

The Principals' Page

St. Hilary School
November 2013

This month, we pause to reflect on and give thanks for the gifts God has given us. We have so many blessings for which to be thankful, and all of us at St. Hilary School are grateful for the opportunity to share with your children the gift of a Catholic education. This is the best gift you can give your children, and we appreciate that you have chosen our school to help you fulfill it.

First quarter report cards were sent home on October 24. This is a perfect time to talk with your child about his or her successes and challenges over the past two months, and to help your child establish goals for achievement in the second quarter. Congratulations to the many students who earned a place on the honor roll this quarter. We offer remedial services for students with learning difficulties, so please be sure to address concerns of this nature with your child's teachers. Conferences will be held the evening of Wednesday, November 13 and the morning of Thursday, November 14, with no school for students on Thursday and Friday, November 14 and 15. We look forward to seeing you at conferences. This is a wonderful opportunity to talk to your child's teacher about how he or she is doing academically, behaviorally, and socially at school. Please know that you may request a conference at any time with your child's teacher should the need arise.

With the first quarter behind us, we are proud to recognize the students who were named by their teachers to receive the Magis Award for the quarter. This award honors students who strive to find God in all things, especially through the love of reading and exemplifying dedication and a positive outlook needed for success. Our first quarter Magis Award recipients are: Room 101—Joseph Malick, Room 102—Annie Sejba, Room



103—Kevin Hart, Room 104—Corinne Slawinski, Room 105—Liam Slaght, Room 106—Morgan Scherler, Room 107—Elle Burkhalter, Room 108—Natalie Olack, Room 110—Jeffrey Boyle, Room 204—Allison Malick, Room 208—Molly Kennedy, Room 209—Owen Tompkins, Room 205—Kathleen Tracy, Room 206—Mason Lawlor, Room 207—Bryan Flannery, Room 201—Isabelle Hahn, Room 202—Meghan Resweber, Room 203—Giovanna Abucejo, Room 111—Olivia Sucato, Room 113—Erin Stock, Room 114—Evelyn Thoman, Room 115—Rachel Wasik, Room 117—Anthony Corsino, Room 118—Laura Angle, Room 116—Liz Gilbert, Room 119—Kailey Kleinman, Room 120—Elizabeth Kalal, and Media Center—Bridget Hahn. These students received a St. Ignatius of Loyola medal at our October 18 school Mass. They were also treated to a trip to the Akron Zoo on October 22, where they participated in activities involving the zoo animals and books written about them.

We would also like recognize the students who have been tapped to serve as peer mediators, to help their classmates resolve low-level disputes, such as playground disagreements and friendship issues, under adult guidance. Peer mediators for 2013-2014 are: Grade 4—Giovanna Nestico, Paul Slanina, Elaina Stein, Bryan Flannery, Reagan Jackson, and Caleb Shannon; Grade 5—Shane Criss, Stephanie Conley, Daniel Monea, Kiara Brady, Sarah Sollenberger, and Bernadette Broscius; Grade 6—Lena Nemer, Nicholas Smith, Evelyn Thoman, Michael McShannic, Kathryn Petit, and Jeffrey Pietrowski; Grade 7—Stephen Klein, Mallory Kozik, Katie Bozzelli, Mason Tipton, Patrick McGrath, and Sadie Salamone; and Grade 8—Gabriel Kornick, Alexa Mark, Elizabeth Redle, Evan Marando, Sophia Judge, and Joshua Parisi. We are proud that these students have accepted the challenge to serve as student leaders and assist other students.

Congratulations also to all students who participated in our fall sports programs. We enjoyed recognizing all of our fall sports athletes at our pep rally on October 17. Special mention goes to Coach Coyne's 6th grade girls soccer team for receiving the CYO sportsmanship award! We are grateful to all of our athletes and cheerleaders, and to all the parents who served as commissioners, coaches and advisors for these students, for representing our school and parish so well!

As you know, the students will have four Fridays off from school this year. The teachers are in school on these days, learning about the new Common Core State Standards. The new Diocesan Math Curriculum,

which was rolled out in the spring, reflects the standards and many of you have probably noticed a change in the rigor of what is expected in Math at St. Hilary School. The new English and Language Arts Curriculum will be rolled out after the first of the year. An initiative from the state superintendents and governors, the Common Core State Standards create a single set of standards for all of the states. The goal of the standards is to ensure that all students are college and career ready upon graduating from high school. Previously, all of the states had different standards. Ohio, for example, currently ranks 25th of the 50 states in student achievement. Implementing the Common Core State Standards will have radical implications for the state of Ohio, as we will have to raise the bar in many areas. Some of the shifts that will occur in the English Language Arts



area are: an increase in reading nonfiction and informational text, reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence, and regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary. In Math, "rigor" is the key word that is used to describe the shifts. The Math standards represent a shift from the focus on skills and procedures of the past decade toward a conceptual understand-

ing of mathematics, balancing practices with content and asking students to explain mathematical reasoning. Also, digital literacy is a huge component in every area of the Common Core State Standards. The way teachers teach will also change. Classes will be more student-centered than teacher-centered. Active teaching, which challenges students to think deeply and critically, will prepare our students for the future. Our iPad initiative has come at an opportune time. Another key shift stated over and over again in the Common Core State Standards is that our students need to be digitally literate and competent. They need to know how to use technology to acquire knowledge, analyze and evaluate information, explore, draw conclusions, and test theories. More importantly, they need to know how to apply what they learn to real-life scenarios. The new tests being developed for the Common Core State Standards are completely digital and require that students as young as kindergarten have knowledge of a mouse and keyboard. We welcome the opportunity to help our students become even better prepared for the challenges of high school, college and career as we implement these new, more rigorous standards.



The trees are almost bare, and the air is turning colder, which means winter is not far away! Please remind your child to dress appropriately, with a coat, hat, gloves, and boots when necessary. We will continue to take students outside for recess each day as long as the weather cooperates. Please be sure your child's name is on all his or her items. Items labeled with names can be returned if they are lost.

The second quarter is underway and will continue through January 10. As you update your calendars for 2014, please take advantage of the online school calendar at www.st-hilaryschool.org to assist in planning your schedule. The calendar is updated regularly, so be sure to check the school website frequently for the latest information on school events. Please note that school will be closed Wednesday, November 27 through Friday, November 29 in observance of Thanksgiving. Looking ahead, our last day of school before Christmas break will be Friday, December 20, with school resuming on Monday, January 6.

Thank you to all parents who so willingly support our school by volunteering through Parents' Association committees, School Board, or in the classroom. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated and vital to the success of our school. Special thanks to the many parents who helped with our recent Fall Fest and Halloween activities, to those who helped with our magazine drive events, and to the parents assisting with morning supervision during our faculty meetings. We could not do it without you!

We wish you and your families a blessed, prayerful Thanksgiving!

Mrs. Arnone

Mr. Baxendale