



December 2015

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## *FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK...*



St. Peter's Annual School Concert celebrated the birth of Jesus, the true reason for the season on December 17th. Our Nativity re-enactment rivaled that of Radio City Music Hall. As always I thank God for your beautiful and talented children. As they performed, their faces reminded all of us of that very special child born in Bethlehem so many years ago.

Despite the commercialism which dominates the holiday season, our students are learning about the true reason for the season. Because our school children attend a Catholic school they are able to celebrate Christmas as the birthday of Jesus. Advent wreaths, Christmas trees, scenes of the Magi and the baby in the manger decorate the school. Central to the school's Christmas concert is the re-enactment of the Nativity. Our teachers can teach Advent prayers and our children can listen to the many Christmas songs and stories like the Legend of the Fourth Wiseman and learn the importance and lessons of this special day.

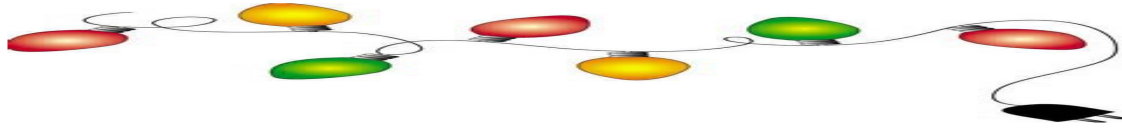
Artaban, known as a priest of the Magi, believed that the baby born that wonderful night, was destined to be the King of Kings, the hope for the world. Artaban planned to meet the three Magi—Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar and bring three gems as gifts for the baby. However, Artaban never met up with the others as circumstances prevented him from arriving in Bethlehem at the appointed time. On his journey he stopped to help a dying man and gave him his food and water. As a result, Artaban had to use one of his gems to buy supplies to complete the trip to Bethlehem. When he finally arrived, the Holy Family had fled Herod's men.

He met a young mother whose child was in danger from the wrath of Herod and paid the leader of the soldiers to spare the woman's baby with another of his gems. The fourth wise man continued on for thirty three years seeking Jesus until he arrived in Jerusalem during Passover. Following the crowd to Golgotha where he hoped to buy the freedom of Jesus with his last gem, he encountered a young woman set to be a slave who begged for his help. He used the last of his gems, to buy her freedom. Artaban had reached the end of his life and had never seen the King he sought. As he lay dying he heard a voice telling him that he had, in fact, seen the King in the faces of all those that he had helped along his journey.

Truly I tell you whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Matthew 25:40-45

The Saint Peter school community wishes everyone a Blessed Christmas as we again welcome the baby sought by the Magi, the baby who promises to bring hope to the waiting world.

## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***



### ***PRESCHOOL - MS. STEEL***

In December we have been starting to work on handwriting activities; the students are tracing and writing their letters using the proper form. The children enjoy singing our phonics and handwriting songs; it gets them excited to learn. We worked on patterns by using our colored cubes and playing picture matching games by pairing pictures of mittens that are alike.

We talked about how winter is approaching and about all the changes in weather we have been having. The children have had a blast making Christmas crafts such as stockings, reindeer, snowflakes, and creating their own wrapping paper! In science we did special experiments in which we mixed glue and shaving cream together to make a 3D snow effect. The students were all really impressed with the way their snow pictures dried as three dimensional art !

The children also learned all about what Christmas means and how special it is since we are celebrating the birth of Jesus. In the classroom we have added a Noah's Ark puzzle that the children love playing with during center time! The children worked hard practicing all their songs for the Christmas concert with Kindergarten and they did such an amazing job. I am so proud of them all!!

In January we are looking forward to learning more new and exciting things. I hope everyone enjoys their holiday break!



## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***



### ***KINDERGARTEN - MRS. TSIKITAS***

This month Kindergarten has been learning about the true meaning of Christmas. We have spoken about the significance of the birth of Jesus and how He is who we celebrate. We have also learned about St. Nicholas and his good deeds.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the feast of St. Nicholas. We left our shoes outside the classroom and when we came out, we found a sweet surprise waiting for us. The children were excited about the visit and the treat. We also learned about the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and how Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus. Finally, we have learned about Advent and the Advent wreath.

December has proven to be a very busy month, especially in Religion class. The students have been very interested in learning about these amazing topics and were fully engaged in all conversations.

This month in Math, we have been working on tens and ones. We have been comparing numbers using greater than, equal to and less than. We have been using the Smart board so much for Math and the students really enjoy using the interactive part of the board. We have found very interesting sites and lessons to utilize with these Math topics.

The students are always eager for more. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year! Please find the time to be happy and reflect on the true meaning of the holiday! Enjoy the time off with your children. I look forward to the new year and all that I have in store for the children!

See you all in 2015!



## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***



### ***GRADE 1 - MRS. GLEASON***

Christmas Blessings from First Grade!

As we entered the joyous season of Advent, our religious studies focused on the Liturgical year. It was very timely as we began our study of Advent, we were beginning Advent. The children have a good understanding of how we move through our Church year. We have also begun to get familiar with the Sacraments.

Reading and writing skills are developing very nicely. The children each did a piece on a pet animal. They developed their writing and then we sat and edited and revised. They had great insight as to how they could improve their writing. Their reading continues to develop as well. We had a great time learning about ðmagic eö and they can now decode words that have long vowel sounds. The children each made a ring of sight words to study. We read word lists and those words they did not know were entered on their individual list which became their study cards.

In Math, we have finished graphs, although we will be revisiting them to keep those skills sharp, we have begun subtraction and the children are doing very well. They used their subtraction skills to make a ðSubtraction Santa.ö They turned out great! We continue to revisit their basic facts in addition to enhance fluency in that area.

Our Science unit is wrapping up. The students have developed an understanding of animal and plant adaptations.

It is hard to believe, we are already celebrating Christmas! It has been such a productive four months! I have already seen so much growth in the children. I hope they all have a wonderful Christmas vacation and return to me with the same enthusiasm I have seen so far! God Bless and Merry Christmas!



## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***



### ***GRADE 2– MR. MORGESE***

Well, this is the last month of 2014. It has gone by so quickly. With the blessing of the Birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, let us take a moment to reflect on our blessings! God bless each and every one of my students and their families. You are in my prayers and heart.

We are now covering geometry in math. We have learned all about congruent shapes, solid figures, vertices, edges, you name it. The kids really love this unit, and so do I. I will continue to reinforce the concepts of graphing, addition, and subtraction.

In English Language Arts we are working on writing stories, advertisements, and book reports. Another book report will be coming up, so keep your eyes peeled. I will be starting a reading book club. Your child will be required to keep track of their reading. I will be grading this list.

Social Studies is all about our earth and how it is used. We will be learning about producers and consumers.

Science is all about the classification of animals. I will be bringing the kids up to the science lab from time to time. **THEY LOVE IT IN THERE!!!**

Finally, in religion we are covering sin, forgiveness, and reconciliation. First Penance will be either January 17<sup>th</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup>. I will keep you posted once I nail down a date.

Please enjoy your Christmas vacation!!!!

God Bless!  
Mr. D  
(and Stella too!)



## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***

### ***GRADE 3– MS. TIGHE***



Happy Holidays! As we begin the holiday season we are ready for the challenging work ahead. Math: The 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are happy to begin division. Their enthusiasm is great. I am frequently asked what we will be doing next. Measurement, length and volume is ahead this 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester. Please encourage your students to play First in Math, daily. Our number one player for the past two months has been Pablo Hernandez.

Reading: Independent reading and Biography Book Reports will be much of the focus, this trimester. We have also studied Fables and morals of a story. The 3<sup>rd</sup> graders did exceptionally well with this. They continue to journal about their reading assignments. They are using critical thinking, and have been working on peer editing with their writing assignments.

Science: The 3<sup>rd</sup> graders loved learning about eating, health, hygiene and germs. They were asked to write a persuasive essay about living healthier lives. They seemed to have a lot of fun with it. They also made health food designs to make fruits and vegetables more appealing. We were very happy with the results. They will be on display.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As we enter the holiday season, we will concentrate on being thankful and sharing our blessings.

Thank You to all the parents for their continued support. Ms. Tighe



## AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS

### GRADE 4 - MRS. BARTELS

'Twas the week before Christmas and all through St. Peter's School . . . . .

. . . . . The students have been busy singing, decorating, learning, and reading about this special holiday and its true meaning.

December is such a magical month with the anticipation of the Christmas holiday and all the excitement it brings. Our Christmas show was a HUGE success with music and singing filling the church. Watching the students reenact the nativity scene always touches me and gives us all something to think about and to be thankful for.

In addition to all the fun, we still managed to get in some learning.

#### First In Math -

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade continues to dominate the Team of the Week title! I am so proud of them and all their hard work. In addition, we even held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place titles (thanks to Joseph and Cynthia)! An ice cream party and a no math homework pass for an entire week has been promised by Mrs. Bartels and Mrs. B. if they can make a clean sweep and grab the Team title, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place! Keep on playing!

#### Religion -

We read about the story of the birth of Jesus: Mary and Joseph's journey into Bethlehem, the Wise Men, the Angel of the Lord, and the Shepherds. No matter how many times we hear and read this story, we always seem to learn something new. Our classroom novel - *'The Best Christmas Pageant Ever'* is a humorous but touching account of a family of misfits that somehow manage to get involved with the annual Christmas Show. We also watched the movie version of the novel which brings the story to life!

We also created a 3 dimensional diorama of a manger scene. We painted shoe boxes, colored and cut out shepherds, animals, Mary, Joseph, and of course the baby Jesus. The background was decorated with snow, clouds, and stars. They have been on display in the hallway for all to enjoy, but the students are looking forward to taking them home and placing them under their own Christmas trees.

#### Social Studies -

We are continuing our studies of the regions of the United States, learning about the state names, capitals, locations, land forms, rivers, gulfs, and oceans. We are also learning how to read a map by identifying the different boundaries, countries, continents, waters, mountain ranges, and places.

#### Writing -

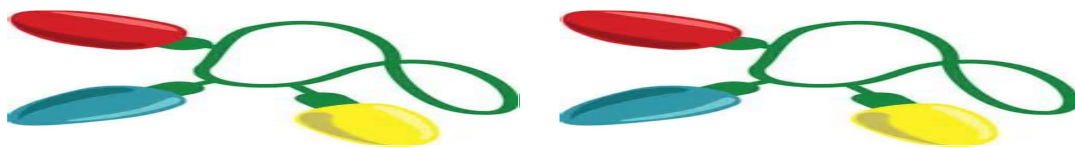
The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades both wrote Persuasive Essays. In addition to that, we have been working on the Writing Roadmap Program in the computer lab.

#### English -

Both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades completed the unit on Pronouns - and there is a long list of them! Demonstrative, Intensive, Reflexive, Subject, Object, Possessive, Contractions, First Person, Second Person, Third Person, and more!

I hope everyone enjoys a wonderful holiday with family and friends. Enjoy your time together with your children, it goes by so quickly !!

. . . . . Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night

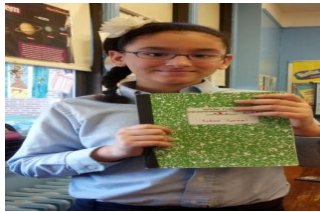


## IE SCHOOL NEWS

### GRADE 5 - MRS. BUBENIK

I would like to wish my students and their families a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year. When we return from Christmas break students will be continuing their hard work on fractions in math. As we progress forward students will be able to add, subtract, multiply, and divide fractions by the end of the unit. I encourage the students to continuously practice their facts and work on firstinmath.com each night. Remember it is required by the students to practice firstinmath.com every night. Students' progress and participation is monitored on a daily basis. In social studies students are mastering their map skills with various class activities. I look forward to their next project coming up in January-Everyone did an amazing job of the Tree of Peace! The students' creativity shined in their projects. Keep up the great work! Science class has been very busy for the students. We have been busy with fun labs on potential and kinetic energy with sling shots and bouncy balls; the students had a blast completing the labs. They did a great job.

The students' journal writing is coming along fantastically. Each week the students are expanding on the different journal prompts and coming up with some amazing entries. Here is an example of one our latest journal prompts.



Journal Prompt: I love when I I love when you kiss me goodnight. I love when you hug me. I love when you do dangerous things just for me. I love when you compliment me. On thundering nights you help me go to sleep and I wake up to mornings of sunshine. That sunshine is you! I love when you call for me, even when you are mad I am still happy. I am happy that you are with me, I am happy I am with you.

In December the fifth graders did a beautiful job animating the first Friday mass on December 6<sup>th</sup>. I know it takes a lot of courage to stand up in front of a group of people and speak. I would like to also express what a beautiful performance the students did at the Christmas Concert. You all did an amazing job and should be very proud of yourselves as I am of you.



I would like to thank my parents for their support with the tricky tray for our school. Whether you donated items, your time or purchased tickets to come it is truly appreciated!! Thank you very much!!! Also, to our class mother who has done a wonderful job so far this school year with taking care of our holiday parties and other necessities needed to run our fine tuned classroom.

Before I leave 2014 I have some housekeeping to remind the students of; replenish your supplies over winter break which includes pencils, markers, colored pencils, and a quiet sharpener. Also, remember to have a chapter book with you each day in school and the book is to be one hundred and fifty pages or better (no comic books/magazines or gaming books). Finally, I want to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and thank you for an amazing first half of the year; I look forward to the second half of the school year and all the fun we will have.

## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***

### ***GRADE 6 - MR. SAGARESE***

6<sup>th</sup> grade S.S.- The students will be studying Ancient Chinese culture, geography and historical events that helped to shape the world we live in. The students will be working on a new PBL that will teach them about basic economic theories. They will be challenged to solve the current economic crisis that exists within the United States today. Will they be able to create a solution to the current unemployment issue within our country? The 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are also reading *The Red Badge of Courage* and will be writing a book report on the story.

7<sup>th</sup> grade S.S.- The students are studying Washington's and John Adams's presidencies. The students have written an essay on whether or not they agree with Alexander Hamilton's economic plan for the future of the United States. The students also had to create a political cartoon dealing with a foreign or domestic issue that President Washington had to deal with during his presidency. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade students also created a political campaign platform for a Federalist or Democratic-Republican candidate for office.

8<sup>th</sup> grade S.S.- The students are studying the Progressive Era. This is an important time period in United States that provided various reforms to government, voting powers and regulating American businesses. The students will also be learning about the Progressive Presidents and their new policies that helped to shape the country that we live in today. The students created several political cartoons dealing with issues the Progressives tried to fix during this time period.

I would like to thank all of the parents and students for donating items for the Christmas raffle and Candy-Cane fundraiser.



## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***



### ***GRADE 7 - MRS. PINTO***

Can it be the middle of December already? Where has the time gone? I know that the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science classes have been very busy.

Grade 6 did fabulous presentations on earthquakes and volcanoes! Some were very creative and entertaining. They have moved on to the different kinds of mountains and how they form. Ask them about plate tectonics.

Grade 7 are building on their knowledge of cells from last year and created 3-D animal and plant cell projects. Some look very much like the diagrams in their book. Well done! Next stop, viruses.

Grade 8 has been "digging" dirt. Soil to be exact. They've learned how to stop erosion and replace the things necessary to keep soil in place.

The 7th Grade has read "The Gift of the Magi" and is now enacting the play, "A Christmas Carol". There are plenty of good "Scrooges" in the class. They each are writing a short story entitled, "The Disastrous Christmas". I cannot wait to read the finished products!

It's pronoun time in Grammar class and their vocabulary and spelling skills are improving.

During the Christmas concert they sang "I'll Be Home for Christmas" and dedicated it to all the brave men and women who keep us safe. God bless our troops.

Everyone is looking forward to Christmas Day with the lovely wrapped gifts and Santa's arrival. I pray that the birth of Our Lord bring you peace and joy, not only on that day, but through the coming new year.

Look out 2015...here we come!



## AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS

**GRADE 8—MRS. REESE**



What a wonderful time of year! The children are all excited about Christmas. Many are also happy a vacation is upon us.

Recently the 8<sup>th</sup> graders wrote an essay or poem about their faith for a contest. I am very proud of the work they did. Several were sent to the contest and to the Archdiocese. Hopefully, we'll have a winner.

We have also been working very hard in algebra. They are solving very difficult equations and will soon work with inequalities.

The 7<sup>th</sup> graders are beginning their study of ratios and proportions, while the 6<sup>th</sup> grade is beginning fractions.



*Merry  
Christmas*



## AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION—MR. LAUDATI

Gymô Physical Education learn with Body & Mind together

Respect: òGive It, Get Itö  
Grades 3-8

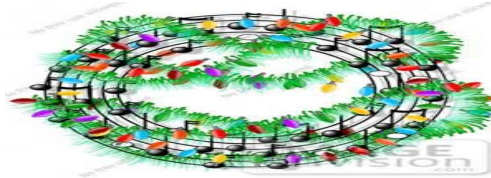


Presidential Fitness Challenge

Some of the activities include Free Throws, Standing Long Jump, and Shuttle Run.

### MUSIC - Mr. Gehman

Congratulations...The children did a great job with the Christmas Concert. I was very happy with all their hard work. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



### ART—Ms. Hoffmann

December has flown by, with many exciting Art Projects being done by our talented students. Art is a wonderful way for students to express themselves.



## AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS



### SPANISH/COMPUTERS—MS. O'SHEA

#### Spanish

December has been lots of fun for our students in Spanish class! We have learned lots of new words, verbs and have celebrated some wonderful holidays!

Kindergarten is now learning about animals. They are learning to say different animal names in Spanish. The first graders are learning about the parts of the face/body. They also read the story "The Night of the Poinsettia" and learned all about "la flor de nochebuena." Third grade has been practicing for their "las posadas" celebration! They read the story "The Night of Las Posadas" and will have a procession in school!

The fourth and fifth graders are learning about verbs ending in "ar." The fourth graders are learning two tenses of the verb (yo and tu or our new BFFs!) while Grade 5 is learning all tenses. Grade 4 also enjoyed a presentation on Panama (after reading the section in our text about the country) from Kristian's mother! She brought a beautiful poster, clothes and other items from the country! We can't thank her enough for a fabulous presentation!

Our sixth graders are learning about action phrases in Spanish and how to use them (along with the verb ir, which means to go.) Grade 7 is learning about different things in and around homes. Our eighth graders continue to work in groups. The "green" group is learning about different things that we use at school while the two "blue" groups are learning illness vocabulary. Don't forget to keep bringing in those "fin de semana" reports or they really do help improve your grades!

Feliz Navidad y feliz año nuevo a todos!

#### Computers

Our students are learning so much during their computer time. I am also learning a lot! I have been attending workshops for Technology Coordinators at the Archdiocesan Center in Newark once a month and I'm bringing back so many great ideas to use with our students!

The Kindergartners are learning to draw and type. They love using the keyboarding activity "Cup Stacking" on [www.abcya.com](http://www.abcya.com) to practice their keyboarding skills. The first graders are also working on keyboarding. They also did a math activity on [www.abcya.com](http://www.abcya.com) called "Holiday Lights." This website can be accessed from home and it also has an iPad app.

Grade 2 has been learning to format documents and they inserted amazing Christmas clip art into their word documents! Grade 3 used their Internet search skills to find facts about Christmas. Grade 4 is getting quite proficient in Microsoft Power Point. They created slide shows based on information that they learned in Spanish class about Panama.

Grade 5 used their graphic design skills to put the gifts that they would like to see "under the tree." Hopefully Santa sees those documents in time! Grade 6 will be learning shortcut keys in Microsoft Word. The seventh graders learned about the features of a magazine cover and created their own covers in Microsoft Publisher.

Our eighth graders completed their annual tradition (well, MY annual tradition!) of creating Christmas stories for each one of our classes in Microsoft Power Point! Each student is a character in their class story and we will be ringing in the holidays by presenting our stories to everyone in the Computer Lab!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone in our St. Peter's family!

## AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS

### DISTINGUISHED

DAVID BETANCUR - GRADE 6  
MARCELA TOLEDO - GRADE 6  
BRIANNA GARCIA - GRADE 5  
ANJIANIE PEREZ - GRADE 8

### FIRST HONORS

JOSEPH NGUYEN - GRADE 4  
KRISTIAN OLAVERRI - GRADE 4  
JERICHO PEREZ - GRADE 4  
ANDREA TOLEDO - GRADE 4  
ZYRUS HERNANDEZ - GRADE 5  
JARVIN MENDOZA - GRADE 5  
CHRISTOPHER MELENDEZ - GRADE 6  
ANDREW CUENCA - GRADE 6  
NATALIA COBA - GRADE 8  
AMANDA KLEIN - GRADE 8  
JOEL MELENDEZ - GRADE 8  
MATHEW MUNOZ - GRADE 8  
KEVIN ZAVALA - GRADE 8

### SECOND HONORS

JOSEPH BICO - GRADE 5  
BIANCA DIAZ - GRADE 5  
SOFIA ZUNIGA - GRADE 5  
DEYANEIRA BEY - GRADE 7  
EMMALIS DIAZ - GRADE 7  
DANIELA LONDONO - GRADE 7  
MATTHEW PEREZ - GRADE 7  
ALLEN GOMEZ - GRADE 8  
EZYELLY KONOPKA - GRADE 8

CONGRATULATIONS

## Alumni of St. Peter School Paramus Catholic Second Honors

Valentina Betancur—Grade 9  
Kimberly Martinez—Grade 9  
Osmalyn Urena—Grade 9  
Dylan Vasquez—Grade 9

## ***AROUND THE SCHOOL NEWS***

The Queen of Peace Knights of Columbus Council #3428 recognizes the achievement of Mark Vintayen, a resident of Bellville and a sophomore at North Arlington's Queen of Peace High School. Mark entered the Knights' essay contest as a freshman and won the council's contest. His winning essay was sent to the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council and entered in its competition, and Mark became an international winner as his writing took second place among all ninth graders among the countries wherever the Knights have councils. As he received the congratulations from the Council 3428 are, pictured from left to right, his father Ulysses, his mother Alfanita, Mark himself, and Bill Mackey, Grand Knight of the Council.



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