



# Saint Michael Parish School Middle School Matters

October 1, 2009

## Important Matters

Please consider visiting Bellarmine high school on November 5<sup>th</sup>. A number of families are planning to be up there and you might be able to arrange a car pool. If your child misses school that day, please send in a note for the absence to be excused.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade parents who are getting a jump start on your “surprise” posters – it works best if they're the 2'x3' size – we are pressed for room and the tri-fold boards might not fit. Let me know if you need that size poster board.

Mrs. Rafferty

We begin the world famous Little Kids Bible next week! This retelling of selected Bible stories accomplishes multiple learning tasks. Kids have to consider their audience and how to evangelize these “kids” so that God's word is alive and meaningful when you're only five years old. They also have to practice word choice and perfect grammar/punctuation. It's a year long task and we do most of it in class. Students receive two grades – a language arts grade for the story and a religion grade for the accompanying art work. I'll have “coloring pages” for the artistically challenged. There are three stories due by next Monday: Creation (Genesis 1:1-31;2:1-4), the Fall of Adam (Genesis 3:1-24), and the story of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-6).

In both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts, we will type the drafts of the autobiographical incident (8<sup>th</sup> grade) or the narrative (7<sup>th</sup> grade). The vocabulary test for Unit 3 is on Thursday (no school on Friday). Both grades also begin Unit 10 on verbs in grammar. This is the most difficult and the most important chapter in the grammar book – it proves invaluable for those students going on to a foreign language in high school.

U.S. History students are beginning a study of life in the British colonies in America. We'll be looking at life in the colonies, the early governments, the effect of religion, developing culture, and especially, the conflict known as the French and Indian War. After each of the four sections, students will be completing a “T-Column” worksheet that includes their notes and a summary of important information. As a result, we'll be working on history and non-fiction reading comprehension.

Mrs. Getchman

This week the students are preparing for our MMO on one of the Twelve Gardens of Stewardship, our school-wide theme this year. We are looking at the Garden of Good Decisions and exploring ways in which we can seek guidance in our quest to follow God.

We finished up our first science investigation on levers on Wednesday with an I-check (test). The test is designed to check the students' ability to think critically and apply concepts to new situations. So far I

am very impressed. Please take some time tonight to look at your student's science notebook and add your comments and initials.

Our language arts period is quite busy, and the students are progressing nicely. We are now working on unit 3 in vocab., will test on sentences in grammar tomorrow, and have completed our first writing assignment *Heroes*. Take a look at all the wonderful hero/role models in the lives of the sixth graders on the bulletin board in the hallway. We have also mailed these essays to the heroes themselves. Next, our writing will focus on how to write different types of topic sentences.

In history we are looking at the beginning of civilizations as early humans moved from hunters and gatherers to farmers in order to create a stable food supply. This ultimately led to permanent shelters, communities, jobs and trade.

The seventh graders are well on their way in studying Medieval Europe. I'm sure you heard about our first simulation on the feudal system. King Addison sure did have it well off! What about those poor peasants and surfs? This week we looked at the role of the Church during Medieval times. It's always fun to read about the Catholic religion in the history book! We took the test on this on Wednesday and will do an *Art in Action* project in which we create illuminated letters, an art form from this period of time.

#### **Save the Date**

Seventh grade will be traveling to Seattle to visit St. James Cathedral and the Frye Art Museum on November 17<sup>th</sup>. More info. to follow. If you think you may want to chaperone, please make sure your insurance, background check, and *Called to Protect* training are up to date.

#### Mrs. Evoy

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders have been multiplying and dividing integers and working with consecutive integers. They have also been continuing to practice the distributive property. The Chapter 2 test is tomorrow. Next week they will be solving simple equations and using equations to solve story problems.

The 7<sup>th</sup> graders have been estimating sums and differences and adding and subtracting decimals. In religion, the kindergarten prayers and vocabulary were tested yesterday. They also have been working on their auction project – working in groups to design car trunk decorations for the “Treats in the Trunk” celebration on Halloween. Your children are quite creative as they incorporate a saint or Bible story in their decoration.

The 6<sup>th</sup> graders are adding and subtracting decimals along with estimation. They will have a quiz on Friday. Next week they will be translating words into numerical and algebraic expressions and learning how to write equations to solve word problems.

#### Mr. Hart

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Science class finished the investigation proving the Earth is round using sailing ships and shadow evidence. The past few days they have been working on their maps from home to school.

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade turned in their Science Fair applications. I will be meeting with each student to polish

their plans. The class will finish proving the Earth is round this week. Both classes will begin investigating Day and Night next week.

The football team has an away game against Pioneer today. On Tuesday the 6<sup>th</sup> the Varsity has a home game against Community Christian. On Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> both the Varsity and J.V. Teams play at home against Hood Canal. Kickoff for both games is 3:30.

#### Mr. Herness

This week in sixth grade Spanish class, students will be learning how to tell time. There will be a homework assignment covering time and numbers called "Preliminar DE". During the second half of the week, students will learn how to describe weather conditions.

Seventh and eighth grade Spanish classes will be working through their final week of reviewing first year Spanish. Next week seventh graders will begin learning possessive pronouns, while the eighth graders will begin reviewing year two.

The middle school computer class will be learning how to crop video in the program i-movie. Students will first choose a stanza of the poem, "The road not taken", by Robert Frost. Once they decide which stanza they are going to read, they record the video. Finally the students select random words within the reading to create a personal sentence, and crop the film to create the sentence.

#### Ms Berning

The middle school artists are just about ready to put away the tempera paint and brushes. Our Keith Haring-style graphics have taken on something of an Australian Aboriginal style due to the use of repeated dot patterns. About half are finished, the rest are in the final stages. We're using 3-D glasses to observe how certain colors either recede or advance!

Students have begun work on our third and final "action" inspired project. They're using digital cameras to capture each other in an action pose, and then they'll project those enlarged photos, trace them on heavy paper in a coloring-book kind of style, and apply color with a collage technique using pieces from torn magazine pictures. If you have some old magazines that we can use, we'd be most appreciative! I'm guessing that we'll be up to our elbows in glue and bit of paper for at least the next week, and we'll need to replenish our magazine stash as we go.