

Principal's Weekly Bulletin

November 13, 2009

Dear Parents,

The saying that the smell of money always draws a crowd was proven once again today as the four big sellers in the art-fund raising contest got their fifteen minutes of fame in the MONEY BOOTH! The rest of the kids formed a semi-circle and chanted the booth-dwellers names in rock star-like fashion. It was a sight to see. Gabriel, Olivia, Lauren and Mackenzie all took their nervous/excited turns in the booth and scooped up as much cash as they could in the allotted time. A quick look at the kids in the crowd revealed many wistful looks, a few looking like Oliver Twist peering through a window at a rotisserie chicken!

Speaking of money. We are looking for donations of paint supplies, artistic talent, or cash as we try to complete the hallway murals and plan the big one outside on the wall of the main building where the fourth graders eat their lunch. Contact Meghan Hengehold if you can help. Thanks!!!

8th Grade parents! Be sure to get in your yearbook dedications and pictures of your 8th graders. Mrs. Sawicki is collecting them. Two (2) weeks left!!

The Town Hall meeting to discuss ideas about future buildings on campus is this Sunday at 3:00 in Father Roberts Hall. Show up if you want some input on any plans for the future of the physical plant of this Parish. Here's your chance to put in your "wish list."

Speaking of Wish Lists, any parents who have not picked up their kids Book Fair Wish List items, have until this Sunday at 2:00 to do so. There will be a chance this Sunday after each Mass to have your kids read to while you shop in Father Roberts Hall. I will get to read to by the kids after the 9:00 Mass.

As promised, here are a couple of websites that have great math worksheets (1) and on-line math problems (2)

(1) <http://www.tlsbooks.com/thirdgradeworksheets.htm>

(2) <http://www.mathfactcafe.com/view/?t=P>

More academics..... In a few weeks, we will send out the report cards and ITBS test results. There is a bit of a change this year with the upper division (except 8th Grade) report cards. We are moving to a percentage-style reporting that is more universally recognized and applied by high schools around the country. The reasons for this are many. We have seen too often that students today will do whatever it takes to get a certain grade and not fully apply themselves to be the best they can be in a given subject. For example, if they have a 92%, they will say, "I have an A, so why do any more?" Other students will spend all their energy trying to be Valedictorian and stress out over that possibility. Well, first of all, this is an elementary and middle school and not a high school. High GPA's and being the Valedictorian here will not get you a scholarship to Notre Dame or Princeton. It is far more important that each student gets in the habit of doing his or her absolute best in every subject. This will set them up for success in

later years. In addition, many schools have different percentages applied to grades. High schools then have to decipher what scale each school is using. I had to do this constantly at Newman when I was evaluating transcripts. Every school in the country knows what it means when a student gets a 95%, or for that matter, a 71%. Additionally, there is also the issue of different teachers using different strategies when rounding off grades; no amount of rule making will change that. The focus should be on learning and not just grades. Grades, and in our case, percentages, are a mere reflection of the success of that learning (and diligence). There will be plenty of time for worrying about GPAs soon enough, believe me. Society today asks kids to grow up too soon as it is, so lets not do it to them here as well. They need to be kids.... If anyone has questions about this, please feel free to stop me on the playground (as long as I am not in the middle of a game with my peeps!) and ask away!

May God Bless you all this weekend. Be safe...

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Matt Vukicevich
Principal
St. Francis Solano School

"Your future is only as bright as your mind is open"