



ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"Teaching goodness, discipline and knowledge for over 150 years"

FALL/WINTER 2014-2015

MONSIGNOR GRAHAM CELEBRATES 40 YEARS AS A PRIEST!

Representatives from each grade presented our pastor, Monsignor John Graham, with cards and good wishes in honor of the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood at the Mass for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. Students also presented Monsignor with a framed poster full of prayer flowers — intentions for more than 79,000 daily prayers from our students and staff for Monsignor himself, for vocations, for world peace and other intentions. Congratulations, Monsignor Graham, and best wishes for many more years of priestly service! Thank you for all you do for us.



NEW SCHOOL YEAR OFF TO A GOOD START

The 2014-2015 academic year got off to a good start, with 937 students enrolled in Pre-K 3 through Grade 8. This year, we opened a third First Grade, Class 1-105, to accommodate an increase in the number of first graders over last year, and we welcomed a new faculty member, Ms. Jilian Boulhosa, to teach it. We also welcomed a new Primary librarian, Sr. Christine Carrigg, RJM, and a new After-school Program Director, Mr. Christopher D'Armiento, who was our Summer Camp Director this past summer. Our Italian language program became full time in September; our Italian teacher, Mrs. Josephine Casale, now teaches Italian to Grades 1 through 8.

"We continue to expand our programs and our staff every year," said principal Sister Patricia Brito, RJM, "with the intention of providing more programs and a better education to all of our students, new and returning. St. Raymond really is a flagship school. Come see for yourselves all that we have to offer."

FULL HOUSE FOR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SHOW; SOLD OUT BOTH NIGHTS

Families and friends, staff and supporters joined us once again for our annual Christmas Show on December 15 and 16. As with prior years, the show was sold out on both nights. This year's theme — *Christmas Gifts* — focused on the gifts that matter the most — the gifts of faith, love, friendship, time and nature. Grades Pre-K through 5 sang religious, traditional and contemporary songs, including songs from the Disney movie *Frozen*. Students also sang a selection from the top 40 best-loved Christmas songs. Grades 6 through 8 performed the Nativity the second night of the show.

"Once again, our students and staff put their hearts and souls into our annual Christmas Show and it showed," said our principal Sister Patricia. "I'm proud of all of them and of our music director, Mr. Connolly, and our music teacher, Ms. Munoz, who did such a great job organizing the show. Our annual Christmas Show really exemplifies the spirit that is St. Raymond's."



PHOTO BY GERI BARON



PHOTO BY KEITH PASCUCCI

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Elementary School,

The holy seasons of Advent and Christmas have just passed and once again we thank God for sending the gift of His Son Jesus into our hearts and homes.

We thank God for His many gifts to us here at St. Raymond's as well! Our school continues to be the largest parochial school in the Archdiocese. We remain a parish-based school and so we are able to provide Catholic faith formation and academic excellence to all of our children in all of our classes. We are not an alternative school — we are a unique school. We teach as Jesus teaches.

Our first semester was filled with many celebrations, as well as parent conferences, Faith Formation Sundays for the families and, of course, report card night — all success stories thanks to the hard work and dedication of our principal, Sister Patricia Brito, RJM and her fabulous team of administrators, faculty and staff. No wonder we are the largest Catholic school in the Archdiocese!

In December, I celebrated my 40th Anniversary to the priesthood with a parish Mass on Sunday, December 7. It was a beautiful gathering of family, friends and parishioners (young and old). We prayed especially for vocations to the priesthood and to religious life at the Mass and I thank the children of the school for their special remembrances at the Mass on December 8 when we celebrated the Immaculate Conception.

Always know that you are welcome to visit and tour our beautiful facility, modern science labs, computer rooms, libraries, and fitness center, and most importantly, to enjoy seeing our wonderful students hard at work. We appreciate and depend upon your financial support for all of our programs as we continue to provide a quality Catholic education at a very moderate tuition. Blessings to you and to your family.

Sincerely,

Monsignor John Graham
Pastor



Dear Alumni and Friends of St. Raymond,

I hope you all had a joyful Christmas and I wish you and your families all the best in the New Year.

We started off September with strong enrollment, maintaining our place as the largest elementary school in the Archdiocese of New York. Now in our third year, we continue Common Core professional development and have completed the first of two Interim Assessments. Our academic program is strong and our faith formation program is even stronger. We recommit ourselves every day to educating our students in the Catholic faith and to providing them with the best faith-centered education available.

We had another successful VIP Reception in October, as well as our annual Halloween activities, and a visit from soldiers in honor of Veterans' Day in November. See the rest of the newsletter for our many Fall happenings.

Last month, we joined Monsignor Graham in celebrating the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. We participated in a special parish Mass on December 7 and recognized him at our school Mass for the feast of the Immaculate Conception on December 8. We cannot thank Monsignor enough for his support of and presence in our school; he is an integral part of our school's success. May God shower His blessings upon him and grant him many more years as our pastor.

We enter 2015 with much work to be done in the upcoming months of the school year. Our commitment to our mission is unwavering but we need your help to continue it. Each year, our parents receive a tuition increase of \$75-\$100. If we continue this pace, we will surely price ourselves out of Catholic education. YOUR HELP is ever so needed. The days of free or \$2-\$5 a month tuition are over. If we could raise \$90,000 per year, we would be able to maintain our tuition at its current rate. Truly, this would be a welcome gift. Please see the article and chart below for an explanation of our financial status and the back cover for our Financial Assistance Fund that will provide tuition aid for those in need.

Thank you for continued faith in us and your generosity. Again, our best wishes to you and your loved ones for a New Year of peace, prosperity and good health.

Gratefully,

Patricia Brito, RJM
Principal



A LOOK AT OUR FINANCIAL PICTURE — WHY WE NEED YOUR HELP

At St. Raymond Elementary School, we have worked hard to provide the best staff and resources available for the students entrusted to our care. However, our tuition does not cover the cost of educating a child. We rely on support from our parish, from alumni and friends and from the Archdiocese of New York to enable us to continue our mission. In addition, we have six women religious on our staff. Their contributed services save us \$200,000 annually because the stipends that they are paid are significantly lower than the salaries lay staff would receive for doing the same work.

St. Raymond Parish, under the guidance of Monsignor Graham, has been very generous to our school. Parish support has made it possible for us to continue providing an excellent education to all those who come here.

However, the parish cannot continue to subsidize our school indefinitely.

"We are very grateful to Monsignor Graham for all that he has done for St. Raymond Elementary School," says Sr. Patricia. "If you take a look at the chart to the right, you will see that our expenses exceed our revenue. To date, the parish has been covering the shortfall. But we can no longer look to the parish for additional support nor can we raise tuition to meet the cost of educating a child. Our families simply could not afford it. Our goal is for the school to become self-sustaining. So we are asking our alumni and friends to help us. We have created a Financial Assistance Fund to provide tuition aid for our students who need it. Please see the article on the back cover for more details. We appreciate all that you do for us and ask you to be as generous as you can."

Fiscal Year 2014 (9/1/13-8/31/14)

Revenue (including tuition, fundraising*, Archdiocesan grants)	\$4,871,492
Parish Support**	1,278,838
Total Revenue	6,150,330
Total Expenses.....	6,227,014
Net revenue under expenses	(\$76,684)
Enrollment.....	944
Cost per student***	6,596.41

*Fundraising includes donations from alumni and other friends.

** Parish Support Breakdown

Parishioner Tuition Discount	67,400
Inner-City Scholarship	
Fund Investment Income	325,000
Parish Support.....	886,438
TOTAL.....	1,278,838

***The cost of educating a student is significantly higher than the \$3,800 tuition (blended amount) that the school receives per student.

FIRST QUARTER ROUNDUP

The first quarter of the 2014-2015 school year was very busy. We prayed, we learned, we celebrated and we shared with others.



Mass of the Holy Spirit

Msgr. Graham delivers his homily to students and guests at the Mass of the Holy Spirit, the first Mass of the school year, in our auditorium.



Halloween Activities

Students in 1-103, Ms. Capalbo's First Grade class, made slime for Halloween while learning a lesson in polymers.



Scholastic Book Fair

Students in Class 4-204 look over the books on sale at the annual Scholastic Book Fair in our Main Library during the week of October 20, 2014.



Soldiers Visit Fifth Grade

Sergeant Kevin Singer (left) and Staff Sergeant Edwin Caba of the Army National Guard 69th Infantry, based at the Armory in Manhattan, visited St. Raymond's in honor of Veterans' Day, after an invitation by Ms. Caitlin Regan, who teaches Class 5-108.



Dress Down Day

Students throughout the school had the chance to dress down on November 17 to raise money to purchase turkeys for Thanksgiving for local families in need. Some of our students in Ms. Hughes class, 8-306, dressed down to support the cause.



Thanksgiving at St. Raymond's

Grades Pre-K through 5 participated in our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive. Msgr. Graham blessed the food at the Thanksgiving Children's Mass in the school auditorium.

Following the Mass, students in Grade 8 helped our maintenance staff load the truck with the baskets for delivery to local families.



After-school students stand in front of the "big turkey" that After-school assistant Mrs. Hilda Garcia created. All the things students are grateful for are written on the turkey.

ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUND

PHOTO BY VINNIE AMASSÉ



St. Raymond Elementary School offers our students a solid Catholic education — a strong academic program immersed in the Catholic faith and a broad array of extracurricular activities, in a safe, supportive and loving environment. We provide excellent value for a reasonable tuition. Sadly, many families are unable to send their children here because they can't afford the tuition. Others send them, only to have to leave when they can no longer keep up with the payments. We do provide scholarships for some students on an as needed basis but they aren't sufficient to keep up with the demand. To address the need for tuition assistance, we have formed the St. Raymond Elementary School Financial Assistance Fund. Through your generosity, you can give our current students the opportunity to remain in our school and incoming students the chance to join our school community.

For our alumni, here is a chance to give back to the school that gave you so much. Consider making a donation on your own or joining with your classmates to give a one-year scholarship in honor of your graduation year.

Catholic education lasts forever. Won't you help provide our students with a lifelong gift?

LEVELS OF GIVING

Catholic Educator	\$3,475* (one year's tuition)
Catholic Leader	\$1,738 (half-year's tuition)
Catholic Supporter	\$869 (quarter-year's tuition)
Catholic Booster	\$348 (one month's tuition)

**All tuition figures are for the parishioner rate for Kindergarten through Grade 8.*

Pre-K and non-parishioner rates are higher. Individuals seeking financial assistance will be required to complete a financial assistance form.

To make a contribution, mail a check to St. Raymond Elementary School, 2380 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462. Please put "Financial Assistance Fund" in the memo line.

Donations can be made online through our credit card vendor. Go to www.NYCharities.org/app/straymondelementary/faf. If you have any questions, please contact Elaine Nole in the Advancement Office, 718-597-3232 x2232.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL VIP RECEPTION!

A record number of guests joined us on Sunday, October 19 for our annual VIP Reception. This year, for their contributions to St. Raymond Elementary School, to the community and to education, we honored Jane Ward Burns, Class of '62; Jim McQuade, Class of '60, Schuyler Hill Funeral Home; Geri Sciortino of The Bronx Design Group; Denis Fatovic, Douglas Roth, Joseph Russo and Phil Sergio of RMR Wealth Builders, Inc.; and the Sullivan/McPhillips Family.

"We are proud to honor these individuals for their commitment to our community, to our school and to education," said our principal, Sr. Patricia Brito, RJM.

VIP Reception guests included faculty and staff, some of our priests and Sisters, parishioners and school families, alumni and others. Thanks to the generosity of many local vendors, we raffled off a number of gift baskets and bags, in addition to our 50/50 raffle. For more details and photos, see the September-October E-News posted on our website, www.straymondelementary.org.



PHOTO BY LAURA STONE

(L-R) Honoree Kevin Sullivan with Daniel Sullivan and Frances Sullivan-Schulz, RMR Wealth Builders honorees Denis Fatovic, Ryan DeGrau, and Joseph Russo, Monsignor John Graham, RMR Wealth Builders' Phil Sergio, St. Raymond Elementary School principal Sister Patricia Brito, honoree Geri Sciortino of The Bronx Design Group and honoree Jim McQuade of Schuyler Hill Funeral Home.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Want to keep current on the latest happenings at St. Raymond Elementary School?



Join our email list and receive our monthly E-News.
Email alumni@straymondelementary.org and we'll add you to our list.



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St. Raymond Elementary School Newsletter

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