

ST. JOHN'S ACADEMY PARENT NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024



Important Dates

- January 2nd - School Resumes
- January 10th - Map Testing Begins
- January 12th - 1st Grade Fairy Tale Fun
- January 15th - Professional Development Day - No School
- January 15th - End of Q2 & S1
- January 27-28th - Newman Basketball Tournament
- January 28th - Catholic Schools Week Begins

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

ST. JOHN'S



ACADEMY

Families of St. John's Academy,

Merry Christmas from the teachers and staff at the Academy. I hope that your break has been joy-filled and relaxing!

Although we are still 2 weeks away from the completion of the 1st semester of the 2023-2024 school year, Christmas Break always feels like the half-way point. As we turn the corner we maintain our focus on monitoring the academic progress of our students and revising plans to ensure that the students are able to reach their potential.



Administratively, we also place a focus on the needs of the school from an enrollment and fundraising standpoint. It's the time of year when we begin looking at our potential staffing and curriculum needs for the coming year and formulate plans to meet our immediate and long-range goals for the school.

I am very pleased to announce that through the collaborative generosity of some of our benefactors we have received \$100,000 in match-gift donations for Giving Hearts Day, which will be held on February 8th. We are hoping that we can utilize every dollar of this opportunity for the betterment of our school and ask all of our families to begin prayerfully discerning what you may be able to contribute this year to help us reach our goal of raising \$200,000. We also ask that you share Giving Hearts Day information with families, friends, and anyone who believes in the value of an education at St. John's Academy.

Enrollment is the lifeblood of our school, not only from a tuition collection standpoint but more importantly, providing a Christ-centered education is the reason St. John's Academy exists. I realize that this can be a difficult process to discern for many families. Each family scenario is unique, and we respect the decision that your family comes to.

I'd like to take a moment to share some thoughts about enrollment at the Academy from the perspective of a father. My wife Jodi and I have 4 children ranging in age from 20 to 10 all of whom attended Catholic schools whenever it was available and for the most part at St. John's Academy.

We made this decision centered on three main ideas that both Jodi and I firmly believe in.

- 1). The decision on school enrollment belonged solely to Jodi and I and not the children. This was for no other reason than the fact that the mind is not fully formed until a person reaches their mid-20's. As a father of a 20-year-old, I can vouch for this (she's close, but not there yet). As parents, it is our primary responsibility to care for the needs of our children, to make the decisions that they are not cognitively ready to make. As every parent can attest to, taking a firm position on something may come with a strong reaction from a child but that's the price of parenting and being willing to look out for their best interests, regardless of their feelings, is a parental responsibility.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

ST. JOHN'S



ACADEMY

2) Secondly, we wanted our children to grow and develop in a safe environment. The world comes at our children at an increasingly early rate. Jodi and I felt the need to do whatever we could to place our children in an environment where our values were reinforced between the hours of 8am-3pm. St. John's Academy, while far from perfect, places a heavy focus on academic achievement, virtue, and moral character and of course the teachings of Jesus Christ. The Academy makes every effort to filter secular ideas from our students, focusing on time-tested truths and values rather than the ever-shifting ideas of the current times. At the Academy, students are protected from cultural ideas and free to talk about and grow in their faith.

3) Lastly, although there were some financial sacrifices made, we viewed this as an added benefit. Our children were able to see that we valued their education and spiritual development to the degree of making financial sacrifices. In today's world, it's pretty easy to spend thousands on sports and activities. Enrollment in a private school indirectly tells a child that we care about who they are and who they develop into as a person.

We understood that the schools our children attended were willing to do whatever was needed to make it affordable for our family and that is certainly true at St. John's Academy. **No family will be turned away for financial reasons. We will find a way to make it work for you!!**

I realize that I'm preaching to the choir as they say as many of you have already made this commitment. To those still deliberating, I'd like to suggest that you prayerfully consider continuing at St. John's Academy. As parents, we have a short period of time to impact the lives of our children. Personally, Jodi and I were seeking all the assistance we could find in helping raise our children to be successful and virtuous adults. We've been extremely pleased with our experience at all the private schools our children were enrolled in. The journey hasn't always been smooth sailing, but we wouldn't change it for the world.

As the principal at the Academy, I have gained an even greater appreciation for the education offered here. We have an absolutely amazing staff. The commitment our teachers have to their students and the mission of the school is second to none. What I have observed here has only reinforced the idea that enrolling our children at St. John's Academy has been one of the best parenting decisions we've ever made.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeff Trumbauer".

Jeff Trumbauer
Principal – St. John's Academy

*May the peace of
Christ be with your
family in 2024!*



Mrs. Mahoney's Kids' Kingdom

This month's Center was math based. A Christmas cookie bakery! Our holiday kitchen was stocked with real utensils, mixing bowls, measuring cups, rolling pins, and cookie sheets. The cookies were labeled with frosting numbers, chocolate chip counters, and double layered shapes. We were challenged to solve sequence and numeral problems using just spatulas. No hands! Also in this Center was a phone and cash register - because this bakery could take orders and deliver to you! Taking cookie orders allowed us to practice our writing, counting, and listening skills in order to fill specific requests!

December included many highlights! To start, we learned more about our class

Saint. Saint Nicholas. The Kinder Prep then had an evening of fun as we celebrated the Eve of his Feast Day! We met at the school to have supper together and play games. In our JAMMIES! The next morning, we found that he had left gold coins and oranges outside our classroom door!

The morning preschoolers were fortunate to ride the bus twice this month! Once was to spend the morning on the UJ campus with education majors. The kids participated in active gross motor skills. The second trip was to the Bison movie theater. The highlight of both outings was, of course, the bus ride itself!

Beyond the Gingerbread yoga and STEM activities, the crafts and songs, the class parties and holiday festivities, we remained close to the reason for this special season. By reading from our Bible and using our Nativity, we continued our learning and sharing about Jesus.





Mrs. Gange's Kids' Kingdom

Winter Activities were the theme for the Month of December!

In December, we focused on all things winter and snowman-related! December flew by so fast we did not even have the chance to touch on Olaf and Frosty the Snowman!

As the month came to an end we focused on a lesson about Arctic Animals.



Library

Thanks to all the families who have donated books for the SJA Library from the giving tree. I will leave the giving tree up through the end of Epiphany. Through family donations, the library was able to add many new books to the library.

**I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!**



January
VIRTUES

WEEK OF JAN 2: OBEDIENCE

WEEK OF JAN 8: PATRIOTISM

WEEK OF JAN 16: PRAYERFULNESS

WEEK OF JAN 22: RESPECT

WEEK OF JAN 29: RESPONSIBILITY



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Mrs. Neville's Pre-K

Pre-K has been very busy! We've been having so much fun playing and learning together. Here are some of the last month's highlights:

- During our unit on animals that hibernate, we read in our "cave" with flashlights.
- For our pre-k Christmas party, we had a Hot Chocolate Bar! The kids could pick the toppings they wanted for their drinks. We also wore pajamas to make the day extra special!
- The AM class went on a trip to the movie theatre with the rest of the school on the last day before Christmas break! We got to ride the bus, have a fun treat, and watch a movie on the big screen. The PM class got to sing Christmas carols with our school family in the gym.





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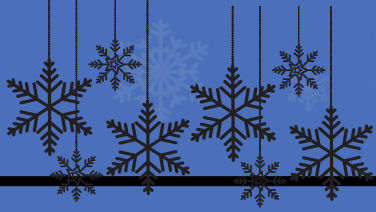
Kindergarten



December is a busy month. Here are some of the things we did.

- Reading – worked on hearing the beginning, middle and ending sounds
- Math – worked on adding and subtracting numbers
- Religion - advent
- Social Studies – where we live, maps
- Prayer Partners – colored Christmas cards for the residents of Ave Maria
- Christmas Centers – decorated cookies, tic-tac-toe, graphing, dot art, coloring





First Grade



The first-grade students loved celebrating the season of Advent. They were all very excited to receive a small crucifix blessed by Pope John Paul II from Fr. Wilhelm.

First grade is also getting excited for Fairy Tale Time in January. They are working hard on making posters to help them retell the story in front of all our families. We will celebrate with royal treats afterwards! It's sure to be a magical time!





Second Grade

We have been preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and are eager to receive this special sacrament!

In math we learned strategies to fluently add and subtract within 100.

In science we described different kinds of materials by their properties and in social studies we traveled around the world to explore how various countries celebrate Christmas.

We enjoy our weekly Adoration time on Tuesdays and priest visits on Wednesdays. We had a lot of personal growth this month and are looking forward to what the new year brings for us!

We also took part in a couple STEM activities that fostered our problem-solving and creativity skills. It was so much fun!





Third Grade



Our very own 3rd graders have created a song to help teach people about the Jesse Tree.

Copy the link and enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/Qn7oeYa5hMg?si=4rmFbd12jSmrniOW>

We also:

- wrote reflections each week as we read about Advent
- Completed a Novel study about a boy OBSESSED with chocolate, *The Chocolate Touch*
- learned about inherited traits
- created many wonderful art projects

Happy New Year!





Fourth Grade

December was filled with many fun activities in the fourth grade!

We enjoyed learning how to code on STEM Day.

We wrote our own Haiku poems and watercolor painted sunsets to match.

Most of our fun centered around preparing for the Christmas season by making cards with our kindergarten prayer partners for the residents at Ave Maria, performing at the SJA Christmas Program, traveling to the movie theater as a school to watch a movie and singing Christmas carols in the gym.



Fifth Grade



We learned a lot during Advent about preparing our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus. We discussed the meaning of the Advent Wreath during these four weeks of preparation. We put our ornaments on the Jesse Tree as we read about Jesus'



ancestors, and we counted down with the Advent Calendar as we anxiously awaited opening the numbered box that held Jesus. We also took some time to think and write about what it would be like to have been a person or animal actually at the Nativity. We had some great stories as we wrote about how we would have felt or what we would have thought if we were an angel, a sheep, a wiseman, etc. We also took a star from the Angel Giving Tree at the Basilica and raised money for the Friends of Chimbote organization.

We did a unit called Christmas Around the World where each student picked a country to research about its Christmas traditions. Then we presented our findings to the class and color coded a map with each country we researched. We also had 3 Foreign Exchange students from France, Poland, and Italy come visit. They told us many interesting things about how they celebrate Christmas in their countries.



Middle School

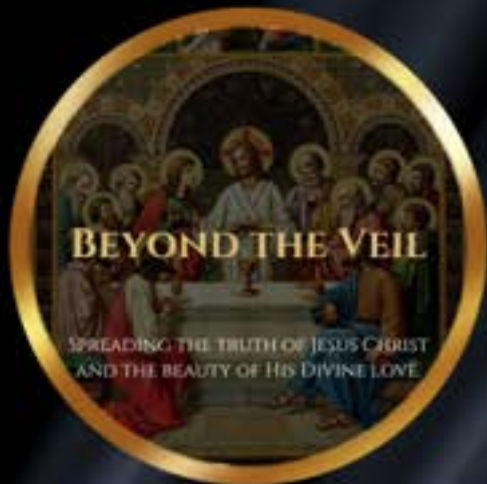
Middle Schooler's Creative Science-Themed Ugly Christmas Sweaters:
In December, each middle school student created their own science-based version of an ugly Christmas sweater. We were blown away by the creativity shown by our students! Don't hesitate to ask your child about their creation – it's sure to make you laugh.

On behalf of the Middle School Staff, we wish you a Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year!

Ugly Science Christmas Sweaters



2024



Exploring the invisible realities of the existence of God.

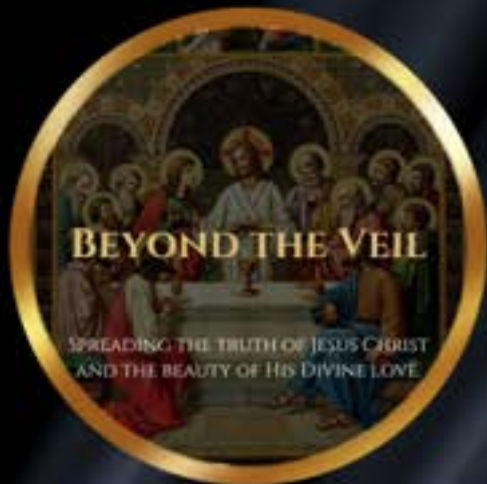
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! As we contemplate a new year, many of us think of resolutions, new habits we would like develop this year. This time of year is seen as a chance to begin anew, to have a fresh start. Might I suggest that this year include developing a holy habit, a habit that draws you into a closer relationship with Christ.

While in confession during Advent, the priest pointed out to me that the common root of all of my sins was that I had not put Christ truly at the center of my life. I had confessed that I had not given God the best part of my day, rather I had given him what I had left over at the end of the day, which resulted in me often falling asleep before concluding my prayers. Father pointed out to me that this a common problem for many adults. After all, as children we are taught to say our prayers before bed. He challenged me to give God the best part of my day, the part where I have the least distractions and am most alert. For me this is the morning, right after I get out of bed. Father challenged me to get up ten minutes earlier and give that time to the Lord. During this time, I need to make a space that allows me to sit quietly with the Lord, allowing Him to speak into my life. If you are anything like me, I am good at talking to God, but I am not good about silently sitting with Him and letting Him speak to me in that silence, having a true dialogue with Him.

Trust me, getting up ten minutes earlier is not something I relish doing. In fact, I am the queen of the snooze button, but this year, I am consistently going to get up 10 minutes earlier each day. (Feel free to check in with me from time to time to see how I am doing with this resolution.) During my confession, Father forewarned me that soon ten minutes may not feel like enough and I may find myself getting up even earlier.

If you are not sure where to start or how to develop a quiet time routine, allow me to offer a few suggestions:

1. Spend ten minutes reading from the Gospels each day. Imagine yourself in the scene as one of the characters or as a bystander. This will necessitate reading through the passage more than once. The first time through, familiarize yourself with the passage. Then read through the passage a second time, becoming a character in the scene or a bystander witnessing the scene.



Exploring the invisible realities of the existence of God.

Take time to pause to reflect on things in the passage or experience that resonate with you. Then read through the passage a third time, identifying a key takeaway for the day.

2. Read any of Matthew Kelly's books. I suggest beginning with Rediscover Jesus. Each chapter is short and gives you a point to ponder and a question to consider. These will help guide you into fruitful quiet time.

3. Read Beautiful Eucharist, the book which Haut Funeral Home provided for each parishioner of St. James this Christmas. I have used many of the passages from this book to help my students through guided meditation each week during our time of Adoration.

4. Read and reflect on The Practice of the Presence of God by Brother Lawrence. Brother Lawrence was keenly aware of God's presence with him in every moment of the day. Each short chapter is rich with content to inspire a dialog with Christ.

5. Get the Hallow App and listen to Fr. Mike Schmitz's daily minute homilies. I guarantee that each one will provide you with much food for thought.

6. Get the IBreviary app and pray through the Liturgy of the Hours.

If you are ready to embark upon creating a new holy habit, consider watching Fr. Mike Schmitz's video, The Secret to Sticking to a New Year's Resolution found at [Add a little bit of body text](#). He will inspire you to remain faithful to your commitment.

Please pray for me, my brothers and sisters in Christ. Be assured of my prayers for you and your children. May by the end of 2024 we all be able to say that we have grown more in love with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

God bless you,
Kristin Higgins, middle school mathematics teacher

O most loving Father, grant that I may at last gaze forever upon the unveiled face of your beloved Son. - St. Thomas Aquinas



Dec.– Jan. Breakfast 2024

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25 No School! Merry Christmas!!	26 No School!	27 French Toast Cereal Fruit No School!	28 Yogurt Cereal Fruit No School!	29 Cereal Bar Cereal Fruit No School!	
1 No School! Happy New Year's!!	2 Cereal Bar Cereal Fruit	3 Pancake Sausage Wrap	4 Poptart Cereal Fruit	5 Caramel Rolls Cereal Fruit	
8 Breakfast Pizza Cereal Fruit	9 Muffin/Omelet Cereal Fruit	10 French Toast Cereal Fruit	11 Yogurt Cereal Fruit	12 Mini Doughnuts Cereal Fruit	



Dec.- Jan. Lunch 2024

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
18 Chicken Burger Baked Beans Ham & Cheese Sandwich	19 Sloppy Joes Corn Turkey Sandwich	20 Scalloped Potatoes & Ham Breadstick Pudding Cup Ham & Turkey	21 Pepperoni Pizza Fruit & Veggies Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich	22 NO SCHOOL! DAYCARE ONLY	
25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! NO SCHOOL!	26 NO SCHOOL!	27 Chicken Nuggets Potato NO SCHOOL! DAYCARE ONLY	28 Hot Dog Baked Beans NO SCHOOL! DAYCARE ONLY	29 Cheese & Chix Quesadilla NO SCHOOL! DAYCARE ONLY	
Jan. 1st NO SCHOOL! Happy New Year's!!	2 Chili/Cheese Breadstick Rostd ChickPeas Turkey Sandwich	3 Orange Chicken Veggie Fried Rice Breadstick Ham Turkey Wrap	4 Chix Drumstick Potatoes & Gravy Roll Ham & Cheese	5 Pizza Sticks Spaghetti Sauce Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich	
8 BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwich Corn Ham & Cheese	9 Tater Tot Casserole & Roll Green Beans Turkey Sandwich	10 Taco/Bag Salsa Ham & Turkey Wrap	11 Mini Corn Dogs Baked Beans Ham & Cheese Sandwich	12 Cheese Pizza Fruit & Veggies Sunbutter & Jelly Sandwich	