

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

We have started the season of Lent, a period of forty days we set aside for prayer, fasting and doing good things for others. Our school is solemnly observing this special time in a variety of ways. Each day, our school-wide Morning Prayer focuses in Lenten themes and the announcements that follow include a daily fact about hunger and homelessness in our state, our country and in the world. On March 26, Fr. Dariusz will be offering the sacrament of reconciliation in our school. We observe Fridays of Lent abstaining from meat. We also encourage our students to offer their Lenten sacrifices for those in need and we are carrying out a school-wide Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Campaign, complete with food drive, led by our Middle School Service Club: The Sacred Heart Stewards. Their goal is to provide the St. Vincent De Paul Soup Kitchen and Homeless Shelter with enough food to feed the needy for one month. They are challenging each class to donate throughout lent the items needed to make this happen: Pre-K and Kindergarten -tuna or canned meat, First grade – pasta, Second grade – canned beans, Third grade – peanut butter or jelly, fourth and fifth grade – canned fruit, Sixth grade – pasta sauce, seventh grade – canned soup, Eighth grade – canned vegetables. In the first two weeks of their campaign they collected a total of 1335 items! In addition, on Wednesday, March 25, members of our SHS Stewards will be serving food at the St. Vincent De Paul Soup Kitchen in Norwich. To finish this extraordinary journey of awareness, on Friday, March 27, they will be having a Simple Supper and Cardboard Village activity to experience and bear witness of what it is to have limited food and no appropriate shelter.

I am also pleased to report that our school continues to be active and grow in many wonderful ways:

Facilities Update: The renovations of the faculty and staff lounge and copy room are now complete. These renovations are possible thanks to Fr. Dariusz decision to use the income from the parish's rental of the Margaret Mary Center as well as from multiple donations of materials and labor from members of Sacred Heart Parish and School. Our faculty and staff are thoroughly enjoying these new facilities.

Middle School News: The 6th graders are once again the winners of the Middle School Homework Challenge for the month of January. In addition, 26 Middle School students received a Principal's Dress Down Pass for a perfect homework record. They are Megan Bosetti, Michelle Chapman, Shannon Forrester, Patrick Griffin, Elizabeth Jennerwein, Audrey Jones, Briana Kleiner, Kathleen Kuchenbrod, Francesca Matira, Ellie McCarthy, Derrick McKinney, Joey Warmus, Martin Wolk, Bea Asuncion, Alyssa Daneault, Kelsey Ellery, Brigid Horan, Xavier Mills, Andy Thomasco, Katie Bosetti, Justin Cavitt, Joe Granatosky, Meredith Haluga, Dominic Jengo, Katie McCarthy, and Julia Scott. Congratulations!

On Thursday, February 26th, Captain Pescatello from the U.S. Army, son of our Middle School History and Religion Teacher, Mrs. Pescatello, visited our Middle School students and gave a wonderful PowerPoint presentation on his experiences while stationed in Iraq. It was fantastic! Thank you, Captain Pescatello, for taking the time to visit our school and talk with our students.

Elementary School News: All the students in Ms. Santangelo's 3rd grade entered the Child Abuse Prevention Initiative Poster Contest sponsored by Groton Youth and Family Services. They all did a fantastic job. In the words of Jennifer Sanford, Counselor of Groton Youth and Family Services "Their images impart such wisdom in all of us!" I am pleased to announce that there were two winning posters from our school. The winning posters were entered by Danielle Millerick and Andrea Garcia. Congratulations to our winners and to the entire 3rd grade for your efforts and achievements!

On Friday, March 13, the 4th grade students a workshop on Ecosystems provided by Mad Science of South Eastern Connecticut. The children had a great time in this in-school field trip that complemented what they are learning in science. We would like to thank Mr. & Mrs. Jeff and Susan Godley for facilitating the arrangements for this wonderful activity.

Raffle: The raffle to benefit our Middle School Science lab is going very well. After only one week, our school collected \$2,680. In addition, sales at other parishes added an additional \$1,500 for a total of \$4,180. With eleven more weeks to go, this truly looks good. Let us continue to sell those tickets to help this important fundraiser reach its potential and fulfill its purpose. Thank you to Mrs. Denise James for coordinating the raffle program for our school. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the following school parents for coordinating the raffle in other parishes: Mrs. Lise Hoth, Mr. George Horan, Mr. Tim McCarthy, Dr. Victoria Reyes-D'Arcy, and Mrs. Mary Alice Rodriguez-McClure.

Registration: Please remember to fill out all registration forms and return them to school along with the registration fee by Tuesday, March 31st, 2009. We have had an unprecedented response from the new families that came to our open house and we are anticipating waiting lists. Sending your forms and registration fee by the due date will ensure that your child has a guaranteed seat for next year. This packet also includes an application for tuition assistance from the Catholic Foundation from the Diocese of Norwich. Families who wish to apply are encourage to fill out these forms and return them to the school along with all the additional documentation required by April 30th, 2009. **This application replaces our old financial aid application, so there will be no other opportunity to apply for financial aid later.**

Other News: In addition to the raffle, our other fundraisers are also going very well. We got another check from Target's Take Charge of Education program this time for \$125 for a total of \$205 this year. In addition, we have earned \$653 from the Box Tops for Education program. We are expecting a check for \$189 in May for a total of \$842 this year. I would like to express our deepest gratitude to Mrs. Pat Snyder for continuing to coordinate this fundraiser. And last, but not least, the Scrip program has generated over \$5,000 thus far. Our sincere appreciation goes to Mrs. Barbara Wong for agreeing to coordinate this program. Thank you, Sacred Heart School, and please continue to support our fundraisers.

On our Athletics news, the basketball season is over and all of our teams finished with more victories than losses: Girls JV – 5 victories and 4 losses, made it to the semi-finals and ended in third place; Girls Varsity - 6 victories and 5 losses, made it to the finals and ended in second place; and Boys Varsity finished the season with 7 victories and 3 losses. On Wednesday, March 11, we celebrated Basketball Day at SHS. Our athletes received a free dress down and were allowed to wear their basketball jerseys. We had a school wide assembly to honor them and to receive the trophy that our Girls Varsity Team won in the tournament.

Our School Board continues to work on a long-range (5 year) strategic plan for our school. They will be presenting an overview of the draft on our next Parents Guild Meeting on April 20, 2009 at 7:00 PM. I am very pleased with the work of our School Board and with their initiative of presenting this plan to our school parents for their information and input.

We have received many calls from parents inquiring about making up snow days. **Due to the unusual number of snow days, we will be making them up on the two days originally set up in our calendar for this purpose: Monday, June 15 and Tuesday, June 16. On both of these days we will be having 1:00 PM dismissal. Thursday, June 11 and Friday, June 12, which were originally schedule for a 1:00 PM dismissal, will now be full days with dismissal at 3:00 PM.** Please, check the June calendar on the May Newsletter, where this information will appear.

As we continue to celebrate this holy season of Lent, may we grow closer to God through our prayers, sacrifices and acts of charity. May we experience God's healing power in our lives and remember those who are in great physical and spiritual deprivation. And may all that we do prepare us for the most important celebration of the liturgical year: Easter!

In Christ's love,

Dr. Calle