



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS *in the*  
ARCHDIOCESE of NEW YORK

Faith-Based. Future-Focused.

## PARENT NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2019

Dear Catholic Schools Families,

As we approach the midpoint of the school year, preparing our hearts during Advent to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, we do so not only with so many things to be thankful for, but also so much about our schools for which we should be proud. Not only are our schools living up to our promises, in so many ways, we are surpassing them.

The principals, staff, and faculty are working tirelessly to instill a desire to learn and a determination to succeed. These core values, paired with the spiritual growth that comes from a deeper understanding of their relationship with God, have produced yet another period of academic excellence and spiritual growth.

I must tell you, parents and guardians, as I've made the rounds of our cherished schools, even after 43 years as an educator, I am still fascinated and inspired by your children and classrooms. The young people you have blessed our hallways with are kind, generous, and polite. Some of them are downright funny as well! This newsletter features an extensive section with examples of service projects across the entire archdiocese. Our students are just as engaged in doing God's work as they are in their homework, and that tells me our Catholic schools are well on our way to providing the world with its next great generation of leaders.

What a gift!

Merry Christmas,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan  
Superintendent of Schools  
Archdiocese of New York



### HIS EMINENCE VISITS ST. LUKE'S SCHOOL

Timothy Cardinal Dolan visited the children of St. Luke's School in the Bronx this past October for the Feast of the Guardian Angels. His Eminence celebrated Mass with the students and later remarked upon the quality of the St. Luke's Choir, whose songs uplifted the ceremony, as well as the St. Luke's student council, who had been so hospitable in showing him around their school. To the students' satisfaction, the Cardinal ended his visit by declaring a "No Homework Day."



## CHOIRS FROM ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK OPEN FOR RADIO CITY CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR IN “THE SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS”



### ST. GREGORY BARBARIGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Garnerville, New York*

Accompanied by choir director David Azarow and principal Mrs. Dana Spicer, the choir from St. Gregory Barbarigo School made the nearly 50-mile trek from Rockland County to Radio City Music Hall to sing at the Christmas Spectacular's opening performance on Nov. 9 at 10 a.m. The students are no strangers to performing on one of New York City's most famous stages, as this is the choir's second year opening for the Rockettes.



### ST. PETER'S SCHOOL

*Yonkers, New York*

Led by their choir directors—Mrs. Ana Germosen, Mrs. Yrcania Ramirez, and Ms. Jennifer Feliz—and with the support of their principal, Ms. Sheila Alagia, the elementary school students of St. Peter's School made their Radio City debut on Nov. 26, prior to the 10 a.m. showing. The students prayed a spontaneous litany, “St. Peter... Pray for us,” and marched onto the stage for an experience they surely will not forget.



### MOORE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

*Staten Island, New York*

The third group of our talented students to perform at Radio City Music Hall prior to the Christmas Spectacular was Moore Catholic High School on Dec. 19 at the 8 p.m. showing. The award-winning Performing Arts Chorus gave a five-minute a capella performance on the legendary stage. Preceding the show, President/Principal Mrs. Gina L. DeSantis said, “Our outstanding chorus, led by the incomparable Mrs. Kristen Pinto, will have the experience of a lifetime as they perform on the storied stage of Radio City Music Hall. We are so very proud of our student-performers.”



## SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES

*THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE CENTRAL WESTCHESTER REGION BROUGHT BOXES OF JOY TO THOSE IN NEED.*



When Maureen Harten, a proactive principal from Immaculate Conception School in Tuckahoe, heard about Cross Catholic Outreach's Boxes of Joy program, she knew she wanted to get involved. Principal Harten was able to rally other schools in the Central Westchester region and launched an initiative that would unite the faculties, students, and principals, reminding them that they are part of a larger school community. The schools were able to collect 588 boxes, and each box was filled with a specific list of items including food, toiletries, toys, etc. It was a joint effort that demonstrated the amazing feats we can accomplish when we work together. The participating schools consisted of Immaculate Conception in Tuckahoe, Immaculate Heart of Mary in Scarsdale, Our Lady of Victory in Mount Vernon, St. Peter's School in Yonkers, St. Paul the Apostle School in Yonkers, Corpus Christi-Holy Rosary School in Port Chester, Sacred Heart in Hartsdale, and Our Lady of Sorrows School in White Plains.





# SERVANT LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT THE REGIONS

## STEPINAC HIGH SCHOOL

*White Plains, New York*



More than 150 students participated in a "Cardboard Box City Campaign," sponsored by Stepinac's Campus Ministry. Student slept in cardboard boxes throughout Stepinac's gymnasium and hallways to raise awareness for the growing homeless crisis and raised \$17,000 to help homeless in Westchester County and New York City.

## ST. ADALBERT SCHOOL

*Staten Island, New York*



On Nov. 4, students and staff from St. Adalbert's hosted their annual pre-Veterans Day breakfast and assembly. More than 100 veterans and their families attended the event and attendees consisted of both active and non-active military personnel.

## OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL

*Bronx, New York*



Students spent one of many charitable mornings helping their friends at the St. Frances of Rome Food Pantry prepare for Thanksgiving.

## KINGSTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Kingston, New York*



The KCS National Junior Honor Society leaders presented the Executive Director of the People's Place Cafe, Christine Hein, with a donation check for \$200, which they earned by selling snacks to their schoolmates. The cafe provides meals to all, regardless of their ability to pay.

## SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Valley Cottage, New York*



Families and students from St. Paul Catholic School sorted and packed up Thanksgiving related food items that were collected in their classrooms to be donated to the St. Paul Church Food Cupboard for its Thanksgiving distribution. The food will go to needy families in Rockland County.

## ST. JOHN SCHOOL

*Goshen, New York*



The sixth grade class at St. John's organized a food drive with the Catholic Daughters to provide the less fortunate with important provisions.

## ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL

*New York, NY*



Over 200 St. Elizabeth School students wore pink to support the fight against breast cancer!

## ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON SCHOOL

*Shrub Oak, New York*



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School students collected 420 cans of food for their annual food drive.



## DRESS FOR SUCCESS!

### BOW TIES IN THE BRONX

**Principal Robert W. Billings, *Our Lady of Refuge School, Bronx***

I started wearing bow ties about 14 years ago. I was changing jobs and figured it would be a good time to try something new.

I taught myself to tie it, after looking at (of course) some YouTube videos. Most of my ties are “serious,” but I do have a few that the students enjoy (chili peppers, musical notes). I buy a lot at an online site called “Beau Ties.” Most of the ones I get as gifts are clip-ons, which I NEVER wear! I often give those to my daughter who works at a college in West Virginia, and she gives them to her students.

I’ve always sought a distinctive uniform at my schools, so the bow tie was a logical step, but I wasn’t sure how the students would react. My friends at FlynnO’Hara Uniforms made a very nice model in school colors (maroon/grey).

The response has been great! I sold out of my initial order (14) and are awaiting another dozen. I’m especially pleased at the students who, in my view, stepped out of their comfort zone to try something new and distinctive. I constantly say to the boys and girls, “Dress for success!” Of course, now I have to come up with something for the girls!





## MARATHON RUNNING PRINCIPAL INSPIRES STUDENTS TO GET ACTIVE

Nicholas Green is the principal of Incarnation School in New York City, but he is also a three-time marathon runner. This year marks the second time that Principal Green participated in the famed New York City marathon specifically, and he set a personal best at 3:49:02.

Principal Green's fervor for running has spread throughout the Incarnation community, and he has been able to get the students to participate in several ways. For example, he is part of two running groups, *We Run Uptown* and *Mile Style*, and Incarnation students have assisted these groups with various charities. They have helped with *We Run Uptown's* Winter clothing drive, and have participated in *Mile Style's* fund raisers and awareness runs for Breast Cancer.

Principal Green also inspired teachers at the school to get into running. Ms. Francesca Ciaramitaro, a middle school teacher who started the middle school running club two years ago, ran her first half-marathon this spring in Brooklyn and has already run her second this fall in her hometown of Detroit. Principal Green and Ms. Ciaramitaro often take the students on runs to interesting places and parks in Washington Heights and Inwood so that students can explore their surrounding community. Additionally, the school began partnering with the New York Road Runners youth programs influencing students to get fit and enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Lastly, Principal Green's influence led to Incarnation's first ever 5K fundraiser, The Wildcat Dash, which took place Nov. 16 at Riverside Park in Manhattan. There were over 100 participants running, walking, and celebrating their school community.

It's no secret that running not only improves cardiovascular health and prevents obesity, but it also has a multitude of mental health benefits. Principal Green's propensity for the hobby has helped to influence his students and school community in a way that will help them for years to come.



Photo by Kelvin Gil



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