for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School. When you see these children in the halls or parking lot, congratulate them on a job well done! And, it's not over yet as they will now advance to the K of C Regional and Archdiocesan District Levels. I will share those competition dates as soon as I receive them.

This weekend is a very busy weekend for our PTG. On Saturday and Sunday, they are sponsoring a Cookie Walk after each Mass (see enclosed flier). John and Judy Drongowski are busy preparing for this event: anxiously awaiting your baked goods and looking forward to seeing you all there! On Sunday, the PTG is sponsoring *Breakfast with St. Nicholas*. Yes, you heard that right! St. Nicholas will be on hand this Sunday, his feast day, to dine with you and your family. Prices and/or info regarding advance ticket purchases are available online at: www.ourladyofmountcarmel.org. Please support the efforts of our PTG! They are doing a wonderful job bolstering school spirit and creating a true sense of community amongst us. We are blessed to have such a dedicated group working on our behalf!

Speaking of school spirit, business is booming at the Comet Spirit Shop. Order forms are available in the school office or online at the school website. The Spirit Shop will be open for business between now and CHRISTmas break on Wednesday and Friday afternoons after school. The last day to order for CHRISTmas delivery is December 14th so don't delay! As mentioned in my last memo, Tuesday, January 5th will be Spirit Day at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Students will be permitted to wear jeans and OLMC Spirit Wear!

SCRIP sales have significantly increased following the announcement that half of the proceeds can be applied toward next year's tuition balance. Thank you to Mrs. LaForest and Mrs. Huerta for taking the lead on this project and making it a reality. SCRIP is ordered every Monday and is delivered every Friday. The last day to order holiday SCRIP is Monday, December 14th. SCRIP cards make great CHRISTmas gifts.

HOPE Tickets also make great CHRISTmas gifts. Your tickets for the month of January are enclosed. Stubs and money are due back by December 31st and can be dropped off at the Rectory Office when the school office is closed.

Some upcoming calendar dates worthy of mention are:

December 8th is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. It is a Holy Day of Obligation. Students will be attending 8:00 a.m. Mass and we invite all parents to join us on this great Marion Holy Day.

On December 15th, students in Grades K-8 will be performing, under the direction of Mrs. Bush, in a CHRISTmas program at 7:00 p.m. in the gym. On Saturday, December 19th, the OLMC High School Thespians will be performing, under the direction of Mrs. Shiveley, *The Gift of the Magi* at 6:00 p.m. in the gym. Both performances are free and promise to give you a short respite from this hectic season as we, the Catholic School community of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, focus on the true meaning of CHRISTmas.

Timothy Scanlon, Principal