



SAINT AUGUSTINE SAINTS NEWS

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SINCE 1858

For Parents, Alumni, Parishioners and Friends of St. Augustine School in Washington D.C.

Anchored in Hope

Dear Alumni, Parishioners, and Friends of St. Augustine Catholic School,

Warm greetings to you and your family; may this newsletter bring a sense of joy and hope. As we reflect on the past months, we are reminded of the enduring theme that has guided us throughout this season: "Anchored in Hope." Hope has been our anchor, steadying us amidst challenges and inspiring us to live out our mission with joy and purpose.

At St. Augustine Catholic School, our primary task remains clear: the communication of the person and message of Jesus Christ. This sacred mission continues to shape every aspect of our school community, guiding our students, staff, and families in faith-filled action.

During the second quarter, our students and families lived out the mission of St. Augustine Catholic School in concrete ways, demonstrating remarkable generosity and compassion. We

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



participated in two major projects: the Canned Food Drive for the Little Sisters of the Poor and Hurricane Relief Donations for two Catholic Schools affected by Hurricane Melissa in Jamaica. Through the collaborative efforts of our church and school community, we raised over \$2,800 in monetary donations to support our brothers and sisters in Jamaica. These acts of charity reflect the heart of our mission—to communicate the person and message of Jesus Christ—by

teaching our students to embody faith, service, and solidarity in their daily lives.

This spirit of hope and generosity continued into our Christmas celebrations, where students showcased their talents through songs, dances, instrumental performances, and a heartfelt enactment of the Nativity scene. Their creativity and joyful participation beautifully reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas: the birth of Jesus, the ultimate embodiment of hope and love. We are especially grateful to Mr. Marvin Ford, who directed the show and provided the musical accompaniment, and Mrs. Emily Williams, a parent who choreographed the performances, for their dedication and support. The Christmas celebration not only honored the season but also brought the values at the heart of our mission to life, allowing our students to share the message of Christ with the entire school community.

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Where Are They Now?

In 1962, Sister Ricardo Maddox, OSP decided to join a religious order in Maryland whose foundation stretches back to 1829, after the first Black Catholics settled in the United States after fleeing the country that became Haiti.

After graduating from all-girls St. Frances Academy in her native Baltimore in 1961, a year later, she decided to follow in the footsteps of her older sister, Ann Joseph Maddox, and become an Oblate Sisters of Providence, joining the motherhouse, which was then located on Mosher Street in Baltimore. She's been a religious sister now for 62 years.

The Oblate Sisters ministered at St. Augustine School for more than 90 years, ending this work during the 1990s, as the number of sisters in their order had declined. Sister Ricardo spent 19 years at St. Augustine, mostly in the 1970s and 1980s, first as a classroom teacher and then as principal.

"I thought I'd never become a principal," Sister Ricardo said of the 1981-1982 decision of Fr. John Mudd, then the pastor at St. Augustine, to promote her to the principal position. She had no aspirations to become an administrator, enjoying classroom teaching.

"Father and I worked well together," Sister Ricardo said.

She served as principal for 10 years and noted that there were challenges but that she enjoyed working with the students and their families.

She noted one incident in the 1980s, when she and Mrs. Betty Washington, who served as the



Where Are They Now is a feature in our newsletter that profiles former Saint Augustine School staff, as well as former parish leaders.

school's librarian, went to the bank to deposit tuition payments. Two Metropolitan Police officers stopped the two women at the bank, telling them the police wanted to question them, since they were "of interest."

The women were brought back to St. Augustine, where someone ran to get Fr. Mudd, who helped sort out the matter, telling the police that both women were "innocent." Sister Ricardo does not know what the police suspected her or Mrs. Washington of doing.

The police came back two weeks later to apologize, but even though she now laughs about the event, Sister Ricardo said she felt upset about what happened and didn't want to accept the apology. "They wanted to bother us," she recounted.

"It's going," Sister Ricardo said of the canonization cause of Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange, the foundress of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first African American superior general. Sister Ricardo noted that the Oblate Sisters have a procurator

for the cause of canonization in Rome, but the process of canonization tends to move slowly.

To be canonized a saint in the Catholic Church - which means that the Church is testifying that Mother Lange is in Heaven and can intercede for people on earth and the poor souls in Purgatory - the Oblate Sisters of Providence and their supporters will need to document two miracles that have occurred through the intercession of Mother Lange.

The Oblate foundress was declared venerable by Pope Francis, which means that she lived a life of "heroic virtue," according to the Catholic Church's investigation into her life.

Sister Ricardo noted that her religious name - Mary Ricardo - was approved by the Oblate Sisters after her sibling, Sister Ann Joseph, suggested it, even though Sister Ricardo has two names she preferred. Back in those days, the young religious did not know their religious name until they were on the altar making first vows.

Mother Lange and her spirit have informed Sister Ricardo's life. In founding the first Black Catholic school in the U.S., St. Frances Academy for Colored Girls, the foundress showed great courage and resilience in a slave holding and racially segregated state. Mother Lange and her sisters bravely served as nurses during a cholera epidemic in 1832, and they also dealt with discrimination and lack of stable housing.

Like Mother Lange, Sister Ricardo doesn't see herself as an activist or rabble-rouser, but she had learned

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Roy Castleberry, Jr. '22 speaks at CBN-DC Gala



As if winning a John Carroll Society essay scholarship award wasn't good enough, Roy Castleberry Jr. '22 took it a step further on Nov. 6.

The Archbishop Carroll High School senior spoke before 320 people at the Catholic Business Network DC Annual Gala at the Four Seasons Hotel about his Catholic education.

"I'm proud of where I started," Castleberry said. "I'm grateful for where I am."

Introduced by Archbishop Carroll President Larry Savoy as "one of the best students" he had seen, Castleberry told the audience about how he came to St. Augustine from a local public school with 300

students, and that St. Augustine became more of a personal experience.

He learned at St. Augustine that "faith isn't just something you talk about. It is something that guides your life." In fact, integrity, respect, discipline, (and) humility" are lived as daily virtues, he added.

He paid tribute to Sister Bibiana Okoro, HHCJ, the former religion teacher and director of religious education at St. Augustine. "She helped me grow," he said.

Castleberry was accompanied at the CBN-DC Gala by his parents, Roy Castleberry, Sr., and Pamela Castleberry, and his brother, Ryan Castleberry '24. Savoy told the audience that Castleberry is a Boy Scout and an Eagle Scout who has been involved in Peer Ministry at Archbishop Carroll and who "most importantly, has a love of God."

"I fell in love with the Mass," Castleberry said of the Friday morning weekly Masses he attended at St. Augustine.

"That kind of environment changes

you," Castleberry said. He said that he does not know what the future holds after his graduation from Carroll this spring, but he is not worried.

He is part of the Advanced Media Program at the Jim Vance Media Center at Archbishop Carroll and has honed his writing skills and learned a great deal about journalism and media through these studies.

"Pro Deo et Patria, thank you." Castleberry said, in concluding his speech. In Latin, this means, "For God and Country," and it is the motto of Archbishop John Carroll, who was both a patriot and a Catholic clergyman.

Last Spring, Castleberry won second place in the Margaret Mary Missar High School Essay Competition, with John Carroll Society, when he wrote about the healing powers of the Eucharist, when he was attending a funeral Mass for a St. Augustine School and Archbishop Carroll High School student who was murdered two years ago. JCS is a group of lay professionals in the Archdiocese of Washington.



Roy Castleberry Jr. '22, with his younger brother, Ryan Castleberry '24.



Roy Castleberry, Jr. '22 with Fr. Patrick Smith, pastor of St. Augustine Catholic Church, and Larry Savoy, president of Archbishop Carroll High School, at the CBN-DC Gala.

Fr. Kemp receives Clergy of the Year award at CBN-DC Gala

Catholic Business Network-DC during its 11th annual Gala on Nov. 6, recognized St. Augustine's former pastor, Fr. Raymond Kemp, with its Clergy of the Year honor.

During his acceptance speech, before an audience of about 320 people at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown, Fr. Kemp paid tribute to St. Augustine.

"There's no place like it," Fr. Kemp said of St. Augustine Church, the oldest Black Catholic church in the city.

"It's the God we meet through the struggle," Fr. Kemp said, when explaining the faith and resilience of Black Catholics. He began serving at St. Augustine as a newly ordained priest and later served as pastor there and at Holy Comforter/St. Cyprian, also in the city.

He paid tribute to Gabriel and Mary Coakley, founding parishioners at St. Augustine, who successfully petitioned President Abraham Lincoln so that they could hold a Strawberry Festival on July 4, 1964, at the White House, an event attended by about 1,000 "Black folk," in Kemp's words, which raised \$1,200 applied toward the mortgage at St. Augustine School, after the parish was founded by Black Catholics worshipping in the basement of St. Matthew's Church (now Cathedral).

Fr. Kemp acknowledged a number of people in attendance, such as John T. Butler, a CBN-DC board member who is a longtime St. Augustine parishioner. He recalled giving an acoustic guitar to Butler and his sister, Mary Butler Armstead, in



Fr. Raymond Kemp / Photo by Steve Kemp

1968 when he met them, as they were launching a folk music group at St. Augustine.

Butler served as co-master of ceremonies for the event, along with Justin Silvers, CBN president. In that role, Butler read an introduction

that Fr. John Mudd, another former pastor of St. Augustine, had written but could not deliver because he was not well enough to attend the CBN-DC Gala. In the introduction, Fr. Mudd credited Fr. Kemp with helping to better introduce him to the richness of African-American Catholics in Washington, DC, and Fr. Kemp testified that one can't understand Catholic education in the city without understanding Black Catholic education.

In addition, Fr. Kemp asked two tables of St. Augustine attendees to stand and be recognized by those at the event, including Fr. Patrick A. Smith, pastor, and Dr. Anika Logan, principal of St. Augustine School.

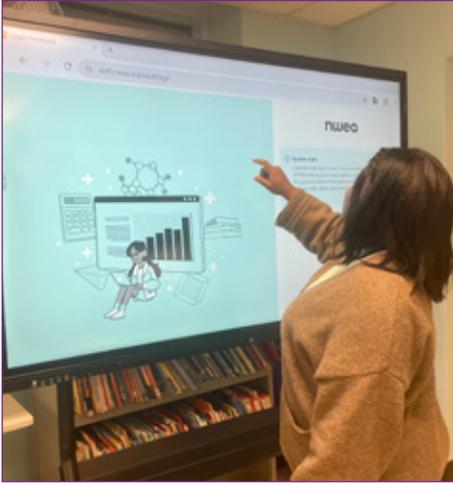
CBN-DC has given \$1.6 million on grants to city Catholic schools, such as St. Augustine School.

First Holy Communion

After studying under the direction of Sister Emmanuella Ladipo, HHCJ, our director of religious education, brothers Marto (7th grade, dressed in a white shirt) Luke (8th grade, wearing a sweater) receive their First Holy Communion from Fr. Patrick A. Smith at the 8:15 a.m. School Mass on Dec. 12 at St. Augustine Catholic Church in December.



Revamped Media Center, with a parishioner's help



When she became principal at Saint Augustine Catholic School less than two years ago, Dr. Anika Logan knew she wanted to revamp the school's library and media center.

Last month, with the help of longtime parishioner Jacques A. Benovil, Dr. Logan got her wish.

Benovil, who serves as St. Augustine Parish's photographer, notified Dr. Logan that his company was moving its offices and downsizing. As a result, he wanted to facilitate the donation of seeking to upgrade furniture and computers and was interested in donating its existing equipment to benefit the school.

"St. Augustine School was my first thought," when he learned that his company was disposing of the equipment, Benovil said. He joined the parish in 2000 and works in information technology.

Dr. Logan gladly said "yes," and the school has removed its long tables, which took up much of the space in the room previously and were placed back to back, to enable groups of 15 to 20 or more students to gather there and take standardized tests on computers. The school installed a smart board,

as well as newer computers, shorter tables, a couch, and armchairs.

Benovil's company donated as many as 30 beige knoll chairs, two rolling media stations, three 70-inch TVs, 41 computer monitors, seven white boards, a Scribe digital white board, as well as an HP 5200 color printer and a color Dell printer, both with toner. The school also received as many as 21 power-enabled teak tables that fold upward, and beige tables that fold downward and can be daisy-chained. The school also received red and white vibe smart white boards.

The school uses the room, which is located in the basement of the school building, for a number of purposes, including taking iXL assessments three times a year, to enable the school to better measure student academic performance and provide individualized learning plans.

The result is a more familiar, comfortable feel in the room, one that gives instructors, including Dr. Olga Williams (librarian/technology instructor) the opportunity to make computer-assisted demonstrations for students with the smartboard.



In an initiative to support two Catholic schools in Jamaica in the wake of Hurricane Melissa, in December, we raised over \$2,800 from our parish and school.

Four of our school's staff members, including our principal, Dr. Anika Logan, have Jamaican roots. The third-most intense Atlantic hurricane on record, Hurricane Melissa made landfall in Jamaica on Oct. 28, 2025, as a Category 5 storm, with winds of up to 185 miles an hour.

The shepherd makes his rounds

It was days after Washington's relatively new archbishop had announced he has a relatively non-aggressive form of cancer that he was having treated.

But there he was in Southeast Washington, in the Congress Heights neighborhood, offering a Saturday Vigil Mass on Nov. 8 to a church that was less-than-half-full.

One can't fault Robert Cardinal McElroy for not trying.

He had come to St. Thomas More Catholic Church to commemorate the Knights of Peter Claver's anniversary of being established in the Archdiocese of Washington. A Catholic fraternal organization formed in 1909 in Mobile, Ala., when the Knights of Columbus were still a segregated organization in substantial parts of the country, KPC started in the Archdiocese of Washington in 2000, after Bishop Leonard Olivier persuaded the late James Cardinal Hickey to allow the organization to begin its work in our archdiocese.

With headquarters in New Orleans, the Knights of Peter Claver are a very unique organization in the fact that they are a Black Catholic organization, and women and children can join the Knights. They have many similar activities as the Knights of Columbus, such as doing charitable works, helping form their members, and advocating for social justice.

Like many community organizations in the U.S., the KPC membership in the District and Maryland skews toward an older demographic, but it was impressive to meet members from Alexandria, Va., Southern Maryland, and Baltimore, with the

Development Corner



Knights dressed in dark suits, and the Ladies Auxiliary wearing white dresses. What they perhaps lack in numbers when compared to an organization like the Knights of Columbus, KPC seems to make up for in their spirit.

One would think on a Saturday night, the Archbishop of Washington would have multiple obligations in tending to a large flock that extends in five counties of Maryland and Washington, D.C., but there was Cardinal McElroy, the tall, Harvard-educated cleric from California, in the parish hall after Mass, having dinner with us.

It turned out that Cardinal McElroy had joined the Knights of Peter Claver while he was Archbishop of San Diego, and the local Ladies Auxiliary leader who spoke at the end of Mass urged him to join the local chapter.

During his homily at Mass, Cardinal McElroy had told us, "You are God's building," reflecting on the feast of the Dedication of the Lateran

Basilica in Rome. When we reflect on God's word and take it to heart, each human person becomes "the most important building," he said, giving his homily without notes, standing in front of the altar.

Cardinal McElroy's words were inspiring and memorable, but like any good parent or parental figure, one could argue that his physical presence and example were more important than any words he spoke.

His presence was a reminder that despite the missteps and flaws, including closing so many parish schools that were important institutions in their neighborhoods, the Catholic Church does have the gift of presence.

Congress Heights is certainly not a neighborhood that sees many tourists passing through, and it does show the signs of struggle, but yet, there is St. Thomas More Catholic Church, with its longtime resident pastor, Fr. Raymond Moore, as well as St. Thomas More Catholic Academy, in addition to the Victory Youth Center, another Catholic apostolate, operating right next door. They haven't given up on Congress Heights.

Sometimes, actions and presence are more important than words.

Bill Murray has been working with Saint Augustine School since 2007, helping to develop support from individuals and foundation to support the school's mission. You can reach him at bmurray@saintaugustine-dc.org.

New Art teacher joins staff



Manique Blackman is a native of Bowie who graduated with a bachelor's degree in Art History from the University of Maryland. She came to study Art History after developing a passion for art and wanting to learn more about its historical development.

Ms. Blackman joined the teaching staff in November, after finding out about the open position, interested in Saint Augustine Catholic School in part because St. Augustine was her childhood church, where her

parents took her to Sunday School, in addition to attending Mass.

She has a studio practice, which includes drawing, ceramics, painting and other artwork and has taught Kindergarten through Fifth Grade children through a summer program. Ms. Blackman has also worked with toddlers through senior citizens through teaching visual arts, and she operates her own arts education business.

Ms. Blackman works at St. Augustine on Mondays and Tuesdays, teaching younger students on Mondays and older students on Tuesdays.

"I have a belief that all is possible with God's grace," she said. Ms. Blackman wants to help Saint Augustine's students to develop their art skills.

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From the principal

As we look forward to the new year, 2026, we remain committed to nurturing the hearts and minds of our students, partnering with families, and living our mission in concrete and meaningful ways. Your continued support and collaboration are invaluable.

Wishing you and your family a blessed New Year, filled with peace, joy, and hope.

Educationally yours,
Dr. Anika Logan

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Where Are They Now?

to stand for what she believes in.

In the Fall 2025, there were 37 Oblate Sisters, and they minister in Costa Rica, Miami, Fla., and Maryland. When Sister Ricardo joined, there were nearly 300 Oblate Sisters in the order, but unfortunately, in the 1960s, there was a mass exodus from the order.

"We're hanging in," Sister Ricardo said of the Oblates. She noted that five candidates are in formation now, which includes aspirancy, postulancy, novitiate and time as a junior sister. Two of the young sisters are Nigerian, while one is Ugandan, another is from Kenya, and a fifth is from Ghana. Africa is a continent where the Catholic Church is growing quickly, with many seminaries and convents full of candidates and vowed religious.

Alumni Notes



Nova (Tate) Y. Payton '94 has starred in the Olney Theater Cener's production of Hello, Dolly! this winter. Playing the lead role of Dolly Gallagher Levi, the soprano has performed since the beginning of the production, on Nov. 6.

A Gospel singer and native Washingtonian, Nova has performed in more than 150 major cities, and she directs the Gospel Choir at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church, N.W., as well as the fine arts department chair and choir director at Archbishop Carroll High School. Hello, Dolly! Completes its run at Olney on Jan. 4.

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Dr. Anika Logan, principal, addresses a group of prospective St. Augustine School parents at an open house, as Ronald Riley, Math Department chair, looks on.

In Memoriam

Harry Anderson '53
Janice Gaskin Foster
(Cordell Gill year)
Ann Nash '53
Rolumanin Quander
Doran Thomas '89

May the souls of the faithfully departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

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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.