

Another Year of Abundant Blessings

Thank you is the word that will be in all my prayers this summer. We end another school year with too many blessings to count at St. Ursula, but let me try.

First and foremost, our Principal, teachers and staff have made this year such a success despite many changes for them professionally. Last summer Sister Joanita undertook the challenge of adding a full day Ready K program without adding additional expense to the budget. Insurmountable for some, but Sister came up with a plan and made it work. This required many of our teachers to start this school year with entirely new classrooms and subjects. Mrs. Patricca's move to start up the Ready K program was a huge success. 13 of the 14 students in her class will return for kindergarten at St. Ursula. I'm sure it has everything to do with her smiling face and loving manner. Mrs. Angelucci took on the challenge of moving from the Middle school to 3rd grade, a huge transition. Ask any parent of a 3rd grade if she was up to the task and you will hear nothing but rave reviews. Our middle school teachers all scrambled to take on new subjects in new grades and did so with much success.

Our SAC committee began its second year in existence this year. Everyone worked to learn from last year's experience and build on our progress.

Our Athletic Association fielded a cheerleading squad for the first time in more than 5 years. Nothing added more to our basketball season than seeing all those bright, smiling faces cheer on our teams. And we even had our first pep rally!!! Our JV girls' basketball team made it to the playoffs for the first time. And, as always, all the athletes enjoyed themselves and learned some valuable skills.

Student Life continued their wonderful works of building community and spirit in our school. The addition of a St. Josephs Day celebration to honor our Dads, a high tea for Moms, the last day of school picnic and the countless other activities they have always coordinated made this year one of the most dynamic in my tenure at St. Ursula. It seemed there was always something fun going on for both the kids and families.

The Finance Committee initiated the financial update reports that keep us on track with our fundraising and tuition payments. This one report took many hours to design and compile but resulted in a significant decrease in the school's end of year collectibles.

While not all our fundraising numbers are final for this year yet, we do anticipate that we will have raised over \$100,000.00 toward the school's bottom line. In all we conducted 20 fundraisers this year. This requires an immense amount of coordination and effort on the part of all the chairpersons and their committees. This summer SAC members already have plans to work diligently to improve reporting systems between our Fundraising and Finance Committees.

The Enrollment Management Committee proudly announced the school's first increase in enrollment in almost 10 years. We are please to say the committee anticipates

another increase in enrollment next year. The establishment of the Ready K program, a follow up system for all inquiries to the school and our wonderful billboard all contributed to the increase in enrollment. While so many Catholic schools are closing in the diocese, we are so blessed to see an increase in enrollment.

The Vision Committee identified the need to reach out to our Parish volunteer counterparts to establish a mutually beneficial relationship. You'll notice the school booth at the Parish Festival will look much different than in previous years since we have joined forces. You will also begin to see more parish news and opportunities for us to enjoy fellowship together as a faith community instead of school and parish separately.

All our volunteers will be recognized at the May 19th Showcase. This school could not exist without the many hands that perform God's work daily. As my term limit as President of the SAC expires, I realize how thankful I am to have had the opportunity to volunteer. The personal rewards of seeing the kids smiling faces, seeing a look of relief on Sister's face, a big profit after the Pot O' Gold, or a new family enrolling their young children has really been a unique experience that I don't think I'd find outside of St. Ursula.

On May 26th, our final SAC meeting before the school year ends, we will welcome new families to join us and find out what participating on the SAC is all about. We will have a short presentation and time for informal discussion. Several of our current SAC members would like to step down or change their volunteer focus. This will open positions on a variety of committees. Please consider joining us at 7 pm in the library. Don't worry, no one will ask you to commit to anything! This is simply an opportunity to learn more about how you can have a voice in the future direction of St. Ursula School.

Recently someone asked me if I could list every person who volunteers in some way at St. Ursula. I started the list and realized that there is not one person or family who hasn't done something to enhance the educational experience in some way. Whether it is raising money, baking cookies, planning parties, hauling books and computers, making play props or serving lunch, each and every person's contribution to our school makes it the very special place it is today. More importantly, these contributions help to ensure that St. Ursula School will be here to serve our faith community for many years to come. For that I am very thankful.