



# St. Agnes Academy News

A PUBLICATION OF ST. AGNES ACADEMY, DALTON, MA

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Headmaster – James Stankiewicz

## Headmaster Headlines...

### Mr. Stankiewicz Bids Farewell After Eight Years as Headmaster

As this is my last newsletter, I would like to thank the exemplary faculty and staff of St. Agnes. They are among the finest professionals with whom I have worked over the course of my career. Be assured that your children are in the care of the best! I would like to thank you, the parents of your precious children, for entrusting them to us and for your support of St. Agnes Academy and its mission.

I would especially like to thank Father Chris for allowing me to participate in the ministry of this great community. He is committed to keeping our school strong and healthy. His view of the school as a Catholic ministry is in keeping with the earliest vision and mission of Catholic schools in our country.

Finally, I would like to welcome Fadia Makdisi, our new principal. We are blessed to have a person of her energy and talent to lead St. Agnes Academy forward. Together with the leadership team of Karen Blefari, Terri Dudziak and Father Chris, St. Agnes is poised to improve and grow!

Please remember St. Agnes in your prayers, as there are undoubtedly many challenges in the future. Through hard work and the grace of the Holy Spirit, our school will continue to flourish.

May God bless you and your families,  
-Jim Stankiewicz

## NEWS BITS...

### Middle School Students Excel at State Science Fair in Worcester

Congratulations to our middle school students who participated in the State Middle School Science Fair at Worcester Technical High School on Saturday, May 11. Nine



*Spring has sprung, finally!*

projects were submitted and six earned awards.

Sydney Moriarty earned honorable mention for her project on “Neural Network vs Dad.” Mia Francesconi (“MIG or TIG, Which Weld is Stronger?”), Belén Galvez (“Remember Me, Remember Me Not”), Helen Makdisi (“Listen, Look, Learn!”), and Cat Moriarty (“Break it Down”) all earned third-place prizes. And last but certainly not least, Julie Alsmann won a second place prize for her project on “Memories, Positive or Negative.” Congrats to all and we are proud of you!



*You always come home:  
Former St. Agnes graduates  
visit their alma mater.*

### Dalton Council on Aging Sponsors Bridges Luncheon

The Dalton Council on Aging graciously hosted our annual Bridges Reunion Luncheon on May 31. Our sixth and seventh graders, along with their families joined our Bridges volunteers for a delicious potluck luncheon. It was a lovely ending to our annual Bridges sessions. We can't wait to do it all again next year!!

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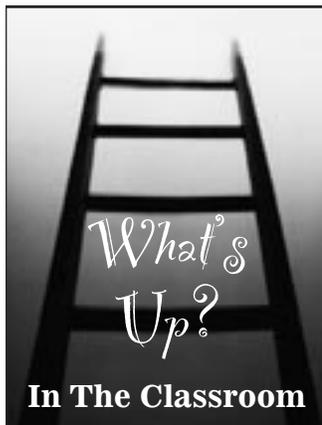
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## Welcome New Principal Fadia Makdisi!

## Music News (Mrs. Desautelle)

Well this year sure flew right by! I've enjoyed working here at St. Agnes with your children and look forward to more music activities next year! If your child is NOT returning to St. Agnes in the fall, would you consider donating their recorder and book back to the school? There is always a need for extras.

Try to keep your child singing and playing that recorder over the summer. Just a few minutes even once per week will help them stay ready for music making in September. Enjoy the summer break!



**In Mrs. Leja's and Mrs. Kulpa's pre-Kindergarten**, it is so hard to believe that we are entering the final week of school. Our year ended with a make-believe trip to Hawaii and a Hawaiian Luau with fresh fruit donated by parents. The children had a fun time dancing in their grass skirts to Hawaiian music. Our next event will be our Pirates day party. The

children had a pizza party provided by the PTO. They will have to walk the plank in order to have their lunch! The children will also be looking for buried treasure by following the treasure map. This is always an exciting time for both classes. Our final day of school will be a celebration in church. The children will receive a certificate for a job well done. We truly enjoyed spending time with the children and wish everyone a happy summer.



*Pre-k students make their visit to Hawaii.*

**In Mrs. Patti's Kindergarten**, it's hard to believe another school year has passed, and with so few snow days it is ending much sooner. Where has the year gone? The last few weeks are always busy ones in our classroom. In May, kindergarten led First Friday Mass along with their eighth grade Big Buddies. Everyone participated and the children all did a spectacular job reading and presenting gifts. We also celebrated Moms at our Mothers' Day Tea. The children were very excited for their moms

to come to our classroom and show off some of the many gifts they worked hard on, to make the day extra special for their mothers.

We finished Unit 5 in our Reading Street Series and are busy reviewing the many skills we have learned this year in reading. The last chapter in math taught us numbers up to 100 and counting by 2's, 5's and 10's. We also have spent the last few weeks learning and reading about the ocean, and the many animals that call ocean their home.

The children are very excited about Donuts for Dad and kindergarten graduation, which will be on Wednesday, June 12.

As another school year passes by, we look back with fond memories of all the fun we had and how much each child has grown. We wish everyone a happy and safe summer!



*Eighth grade big buddies pose with their kindergarten little buddies.*

**In Mrs. Shapiro's first grade**, the class had a celebration on Thursday, May 30, at the Dalton Public Library to conclude our year-long community service project. This project is a "big brother/sister" literacy program where St. Agnes first grade students take turns to interact with and read to the pre-schoolers during story time. This was a great experience for everyone. A big thank-you to Kim Gwilt, Robert DiFazio, Wendy Provencher, and our St. Agnes volunteer Bunny Whitman for the program's continued success!

In math, we are learning about addition/subtraction of two-digit numbers. In reading, the children are finishing up their last book in first grade. Our class has been reading about and studying the concept of great ideas. Throughout this unit, we have examined clever solutions, different ways of seeing things, and brand-new ideas. In religion, our focus was learning about the missionary work of the church. We are learning about how to love and serve others.

In science, the children finished up the year learning about the ocean community. The unit incorporates oral language, written language, reading, math, poetry, vocabulary development, music, art, social studies, and science. The students enjoyed sharing their shells with the class. They have learned many amazing facts about the oceans of the world and sea creatures inhabiting them. The class also created art projects displayed in the hallway.

It's been a rewarding year to see how far they've come in their reading and math this year. They have a lot to be proud of. Thank you for all your support and have a safe and wonderful summer!



*First graders spend their last day at the Dalton Library reading program.*

In Mrs. Belfari's second grade, we're swinging into the "Home Stretch" with happy faces! May has been a super busy month with lots of special things happening. On May 11, the children participated in a First Communion retreat held here at the school. The children enjoyed going from activity to activity, culminating in the library pretending to be a disciple at the Lord's Last Supper. Banners were made and songs were sung all in preparation for the big day. On Saturday, May 19, the children received First Communion. The sun was shining and all had a beautiful ceremony and day.

We finished our Reading curriculum last week and Benchmarks and end of the year tests were administered. With that behind us, we are now working on Literature Circles, where the children get into small groups and read the short novel together, discussing it as they go. Many of the stories are mysteries and I love to listen to the discussions as they try to figure out the clues. It's amazing how far their reading has progressed this year.

We have also completed our Banana Splits Reading Incentive Program. One of the assignments was to make a diorama on one of their books so we decided to do a diorama fair this week. We have invited several other classes to come in to see the dioramas and hear a bit about the books that are depicted. Our much-anticipated Banana Splits party will be held on Friday! Thank you for all of your assistance throughout this and all of this year's reading incentive programs. I know they're a lot of work, but hopefully you've seen the benefits when you listen to your child's reading!

In math, we've also reached another pinnacle that they've been waiting for: MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION! They really feel like the big kids now. And they seem to be doing really well with the concepts too! We are going to try to finish up the chapter/ test this week. As a joke, last week I gave them a multiplication timed test-figuring that they would just throw up their hands and say, "Forget this!" They shocked me when they finished well before the timer and told me how much fun it

was! I'll try another one this week if time permits.

This week we are working on a Second Grade Memory Book. We are having a lot of fun reminiscing about the funny things that have happened this year and all that they've learned. I hope to send them home by week's end so keep your eyes on the folders. I'm sure they'll be excited to share them with you.

Thank you all for your help in preparing your youngster for third grade. Each and every one of them has brought something unique to the class, turning this into one of my favorite classes ever. Thank you for sharing your child with me. It's been a pleasure.



*Second graders and pre-K release butterflies.*

In Mrs. Todriff's third grade, we are all busy with our end-of-the-year projects. In reading, the stories were based around the concept of freedom. We also concentrated on vowel patterns, final syllables, adjectives, and adverbs. Students completed narrative writings and biography book reports. Third graders did a terrific job presenting interesting people from the past and present!

In math, we completed the chapter on measurement and time. Then we worked on geometry with an introduction to fractions. I hope students continue to practice their multiplication facts this summer! In religion, we read about St. Patrick and the Holy Trinity.

In science and social studies, students became the teachers. Each group was assigned a different chapter, and then they summarized and presented the main ideas to each other in creative ways. It was a nice way to end the year, with a little "freedom of expression." Third grade has really shined this year. Thank you to all families and everyone at St. Agnes Academy for helping third grade achieve their goals this year!



*Third graders show off their recent projects.*



*Plenty of fun at recent Sturbridge Village trip.*

**In Mrs. Adams' fourth grade,** we can't believe that the year flew by so fast! We have taken our last Benchmark on Unit 6, "Reaching for Goals," with the question, how can the achievements of others affect our goals? In social studies, we are finishing up on the Southwest Region - its land, history and culture. In religion, our focus has been, "Our Vocation to the World." This chapter asks us to answer our call, or vocation, to serve others by developing our special talents. In math, we have finished a chapter on statistics and probability, and we have been working on fraction concepts. It has been a fun, successful year!



*St. Agnes DARE graduates pose with local law enforcement officials.*

**In Ms. Young's fifth grade,** the academic year comes to a close and talk of summer plans and excitement of warmer weather frequently arise. The class has been concluding their studies in religion class by discussing the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Matrimony. We also discussed the Theological and Cardinal Virtues, various ways that we can pray, and how people such as Saint Philip Neri and Saint Margaret of Scotland fulfilled their vocations to God.

In math, the boys and girls have been finishing work using decimals in the four operations. They will conclude the year with a review of measurement regarding customary units and the metric system.

In reading, the students wrote essays for their DARE

class. Their pieces were impressive, and some students read their final versions at the DARE graduation ceremony. They have also read stories about the different jobs within an ant colony, how we can be proud of our unique characteristics, and how making new friends can sometimes be a challenge, but is worth the effort in the end.

The fourth and fifth grades traveled to Old Sturbridge Village for a field trip on May 10. The girls and boys enjoyed wandering through the exhibits, learning more as to how people lived during the 1830's in New England.



*Middle School students at the state science fair in Worcester.*

**In Mr. Lange's sixth grade:**

**Math:** Sixth graders finished up the year studying percents, which included a range of everyday problems involving percentages. They were also successful at taking an end-of-year cumulative test.

**Science:** Sixth graders finished the year learning about cells, specifically their structure and parts, and how they function. They were excited to use microscopes to see cells up close and draw what they saw. A common comment heard around the classroom was, "That's so cool!"

**Social Studies:** Our Roman cities are under construction! Students are using a wide variety of recyclable materials to build Roman cities based on the same principles that guided city planning throughout the Roman Empire.

**Literature:** Thank you, Mr. Timothy Burdick of Adams Community Bank! Mr. Burdick joined us recently to talk about loans and business plans. He shared great information that will help the students create business plans as part of our "Lawn Boy" unit. *Lawn Boy* by Gary Paulsen is the comical story of a young boy who creates his own lawn care business after receiving his grandfather's rider mower as a birthday gift.

**In Mrs. Dudziak's seventh grade:**

**Math:** Seventh graders finished the year learning about geometry: angles, lines, two-dimensional and three-dimensional figures. They also were successful at taking an end-of-year cumulative test.

**Science:** Students in grade 7 finished the year with a unit about physical science, starting with potential and

kinetic energy. We also had discussions about basic chemistry concepts such as matter, states of matter, elements, atoms, and molecules.

Language Arts: We have been working on sentence variety and structure and effective paragraphs. We practiced what we learned by writing summaries of non-fiction articles.

Literature: We finished our section on essays and have been studying the poetry of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost, to name a few.

Social Studies: Our Roman cities are under construction! Students are using a wide variety of recyclable materials to build Roman cities based on the same principles that guided city planning throughout the Roman Empire.



*Volunteers Bill Shea and Jimbo Doucette worked with eighth graders to build Shaker-style trays.*

**In Mrs. Jamros' eighth grade:**

Math: We learned about ratios and proportions, including direct, partitive, and inverse proportions, and have moved on to geometric measure and coordinate geometry.

Science: The class finished the year studying genetics and heredity. They learned about the various ways that traits are passed on to offspring and practiced methods of determining the probability of the different outcomes.

Religion: We learned that the Eucharist is the center of Catholic life throughout the universal Church. We discussed how we are disciples of Jesus, and how we are called to serve others with humility. We realize that through prayer, Christ's healing presence works to transform us.

Language Arts: We have been working on improving paragraph unity and coherence. We also learned

the purpose of descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive paragraphs in our writing.

Literature: We completed our unit on nonfiction and are wrapping up the year with poetry. We have enjoyed reading works from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Langston Hughes, and Robert Frost.

Social Studies: Our final unit for this school year was on the Age of Exploration. Students learned all about the various explorers and the reasons which motivated them to go on their journeys. The unit ended with a project based on any topic of interest from or relating to that time period.



*Eighth grade ready for their cruise.*



*Eighth graders take a breather during recent Boston trip.*

*Be safe, have fun,  
and see you August 28!*



# *A Tribute*

## **TO A FAITHFUL LEADER**

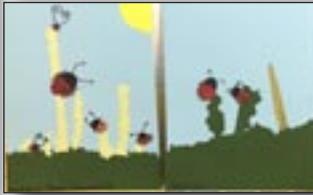
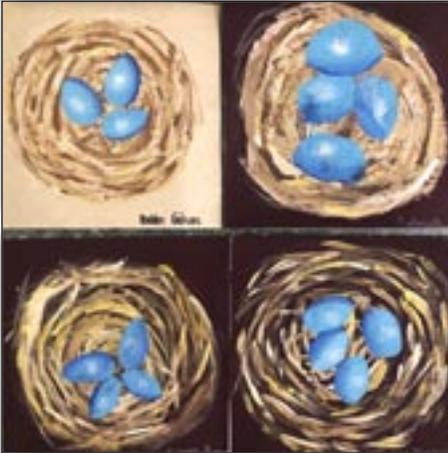
St. Agnes Academy has been so blessed to have Jim Stankiewicz as headmaster these last eight years. His staunch commitment to academic excellence and his passion for Catholic education has rung loud and true in the halls of this school. The benefactors have been countless students who have learned important life lessons that will carry them into adulthood. Jim has shown them that faith and love can carry the day and bring them to unimagined heights.

Even more profound has been Jim's genuine kindness and the love, care, and thoughtfulness that he shows everyone. St. Agnes has no greater friend and for that we will always be indebted. May his retirement be filled with happiness and relaxation. May God bless Jim with good health, and continually renew the powerful spirit and energy that Jim so generously gave to our great St. Agnes community.

*With love and great thanks,*  
Fr. Chris, faculty, staff,  
students, parents, and friends



Academy Artwork





## Letter from Burkina Faso

*Sr. Linda Answers the Call*

June 2019

### *Aching Heart*



Ninety-three students in a single sixth-grade class. One teacher, no aides, few books, no resources, no electricity and 105 degree temperatures.

Is it any wonder students struggle to succeed in school? And yet children here want to go to school. They want to learn to read and write and do math. They want a brighter future and a chance to escape the cycle of poverty.

At the end of the day, students don't rush off to dance class or sports teams. They go home to collect firewood, wait in line to draw water from the village well, help prepare meals, do laundry or care for younger siblings.

All this makes my old educator's heart ache.

Yet there is hope with sponsorship. Many children who are presently in school would not be enrolled at all without the help of sponsorship. So while there remain many problems and the system is not ideal, there is still hope for a brighter future!

This is why we do what we do! This is why we build schools and promote sponsorship.

-Sr. Linda

