

Religious Education

Newsletter Date
February 20, 2019

Lent: a Time to Ponder and Prepare by Pat Vanderpool

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that Jesus established the Church in order to bring souls to faith in God. One way the Church helps us to grow in faith is to give us the 40 days of the season of Lent to encourage us to reflect on the life/ death/ eternal life process and to help us prepare for the tremendous joy of the Easter season that follows.

We are encouraged to ponder the mysteries of life/ death/eternal life always, but especially during Lent. I believe the Church wants us to actually sit in this mystery and really wonder about the possibilities. Maybe a way to carry out the sacrificial part of the season might be to commit to some amount of time during Lent to be unoccupied and have nothing to do and use it to ponder these mysteries.

This is also a great time to talk to our children and students about this great mystery of life/death/ and eternal life. The Gospels are filled with the promise of heaven and the encouragement not to fear our bodily death. This is such an important message to make sure our young Catholics hear and appreciate. We must balance our conversations of death and dying with the truth of the dignity of human life and our eternal life in heaven.

When we consider the preparatory nature of Lent we have to ask for what it is that we are actually preparing? Of course, the celebration of Easter and the Resurrection of Jesus is a significant part of our preparation. But beyond that, as we have previously mentioned, we are pondering and preparing for eternal life.

When it comes to seeing Lent as a preparatory time we tend to think of it as work, toil, hardship, sort of a paying our dues kind of experience. I think of preparing for various undertakings like training for a marathon (exhilaration just before the race), studying for classes (walking on a podium to acquiring a degree) or even simply preparing food for a meal (sitting together and preparing to eat it). I think it is truly amazing that in God's plan, preparing for eternal life is also how we find true joy in this life as well.

We have a God who loves us so much that He became one of us to teach us how to become like Him. He loved us as a father in that when we failed to love Him initially (at the Fall in the Garden of Eden), He took on our failure, reconciled us to Himself and then continues to give each of us the grace we need so that we can choose to love as He loves. Our preparation while necessarily containing the components of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving can yet be a reflection of the real love of God for His people.



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A Parent's Perspective by Fred and Sue Reynolds

We have four children, all who started at St. Ann Montessori where learning about GOD is part of their own learning. We continue to send them to CCD every Wednesday, not because we want them to go, they WANT to go and share their excitement about GOD with friends! Sue and I feel that being part of the St. Ann Community is truly a blessing for our children and their Faith, but also for our own Faith development as individuals and as a family. We truly appreciate the St. Ann Religious Education Program, and Father Marotti/Deacon Mike for their support!

Safe Environment by Bobby Kinkela

All volunteers who work with children at St Ann's must be in contact with the Safe Environment Coordinator: Bobby Kinkela. Bobbyk@stannaugusta.org

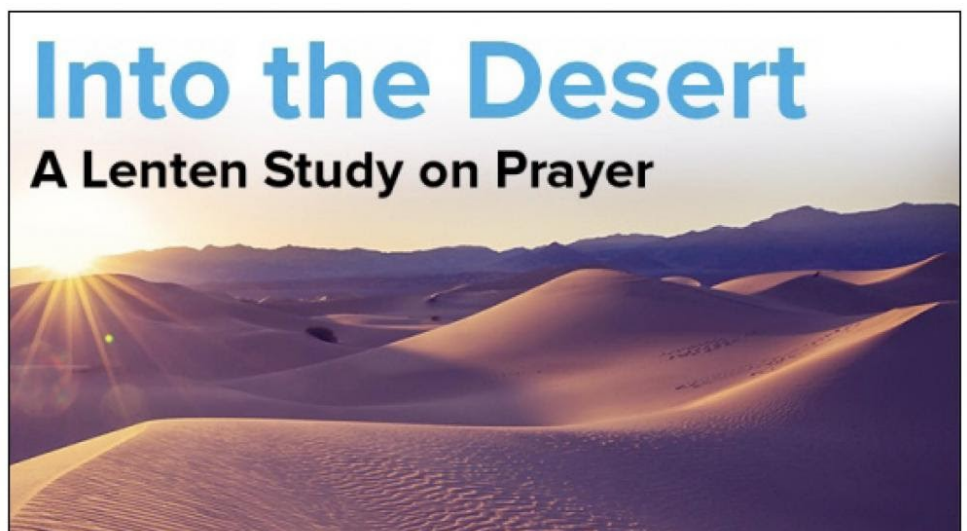
FORMED THE CATHOLIC FAITH.
ON DEMAND.

Formed by Bobby Kinkela

As we start lent on March 6th, consider using Formed as a way to study. Our faith can be deepened as we study more. With the digital tools, anyone with a smart phone can download formed App to grow deeper. You can also use Formed on a computer.

How do you sign up for Formed? Visit formed.org with a web browser.

- Click on Register (lower right of the page) Enter the Parish Code (DDGDR3)
- Enter your email and create a password (you need this to login later.



- Enjoy! The parish pays for this resource, so please use it and share!

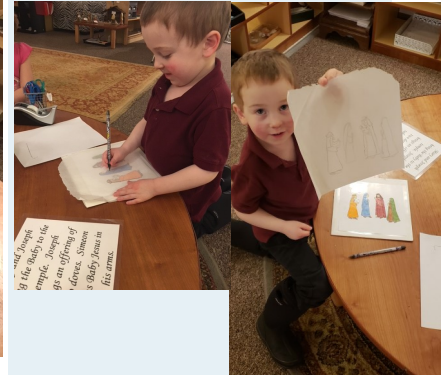
Mustard Seeds (Pre-school, Kindergarten)

Dear Mustard Seed Atrium Families,



While we have had very few Wednesday evening classes since our return from Christmas break due to the weather, we have packed quite a bit of learning into those times, starting with The Visit of the Magi, presented by Mrs. Hammond.

The children learned about the gifts presented to Jesus. They got to touch, see, and smell these treasures, and also made a crown of their own. The children learned that the gifts of the Magi proclaim Jesus' future role in Salvation History as King (gold), priest (Frankincense), and Savior (Myrrh - used for burial).



Last week, Mrs. Mollison led the lesson on the Presentation at the Temple. The children heard about two prophets, Simeon and Anna who were waiting a long time at the temple for the coming of the Messiah. Jesus, the light, was revealed and proclaimed by Simeon and Anna, who when prompted by the Holy Spirit, recognized him in the temple and in rejoicing they share the good news with everyone. We talked about how the Holy Spirit speaks to others about the great light and encouraged the children to ponder how He is speaking to them.



In the coming weeks, we will be learning about the gestures of the mass, as well as some of the parables (stories) Jesus told to teach us about what Heaven is like: The Mustard Seed, The Precious Pearl, The Good Shepherd, The Found Sheep, etc.



Sincerely,
Ms. Laurie Hammond

Mrs. Connie Mollison

Miss Myriam Troncoso



Good Shepherd (Kindergarten & 1st Grade)

Since our holiday break we have changed our liturgical color from white (celebration) back to green (ordinary time, or "growing time"). Fr. Marotti visited our classroom in January. The children had many great and imaginative questions to pose to him. But, Father is quick and managed to stay one step ahead of them. We finished learning the infancy narratives of Jesus, with the Presentation in the Temple story.



Saint stories are a favorite for this age group. We introduced, Mother Teresa, with the book Mother Teresa, the Smile of Calcutta. This story tied in with our maxim, to love your neighbor as yourself. We spent two sessions learning about Baptism. Your child may have asked you where their own baptismal candle is located in your home, or how you chose their Godparents. Hopefully they came home with questions and comments pertaining to their own very special Baptismal day. They are taught about water being used as a sign of cleansing from sin. The chrism oil as a sign of strength. The white garment as a sign of purity. And the light (candle), lit from the Easter candle, as a sign of Christ now

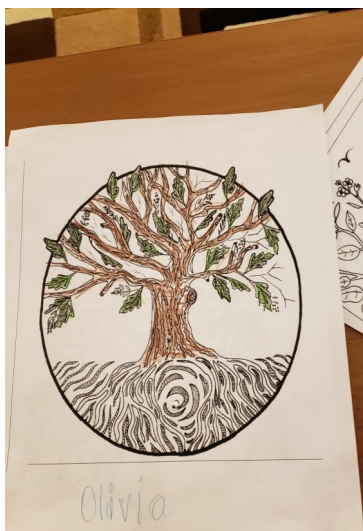
living in the baptized. This pairs with one of the class favorite songs, "this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine"



Above: Baptismal font

In February, we begin to introduce parables. These are more stories, but taught directly by Jesus in the New Testament. Our first parable was that of the mustard seed, the tiniest of seeds that grows into the largest of bushes. The students brought home their mustard seed artwork to share with you.

We hope to be back together in the classroom soon. Stay healthy and safe in this challenging weather.



*"Miss Cheri" Czerney
"Miss MariAnn" Waite*



Safe Environment

St. Ann Religious Ed. will present a sexual abuse prevention program, the *Touching Safety program*, to our students on February 27. The creators of the *Protecting God's Children™* program developed the *Touching Safety program*. This program is provided to us by the diocese of Kalamazoo, and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse.

This year we are focusing on lessons 1 and 2.

Touching safety classes Lessons 1 & 2.

Lesson 1: Touching Safety Rules. Students learn simple rules about what to do and how to react when someone's touch is confusing, scary, or makes the child or young person feel uncomfortable. Young people start to deal with the real risks they face when they are out in the world and on their own, and they begin to learn where to draw boundary lines in relationships.

Lesson 2: Safe Friends, Safe Adults, and Safe Touches Children, young people, and their parents establish basic guidelines for working together to make certain which friends and other adults in their environment can be trusted to act safely and in the best interest of each child or young person.

This is also a time for grades 7 & 8 the economic and spiritual virtues of saving sexuality until marriage.

The scheduled lessons are being offered to all students Kindergarten up to High School (not our 3 and 4 year olds in Mustard Seeds) at St. Ann Religious Education. As a parent, you have the right to choose whether your student participates. If you have questions about the program or the lesson, please contact Bobby Kinkela at bobbyk@stannaugusta.org. If you determine that you DO NOT want your child to participate, please complete the "opt-out" form here, and return it to your child's catechist or give it directly to Bobby Kinkela no later than February 27th.

For more information on the *Touching Safety program*, visit the *VIRTUS Online™* website at www.virtusonline.org.

Opt-out form for use with the Touching Safety program:

Directions: Print out and give to Bobby Kinkela or send to bobbyk@stannaugusta.org

St Ann Religious Education does not have my permission to present the *Touching Safety program*, to my child whose name is _____

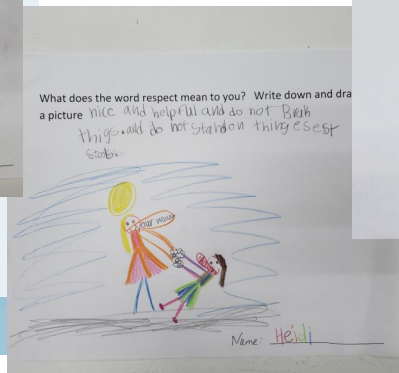
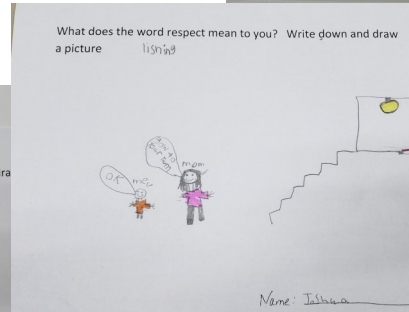
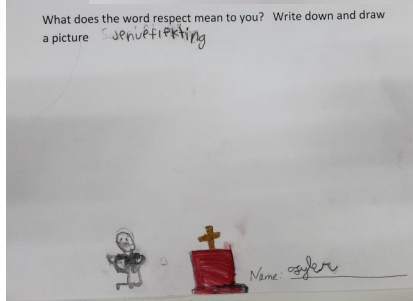
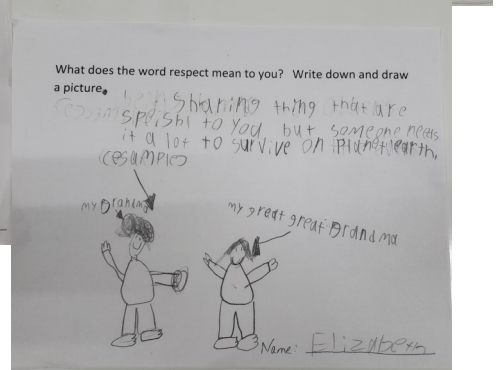
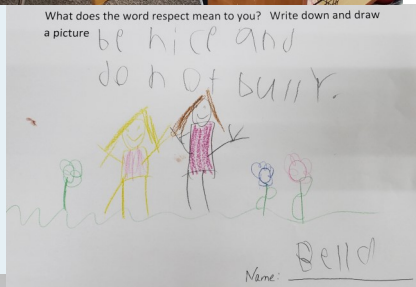
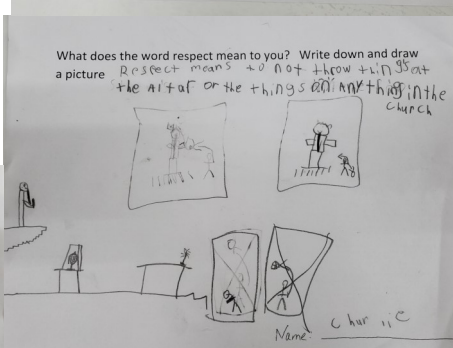
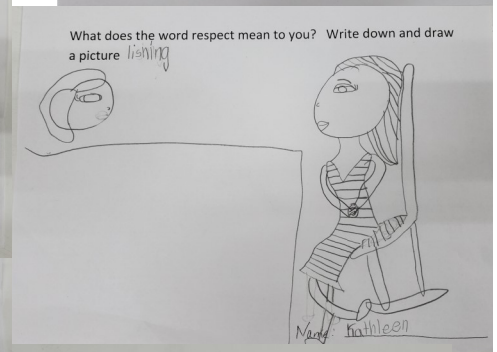
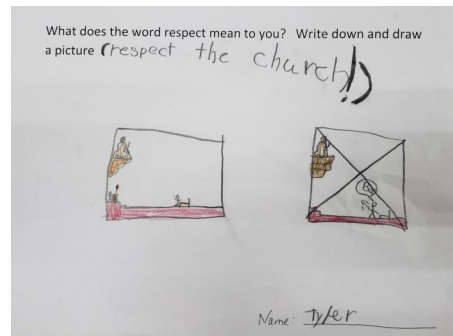
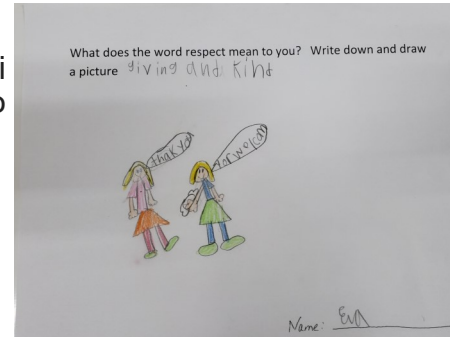
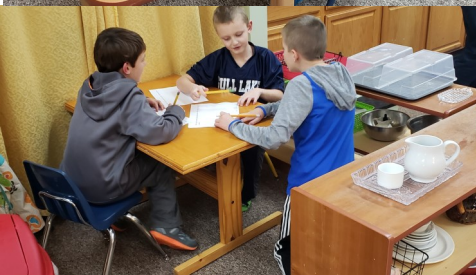
Parent Name _____ Date _____

Parent Name Printed _____

True Vine (2nd Grade)

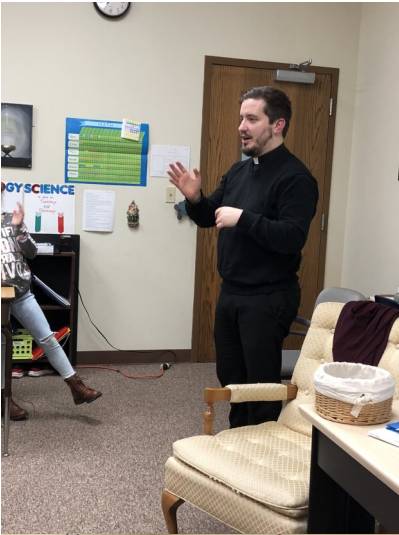
Over the last couple of weeks (that we've had class!) we have been reviewing parts of the mass along with discussing the meaning of the word respect. You can see some examples that the children did in relation to the word respect. We also had a visit by Father to the classroom. There was much dialogue which was enjoyed by all.

Mrs. Phyllis Kalkowski
Mrs. Valerie Mancuso



3rd Grade theme: When the People of God gather, at Church or at home,

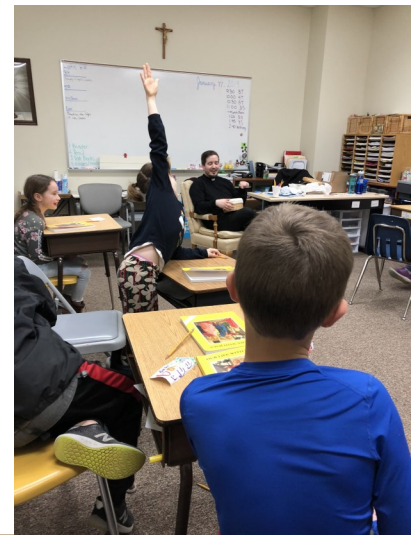
we learn to know, love, and serve Him in this life and the next thus deepening our relationship with Jesus.



The BIG event, at the top of every students' list, was Father Marotti's visit on January 16th! This year we have really enjoyed our visits from Father Marotti. He answered many, many questions, and finished with a special blessing. You can see from the photos which show Father's animating engagement with the class!

We have been focusing on the Creed this year. The Creed is so important, because it contains the most important doctrines we need to know. The third grade year is focused in particular with "Who Jesus Is" and "His life, death, resurrection and ascension."

Jesus, the second person of the Trinity, was born into the human family of Mary and Joseph (Joseph is His adopted father). He came to sacrifice Himself to save us from sin, to show us God's love, to be a model for holiness, and make us God's into children.

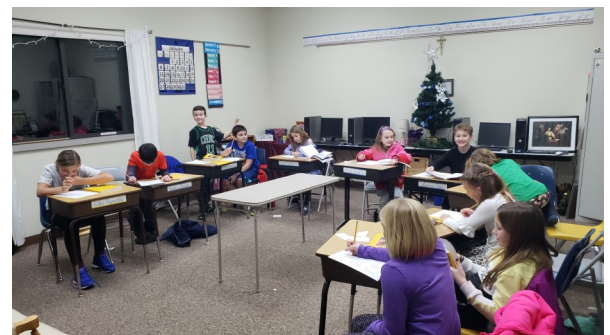
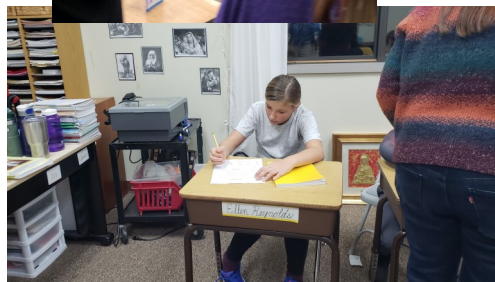


Through Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus has saved us from eternal death. After His ascension, He sent the Holy Spirit to remain with us, sanctify us through the sacraments, and give actual grace to live the Gospel message. (Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension is technically called the "paschal mystery." We don't use this word at this level, but you can!)

Keep up your ministry as parents and let us know if there is anything we can do to help you teach the children the faith!

In Christ,
Mrs. Char Crandell

Mrs. Natalie
Escandon



4th & 5th Grade

During this last season we have been reviewing sacraments, with emphasis on the Eucharist. Students were asked to sketch the church, noting how everything centers on the Eucharistic presence from tabernacle to 24-hour lighting illuminating it. We reviewed the parts of the Mass and you can take a look at some Catholic Mass trivia here: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/-A4s4Nhga04?rel=0>

Students also were asked to explore their readiness to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, which requires a clean conscience and good relationship with others as well as full participation in the Mass. We might want to ask ourselves, “Always”, “Sometimes” or “Needs Improvement” how we’re doing with the following:

- I share my time with my family. This includes the time to do chores. It also includes time to help and support and just listen.
- When I’m angry with my family, I make peace as soon as I can and definitely before Mass.
- When I do something wrong, I ask for forgiveness and try to make it up to the person.
- Even when it is hard, I try to forgive others.
- I share my time with my friends and classmates. I help them with schoolwork or other activities.
- I share my time with my parish. I take part in parish activities and support them with my money and talents.
- I make time to attend the Sacrament of Confession regularly and abstain from the Eucharist when I have committed an unconfessed mortal sin.
- I listen attentively and make all the appropriate sung and spoken responses during Mass.
- I share my things with my family and friends. For example, I let my brothers and sisters use my games, music or clothes.
- I share my talents to help the community.
- I share without being asked.

Homework: ask your child one thing on this list you plan to improve.

Dr. Jessica Kinkela

Mrs. Kim Clancy



6th Grade

Love is in the air! Did you know that Valentines Day has Catholic origins? Saint Valentine of Rome is a third century Roman Saint associated with courtly love. The story goes that the last words he wrote were in a note to a judge's daughter. He inspired today's romance by signing it "from your Valentine." He later was martyred on February 14, 269 which remains his feast day; Saint Valentine is the Patron of love, young people and marriages.



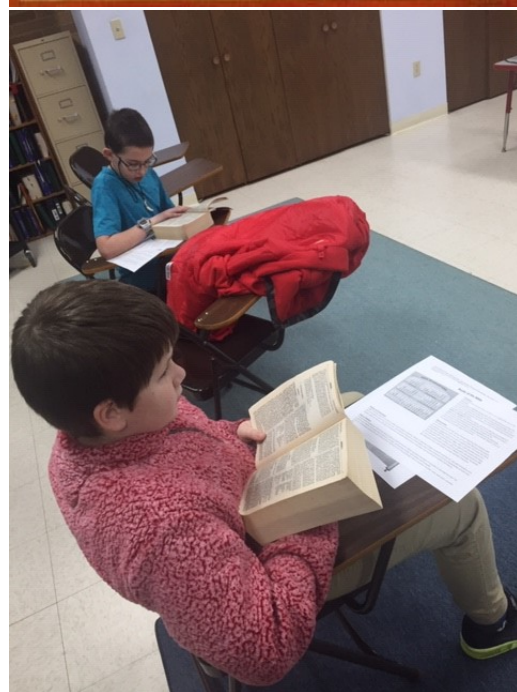
But wait! For there is no greater love than the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Jesus is the incarnation of God's infinite love. The human nature, which the Son of God took upon Himself, was filled with love and kindness that has never found an equal. He is the perfect model of love of God and neighbor.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus began about the year 1672. On numerous occasions, He appeared as an apparition to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque in France, and He asked to be honored in the symbol of His Heart of Flesh. The

Church has dedicated June to the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As Pope Pius XII so beautifully stated, "Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, of its very nature, is a worship of the love with which God, through Jesus, loved us, and at the same time, an exercise of our own love by which we are related to God and to other men."

So next time Valentines Day comes around, think not of chocolate and flowers, rather think of the infinite love that Jesus has for us! Venerate His Sacred Heart!



Mrs. Mindy Kulasa

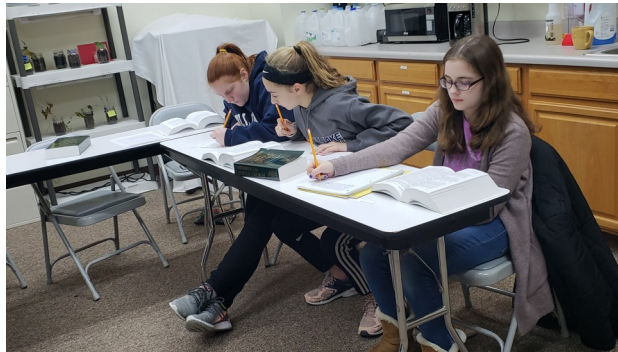
Mrs. Myriam Troncoso

7th Grade

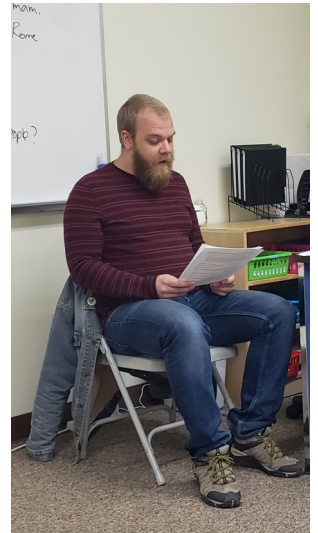


For these past months the 7th graders and I have been talking about morality. We've been talking specifically about how we come to understand sin, why sin is harmful, where it comes from and what to do about it. We have talked a lot about what sin is, that it is selfishness that is opposed to love, and caused by putting things before God.

We also spent a week talking about what it means for God to be merciful because sin should never lead us to despair. The seventh grade class has been engaged in our discussions about the topics and has demonstrated that they have been learning the material.



Mr. Brendan Barnes



For Homework: Share with your 7th grader why you are Catholic and ask them how they feel about making a choice to stay close to God.



8th Grade/ 1st Year Confirmation Prep

We have started our reflection papers on the virtues. Starting with temperance, we want to see how we are living the virtues and how we can do better.

Whenever studying temperance with 8th graders, I am always surprised how much resistance they give me when I suggest 12 hours of video games in one day is too much! Whether they joke or not, it is important to emphasize with our words (and especially our actions) how we need to moderate our time. We need time to rest and time to work; time in the computer world and time outside; time with our friends and time with our family. Finding the balance in life is very important, and it's a virtue that doesn't come naturally as a student in 8th grade but comes over time.



What does come naturally is the 10 commandments. We did a combined class with the seventh grade which worked well. The 7th commandment against theft and for protecting property is covered in the catechism starting in 2401. We also connect the 7th commandment to temperance. It is important to balance the what we have available with what we really need (2407). The example we gave is it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to own 12 cars if you only need 2. Jesus "became poor so that by his poverty, you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9) and so we should do the same according to our call from God.

Homework: Talk about work-life balance with your children. How to balance the demands of family with the demands of adulthood?

Mr. Bobby Kinkela
Mrs. Joy Brown



St Ann Catholic Parish

Clergy

Fr. Marotti— Pastor

Deacon Mike Carl— Pastoral

Coordinator

Religious Education

Mrs. Pat Vanderpool— Director of
Religious Education

Mr. Bobby Kinkela—

Associate Director/ Safe Environ-
ment Coordinator

Poster Contest by Bobby Kinkela

The Knights of Columbus hosted a “Keep Christ in Christmas” poster contest at St Ann’s this year. We had over 25 posters submitted from parish families, children enrolled in religious education and students from Light of Christ Academy. Parishioners then had Winners was picked for three age groups: 5-7 year olds; 8-10 year olds; 11-14 year olds. Winners received a \$25 gift card. We are proud that two of the winners started their posters in their religious education classes then finished them at home. All students received a certificate from the Knights of Columbus for participating. Thank you to all involved!



Submissions from
8th grade religious
education



St Ann Catholic Parish

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Newsletter made by
Bobby Kinkela

Any comments or suggestions
can be sent to
bobbyk@stannaugusta.org

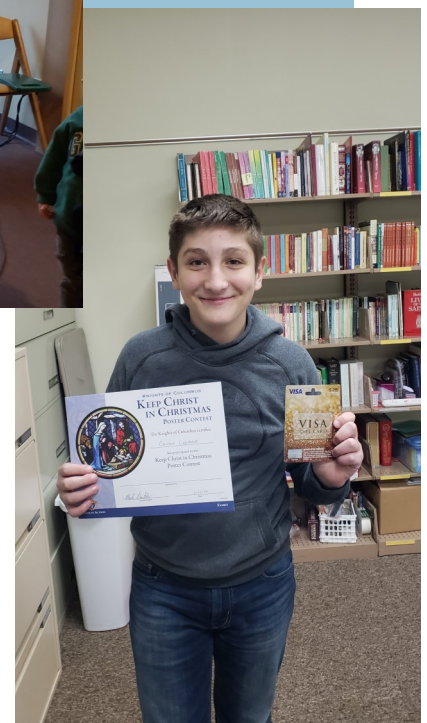


Above:
5-7 year old
winner:
Therese A



Left:
8-10 year old
winner:
Naomi K

With KOC
Grand Knight
Mark Gentilia



Above:
11-14 year old winner:
Colton L