



Principal's Corner:

Every year we follow the tradition of evaluating the past year and making decisions for the upcoming year. Most New Year's resolutions focus on making ourselves better physically (weight loss, more activity, and healthier eating, etc.). However, don't forget that we also need to make ourselves better spiritually! Going to Mass weekly, and setting the example for our children to go to Mass weekly, is one way to help us grow spiritually. Good luck on your resolutions!

At the end of this month (January 29-February 5), we will be celebrating a very special event: **Catholic Schools Week!** This year our Catholic School's Week theme centers on three core concepts: Faith, Academics, and Service. Children are taught faith—not just the basics of Christianity, but how to have a relationship with God. Academics, which in Catholic schools are held to very high standards, help each child reach his/her potential. Service, the giving of one's time and effort to help others, is taught both as an expression of faith and of good citizenship. More information about this special week and events that will be taking place will be sent home later this month.

Parent/Guardian Questionnaire

Results:

Attached to this newsletter you will find the results from our 2011 Fall Parent/Guardian Questionnaire. It was very exciting to see the positive results! We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated staff and group of parents that value the importance of education. However, we do have a couple of areas in

which we would like to improve: (school seeks views of parents/guardians; school staff explain how I can help my child at home; being kept informed about child's progress; comfort level of approaching problems). To do this, we need your help! Please continue to bring questions, comments, concerns or ideas to your child's teacher and/or principal at any time. Your input is valuable and appreciated. Thank you for taking the time to fill out these surveys and for additional comments that will help improve the quality of our program. I will continue to address all concerns to the best of my ability.

How Can I Help My Child At Home?

As a parent, you have a special interest in your child's education. As you become more involved, here are some basic tips that you can use at home:

- 1. Encourage your child to read.** It's the single most important thing that you can do to help your child succeed in school. Read with your child from the start, and make sure there are lots of reading materials in the house.
- 2. Talk with your child.** Talking and listening are major components of children's school success. By having many opportunities to use and hear spoken language, children are given a tremendous advantage, picking up the language skills they will need to do well in school.
- 3. Monitor homework, and how much time children spend watching television, playing video games, and using the Internet.** Help your child get organized and provide a quiet place in the home for him or her to study. Limit the amount of time your child spends watching television, surfing the Internet, and playing video games. Help your child learn to properly and effectively use the Internet.
- 4. Encourage your child to be responsible and work independently.** Make it clear to your child that he or she has to take responsibility for actions both at home and at school.
- 5. Encourage active learning.** Listen to your child's ideas and respond to them. Active learning also can take place when your child plays sports, acts in a school play, plays a musical instrument, or visits museums and bookstores.

Keep Your Kids Healthy This Winter:

As winter arrives, you may be dreading the colds, flu, and general icky-ness, that seems to accompany it. Here are six tips to help you and your children stay healthy this winter.

Wash Your Hands: The CDC estimates that children with proper hygiene miss 2.42 days of school each year, while children who do not practice proper hygiene miss 3.02 days a year. Teach your children to wash their hands well, and often. This includes before and after meals, after coughing or sneezing, after using the restroom, and when they come home from school. You can also use alcohol-based wipes or gels when a water source is not readily available.

Keep Warm: Make sure you and your children are dressed appropriately for the colder weather. Jackets, gloves, and hats are all important clothing pieces to protect against the elements and keep your body in tip-top shape.

Eat Well: Make sure your children get well-balanced meals. Give your family the vitamins and minerals they need, so their bodies have the energy to stay healthy.

Sleep: Sleep is one of the most important things we can do to give our body a leg up against sickness this winter. Each member of your family should get at least seven hours of restful sleep each night, more for your younger children (10-13 hours).

Food Safety: As you prepare your holiday meals, wash your hands often when handling food. Keep any raw meats, poultry, and eggs away from food that is ready to eat or already prepared. Invest in a quality food thermometer to check the temperature of all of your cooked meals, make sure they are at least at the proper eating temperature. Do not use the same knives, cutting boards, or utensils to prepare raw foods and ready-to-eat foods.

Quarantine: If you still get sick after taking precautions, quarantine the family members. Do not allow your children to return to school until they are 24-hours free of fevers or vomiting. Wipe all surfaces with disinfectant, as well as washing clothing and bedding in hot, soapy water. Consider getting your children a flu shot this year to give you a

leg up against sickness. —planningfamily.com

2012-2013 4-Year Old Preschool and Kindergarten:

It is time to start thinking about registering your child(ren) for **4-Year Old Preschool and Kindergarten** for the 2012-2013 school year. We will hold an informational meeting in the school gym for these two programs on Thursday, February 2 from 5:30-6:15 p.m. for 4-Year Old Preschool and 6:30-7:15 p.m. for Kindergarten. Please bring your children! While I meet with parents at the beginning of each session, the children will be meeting their teachers and finding their classrooms. We hope to see you then!

Invest in YOUR Community:

Catholic schools build upon a proud past, a commitment to faith formation, a values-based education, and universal respect as they anticipate a promising future. Most importantly a Catholic school approaches education of the whole child: mind, body, and spirit. We believe every student should have the choice for a Catholic education and with your support we will secure that right for every child. As an Iowa taxpayer, you can contribute to the *Our Faith, Our Children, Our Future School Tuition Organization* and receive an **Iowa tax credit equal to 65%** of your donation. The amount you contribute also qualifies as a charitable donation on your federal tax return. Support your community and invest in Catholic education. All donations must be postmarked by **December 31st** in order to qualify for the tax credit in 2011. Give today at www.OurFaithSTO.org or call [563-556-2580](tel:563-556-2580) ext. 256.

Aquin Receives McElroy Grant

Meg O'Brien, Aquin 5th grade teacher, has written a grant application, which has resulted in an award of \$2,000 from the R.J. McElroy Trust. The application consisted of requesting funds to purchase Apple iPads to be used for a project on the history and operations of area farms. The iPads will be a key tool in the research and presentations, and will be kept at Aquin for other student educational uses and for similar projects. The grant was limited to \$2,000, which will be short of the total funds needed. Meg and Tom O'Brien are donating additional funds to cover the balance.

The R.J. McElroy Trust was founded in 1965, and is located in Waterloo, Iowa. The benefactor was R.J. McElroy, a pioneer Iowa broadcaster. In 1947, McElroy founded the Black Hawk Broadcasting Company, and put radio station KWWL on the air, followed by KWWL TV and several other radio and television stations. McElroy died in 1965 and made provisions in his will for the establishment of a trust fund, the proceeds of which are to be used for the educational benefit of deserving young people.

Aquin System Gala:

Please mark your calendars for the first annual Aquin System Gala that will be held on Saturday, March 17th. Check out the information about the Gala on the Aquin website.

Schwan's Update:

Thank you to everyone for making our second Schwan's Truckload Sale a success. Aquin sold \$5141.00 in Schwan's items, which will bring \$1063.40 to our school to update technology and other instructional materials. Our next sale will be held in the spring.

Right to Life Pilgrimage:

Please keep the 8th graders and their chaperones in your prayers as they travel to Washington, D.C. for the Right to Life March January 21-25.

Pedals for Progress:

Thanks to all of the people who donated to Aquin's bike drive for Pedals for Progress. We collected close to 50 bikes and raised over \$550 dollars to pay for shipping. It was a great experience for everyone involved.

Special thanks go to Tim Weitzel for coming to Aquin to speak about the program, Tom Manternach for picking up and transporting the bikes, Mark Otting for the generous use of his building for storage, Sarah Lensen and Brad Manternach for lifting and carrying all of those bikes and to Liz Lensen for organizing this event!

End of 2nd Quarter/Progress Reports

The second quarter will end on Thursday, January 12. Progress reports will be sent home on Friday, January 20th. Please be sure to check your child(ren)s book bags.

Out of Uniform Day

Our Out of Uniform Day in January will be for the Dubuque Rescue Mission. The mission serves the homeless and less fortunate in the Dubuque area.

New Doors

Thank you to Al Takes and Pat Sauser for installing the new doors in the bookkeeper's office and principal's office. We also thank Manternach 4L Farms Corp. for the donation to help pay for the doors.

Yearbooks

We have some extra yearbooks from the 2010-11 school year. If you are interested in purchasing one, please send \$10 with your child. Thank you.

Catholic Youth & Faith Today

The Dubuque Area Vocation Assn. (DAVA) invites students in grades 6-12 and their families to hear ValLimar Jansen as she presents the message "Let's Get on Fire!" through the power of music and gospel stories. She is a nationally recognized presenter and highly regarded singer, cantor and recording artist. She is also a college professor, a leader of worship and prayer, and a workshop presenter. ValLimar will be at the Kehl Center on the campus of Clarke University on Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 6:45 p.m. Students must be accompanied by their parents and/or religious education teachers.

Tis the Season to Be Reading!

Take time this holiday season to turn off the TV and electronic games and pick up a good book to read with your children! Every Aquin student should have at least one library book tucked into his or her book bag! Be sure to pack up all those library books and return them **January 3, 2012** as this is when **all library books are due** back. And if by chance you should have your child do a little "cleaning" in the house, be sure to return any lost or misplaced library books, too. Yes, we do have "overdue" and "lost" books and would greatly appreciate having all books returned after Christmas break. Thanks for your cooperation.

Donations to the **Aquin Commemorative Book Program** this month include: Jim & Sandy Rollinger (In honor of Sue Gudenkauf's Consecration into Religious Ministry); Robert & Linda Stoll (In memory of Tim Driscoll). Thanks to all our generous supporters of our school and library.