

SAINT AUGUSTINE SAINTS NEWS



A Wise and Proven Investment

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Alumni, Supporters and Friends of St Augustine School,

I recently came across several book reviews of a work written by two law professors (Margaret Brinig and Nicole Garnett) from the University of Notre Dame entitled, *Lost Classroom, Lost Community: Catholic Schools' Importance in Urban America*.

I haven't actually purchased the book yet but after reading a dozen and a half reviews of it, it seems that the authors set out to achieve two primary goals: To make a compelling case that the closing of Catholic schools have a verifiably negative impact on the neighborhoods where that school once resided in terms of crime and economic decline. Second, the authors argue – in light of this data – for government assistance in the form of tuition tax credits or vouchers for families attending the Catholic schools currently operating

– especially those in urban centers.

For the sake of this column, I will only comment on the first goal: ***proving through research the demonstrably positive impact that Catholic schools have on neighborhoods across this country.*** What excites me is that two professors methodically lay out compelling data to back up something that I, and many others, have been insisting on for several years: Catholic schools in our cities in general, and in the Black community in particular, have arguably, historically speaking, been more responsible for the Black middle class in the United States than any other institution. Despite this, in the past two decades more than 1,600 Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. have closed including more than two dozen in our own Archdiocese. This, of course, is a real source of sadness for me. How many children have been lost? How many families? Have we cared enough to even bother keeping statistics on what happens



to the children that once flourished in our now closed schools?

These are hard but necessary questions. But make no mistake about it: You, the supporters and friends of Saint Augustine Catholic School, are the joy that overcomes my sorrow every time! Our Catholic school remains “open for business” and continues to provide lifelong lessons and life-forming principles of faith, hard work, leadership and service that will help our children be the leaders of tomorrow in their families, neighborhoods, civic

continued on page 7

Inside
pages

Speaking through our actions.....2

From the Principal's Desk.....3

*Eighth Graders fundraiser for
New York trip.....4*

Christmas Show.....5

Our Junior Saints.....6

*St. Augustine Pastor featured
in video.....7*

Speaking through our actions

Bill Murray



My father, James E. Murray, passed away on December 9, after a bout with cancer and dementia, at the age of 84. The funeral service took place at Church of the Little Flower in Bethesda four days before Christmas.

During the last year or two of his life, and following his passing, I have been reflecting on my father and his legacy. I am not so much proud that he was a successful lawyer who focused on mortgage-backed securities and served as president of Fannie Mae for two years, as I am about his character.

One of the points that Little Flower's pastor, Rev. Msgr. Peter Vaghi, said during his homily at the funeral service was that my father spoke loudly through his actions. He did not always say a great deal. While there were certainly times when I would have preferred it if he said more, I am struck by the example my father set through his deeds.

I remember growing up, through my father's friendship with the late Rev. Msgr. J. Joshua Mundell, who was pastor for decades at Immaculate Conception Church in Shaw, my father sponsored a student in the grade school and assisted her with attending Catholic middle school and high school. The young lady became a friend of my family's, but I don't think I would have known that my father helped her receive a Catholic education were it not for someone else in the family mentioning it.

I think my father had a sense of solidarity, which is an important concept for Catholics. As a man who grew up in a small town in Iowa, he could relate to someone who had potential but needed a bit of help to achieve her goals. Even though my father grew up in a farming community with about 1,000 people, the town of Bancroft, Iowa, has one of the most beautiful Catholic churches in Northern Iowa, St. John's, and my father was fortunate to attend the parish school, which closed within the last 20 years. The young lady eventually graduated from Mount St. Mary's University and is doing quite well.

Later on, as a Knight of Malta in the Federal Association, my father helped spearhead a fundraising project for the Holy Family Hospital, a maternity hospital in Bethlehem. Again, hardly a word was spoken about this initiative. I know that if it were me doing the good deed for people living half a world away in the Holy Lands, I would probably be writing press releases and going on a social media campaign to talk about my good work! But my father came from a different generation, one that really valued obligation and responsibility, it appears to me. He was more comfortable talking about Notre Dame football and basketball – enduring through some lean years, particularly for the hoops team – since he followed his alma mater's teams religiously.

My father's philosophy reminds me of a St. Augustine Catholic School alumnus and parishioner who has given hundreds of hours of his time and been very generous in his support for the parish and school. I remember talking with him several years ago about it, and he said that he just did what he was supposed to

be doing. Really? I don't know about you, but people like this parishioner and my father sure are a challenge to me!

And it strikes me that among the parishioners, alumni, parents and friends of St. Augustine Catholic School, that there are many quiet doers, those who have a strong sense of solidarity with our school and its children. Consider for a moment that since July 1, the start of our fiscal year, we have received nearly \$300,000 in donations from more than 150 individuals, corporations, and foundations (as of late January), which includes that which is given through the monthly collection in church, through the mail in response to our newsletter and appeals, through our school website, through our outreach to family foundations, and other means, such as the United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns. Some donors have been giving to us for the last nine years, since the parish began the process of taking responsibility for the school's financing and management. Our goal by June 30 is to raise at least \$450,000, which helps keep the school among the most affordable in the Archdiocese of Washington (\$5,500 per student in 2016-2017). During an era when so many urban Catholic parish schools have closed, we are on to something at St. Augustine, providing a sustainable revenue source that our school can rely on, based on grassroots support.

Thank you for being a part of this success.

Bill Murray has been working with St. Augustine in development since 2008, and you can reach him at 240-418-5427 or bmurray@saintaugustine-dc.org.

Saint Augustine School "A Hidden Gem"

From the Principal's Desk



Photo by Michael Hoyt

The mission of Saint Augustine is to ensure that every child succeeds academically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Academically, students are educated holistically-to be able to interact with their peers. The faculty and staff see the mission of educating the whole child as a call to serve, as is outlined in the Parents/Students Handbook. In addition, teachers do not come to work unprepared. They arrive early to educate their assigned students with passion to build a better future. Differentiated instruction, which means giving different levels of instruction to students based on their understanding and needs, is the reason why every child succeeds at St. Augustine. The majority of the students who graduate from St. Augustine have proceeded through college because of the solid education they received from their alma mater.

Since there are many people in our local area who do not know of the riches of St. Augustine Catholic School, which was founded in 1858 by a faith community that was worshipping in the basement of what

is today St. Matthew's Cathedral, I decided to title this column, "A Hidden Gem."

Our vision and core values, rather than just be spoken words, form our guiding principle. Students are taught to be respectful, kind to one another, treat every adult with love, have humility like that of Christ, and always listen, and love to learn. As a result, students are willing to take challenging responsibilities. They have shown great sportsmanship, which is particularly tested when they suffer defeat. They have participated in academic, athletic, and other competitions in the local district and national levels, such as spelling bee, fencing, youth leadership, football, flag football, Girl Scouts, soccer, robotics, chess, and pre-engineering. We will take this time to give them a shout out and congratulate all our students past and parents for making us proud. They are our generational, "Hidden Gem(s)." We want our students to remember to strive for the best, and share in our mission statement, broken into three parts.

Our mission statement is:

Saint Augustine Catholic School primary task is the communication of the mission and message of Christ. We provide this through standard based curriculum, community service, and leadership opportunities in a global society.

Students are taught to be respectful, kind to one another, treat every adult with love, humility like that of Christ. Most importantly, they learn to love and love to learn, as St. Augustine of Hippo said. Solid education that is received from their alma mater and the vision and core values that form our guiding principles are not just spoken but lived realities every day in our school.

Academically, students are educated holistically-to be able to interact with the rest of their peers across the globe. Our students have participated in youth leadership development, field trip visits to the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, art museum visits, performing arts, liturgical dance, drama, and the school band, just to mention a few. We design our curriculum, in conjunction with the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Office, to build and strengthen our students' faith and spirituality.

Bravo for all our students do and for their great accomplishments. Thank you for your support of St. Augustine Catholic School.

Sincerely,

Sister Gloria Agumagu, HHCJ

Eighth Graders fundraise for New York trip



Manning Hall (left) and EmnetYohannes advertise the coffee and donut stand.



EmnetYohannes (left) with her classmate, Manning Hall.



EmnetYohannes enjoys a cup of tea.

During the last three months of the year, St. Augustine Catholic School eighth graders set up and staffed a table in front of the school during dismissal time – weather permitting – and on other days setting up shop outside the school’s main office.

The purpose of this activity? The students sold coffee, tea, and pastries for \$2.00 each to fund their graduation trip to New York City in June 2017. In addition to their fundraising hustle, the students showed strong teamwork and interfaced with fellow students, staff, and school visitors. The graduation trip will cost at least \$600.00 per student.

On a rainy November afternoon, the day after the Presidential Election, three female eighth graders, EmnetYohannes, Manning Hall, and Tioluwanifabunmi, cheerfully sold afternoon refreshments to their customers outside the main office.

TioluwaniFabunmi said that the

students may have to raise more than \$600.00 per eighth grade student because of potential extra trip expenses. She said that she and her classmates are prepared to sell coffee, tea and pastries as long as

it takes, and that they will do other fundraising activities, such as car washes.

Please pray for our eighth graders, as they await word of high school admissions decisions.



TioluwaniFabunmi pours a cup of coffee for another satisfied customer, while Manning Hall looks on.

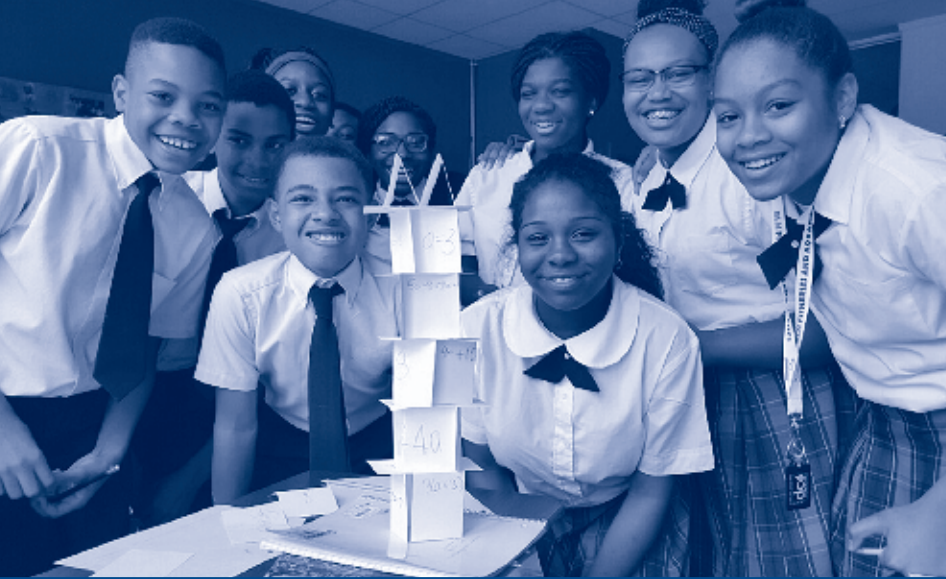


Christmas Show

St. Augustine Annual Christmas Production, Prepare the Way of the Lord. December 21, 2016.

Mr. Neptune Pringle, III, our Director of Music and the Performing Arts, directed the production.





Project Based Learning

Under the watchful eye of Mr. Patrick Respers, our middle school Math teacher, a group of St. Augustine eighth graders engage in project based learning (PBL). PBL is a teaching method that enables students to gain deeper knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge.



Our Junior Saints

Kari Noelle Delemar, a fifth-grade student at St. Augustine who created an attractive Nativity scene, was featured in the December issue of "Junior Saints," in the Catholic Standard, the English-language newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Olivia Williams, a seventh-grade student at St. Augustine, was also featured in the same issue of "Junior Saints," with her answer to the question, "What does the gift of Jesus mean to you?" She wrote, "The gift of Jesus is very important to me. Without Jesus I wouldn't be where I am right now! Jesus allowed me to get through each day. I always have faith in Him, and I never lose hope. Believing in and spreading the word of God is my duty as a Catholic."

We congratulate our Junior Saints and their teachers and thank the Catholic Standard for highlighting them!

Spelling Bee Champs

Congratulations to the following St. Augustine Catholic School students, who will be representing the school at the 35th Annual District of Columbia Spelling Bee, sponsored by the *Washington Informer* and Washington Informer Charities.

First Place - Inachide Achikem (Sixth Grade)

Second Place - Maurice Hall (Seventh Grade)

Third Place - FevenTadele (Fifth Grade)

St. Augustine Pastor featured in video



The pastor of St. Augustine Catholic Church, Fr. Patrick A. Smith, had a busy January.

As though praying an hour each day, baptizing infants, counseling couples getting ready for marriage, burying the faithfully departed, offering Mass, and administering a parish and school were not enough, Fr. Smith was featured in a vocations video sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington, as well as an article in the *Catholic Standard*, the English-language newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington. He also delivered the homily at an Archdiocese of Washington Mass to commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ordained a priest in 1990 and pastor at St. Augustine since 2004, Fr. Smith was featured in a two-minute vocations video produced by the Archdiocese of Washington that one can view on the St. Augustine Catholic School website (www.staug-dc.org) or YouTube. The video, which came out in January, focuses on St. Augustine Catholic School as a place where Fr. Smith exercises his priestly ministry, in addition to his pastoral ministry within the parish.

In the January 5, 2017, issue of the *Catholic Standard*, Mark Zimmerman,

editor, wrote a story about Fr. Smith, in an edition that commemorated the 50th anniversary of Donald Cardinal Wuerl, the Archdiocese of Washington. The story is titled, "Supporting Catholic school is a legacy for St. Augustine Parish and its pastor." One can read the article on the St. Augustine School website (www.staug-dc.org).

In addition, Fr. Smith delivered the homily at the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass sponsored by the Archdiocese of Washington, which took place on Saturday, Jan. 14 at St. Thomas More Parish in Southeast Washington. The main celebrant of the Mass was Bishop Mario Dorsonville, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington. Fr. Smith called Dr. King a "prophet" whom the faithful should seek to imitate.

Correction

In the Fall 2016 issue of the St. Augustine Saints newsletter (Vol. 8, No. 3), the last name of Christopher Marc Clarke '86 was misspelled in the In Memoriam section on Page 3 as well as on Page 6 in the "Holy Name Society Scholarship," article on Page 6. In addition, on the Page 6, article, Nicholas Clarke '16 is the son of Vincent Michael Clarke '84, and his aunt is Ingrid Clarke-Marshall '89. We regret these errors.

continued from page 1

From the Pastor's Desk

organizations, parishes, schools, government, elected offices, and even the Church!

If you ever had any doubt, this book gives compelling evidence of one more thing too: Your support is making a difference in the lives of our children! For that, I remain forever grateful.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Patrick A. Smith
Pastor

Upcoming Events

Science Fair

April 27, 2017 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

We are looking for judges to evaluate our students' work. Particularly if you have a science or engineering background, please let us know! It is not necessary to stay for the entire six hours. Please contact Bill Murray at bmurray@saintaugustine-dc.org or 240-418-5427 to volunteer.

Fr. Raymond Kemp Golden Anniversary

**REV. RAYMOND KEMP
GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF
PRIESTLY ORDINATION**

May 7, 2017

12:30 p.m. Mass

2:30 p.m. Picnic

St. Augustine Catholic Church
1425 V Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20009

One can also make a donation at the school's website www.staug-dc.org.

Office of Alumni Relations/Development
St. Augustine Catholic School (PreK-3 to 8)
1421 V Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
202-667-2608

Non-Profit Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 966
Southern Maryland

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SAINT AUGUSTINE SAINTS NEWS • VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1 • Winter 2017

www.staug-dc.org

Rev. Patrick A. Smith, pastor

fatherpat@saintaugustine-dc.org
202-265-1470 (church office)

Sister Gloria Agumagu, HHCJ, principal

sistergloria@saintaugustine-dc.org
202-667-2608

Bill Murray, development officer

bmurray@saintaugustine-dc.org
240-418-5427

Story ideas for the newsletter? Please contact **Bill Murray** at bmurray@saintaugustine-dc.org.

Would you like to update your address for our records?
Please complete an alumni contact form at www.staug-dc.org/alumni.html.

We welcome inquiries from alumni, former students and anyone interested in our school.