



# St. Agnes Academy News

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Headmaster – James Stankiewicz

## Headmaster Headlines...

### Year Opens with New Faculty and Full Slate of Activities

It is hard to believe that we have already headed into fall and have completed our fifth week of school! We are off to a great start with many activities already underway and many more planned for the year.

Since the beginning of school I have been able to welcome two new teachers to our staff. Mrs. Patricia To-driff is our new third grade teacher. She has been working hard with our third graders and her experience is evident with the results she is getting with them. Another very experienced teacher, Mrs. Ann Marie De-sautelle, has joined us to teach music and reports from students and staff say that her classes are instructional and fun! We welcome them both to our community!

I was very pleased to see such great attendance at our back-to-school night in September. Thank you to the PTO for providing such great refreshments for the evening! I am looking forward to parent-teacher conferences in November, however, anytime that you need to contact me or your child's teacher for any reason, please do not hesitate to call or email. We are available to speak or meet with you concerning your child's progress.

I thank you for choosing St. Agnes Academy for your child's school. We offer excellent academics and the added value of a St. Agnes education can be found in the way students interact and work together in a manner modeled by Jesus. The Catholic Christian values make all the difference. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said "Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

May God bless you and your families,

-Jim Stankiewicz

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## NEWS BITS...

### School Health Recommendations for Keeping Students at Home

• **Fever (greater than 100°F).** Your student's temperature should be back to normal (less than 99°F) without the use of fever reducing medicines - such as Tylenol or Advil - for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

• **Coughing (excessive).** Your student's cough should be "dry" sounding and easily controlled by a drink of water or cough drop before returning to school.

• **Vomiting or Diarrhea.** Your student should be able to eat food and drink liquids without vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

• **Red or Draining Eyes.** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure your student does not have conjunctivitis. If being treated for an infection, please follow the infection recommendation below.

• **Excessive Nasal Drainage.** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure your student does not have an infection. If being treated for an infection, please follow the infection recommendation below.

• **Visible Lice or Nits.** Students identified as having lice may return to school as soon as the first treatment is completed. Parents/guardians will give verbal confirmation or sign a form indicating that the initial treatment has been completed and what the treatment was.

• **Unusual Rash.** Please keep your child at home and check with a physician to ensure that the rash is not contagious. If being treated for an infection please follow the infection recommendation below.

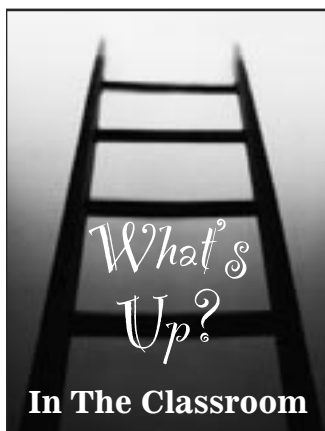
• **Infection.** If your student has been tested or treated for any contagious infection, have them stay at home until test results are available. If positive for infection, they should have had their medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school. This is to best ensure the infection is not spread and your child does not have a medication reaction/allergic response in school. If medication is to be given at school, please personally give the medicine to the School Health Office with the medication permission form. Forms can be found on the St. Agnes Catholic Community website through the Academy Health Office link, under Resources.

Please help us keep the school safe and healthy by encouraging proper hand washing techniques and basic infection control, such as coughing/sneezing into upper arm or tissue. If your student's illness or injury results in medications being delivered during school hours, note the following from the student medication policy: all medication has to be delivered and picked up by par-

ent/guardian, be in a properly marked pharmacy container, and be accompanied by the school's permission for medication form with both physician and parent signatures.

## Calendar of Events:

October 19 – Diocesan in-service day  
October 26 – First quarter ends  
October 26 – Halloween Party - school hall  
November 1 – All Saints' Day  
November 2 – All Souls' Day  
November 2 – First Friday Mass at 9 a.m.  
November 6 – Parent-teacher conferences – Half day  
November 13 – School board- 6 p.m. in library  
November 21 – Thanksgiving recess – Half day  
November 22 – Thanksgiving Day



In Mrs. Leja's and Mrs. Kulpa's pre-Kindergarten, we have had a great start to our new school year. Both the pre-school and pre-kindergarten classes have settled down nicely. New friendships have developed, as well as old friendships renewed from last year. Both classes are open in the

morning for free play; it has been enjoyable to watch how nicely the children interact with each other. The pre-school class has been learning about farm life and animals. They have done numerous projects related to the farm and they will have a Hoe-down celebration at the end of their unit. They played games and had a "He-Haw" great time!

The pre-K began the year with getting to know their classmates. We talked about friendships and how to show kindness to each other. We also have been doing a unit to welcome in the fall season. We have done some apple printing and painted beautiful fall trees. We are looking forward to working with the children in the months ahead.

In Mrs. Patti's kindergarten, the class is off to a wonderful start. The children have been busy making new friends, learning many new things, and being "Bucket Fillers." We kicked off the season of autumn by learning about apples and celebrating Johnny Appleseed's birthday. We tasted different apples and then made a graph to show which one was our favorite. Granny Smith was our class favorite!

In reading, we are underway in our Reading Street Series, along with learning about rhyming, practicing writing our names the "kindergarten way" and learning about letters and sounds. We have begun the second chapter in math in which we are learning about three-dimensional shapes. We have learned the names and qualities of a cone, sphere, cube, and cylinder. Religion class

has focused on teaching that God created the world and all the wonderful things in it, such as the animals and people.

Another exciting event in kindergarten has been meeting our eighth grade Big Buddies. The eighth graders will visit every other week and do many fun projects throughout the school year with our class.

We are looking forward to October as we will be celebrating National Fire Safety Week, in addition to looking for signs of fall.



*It's the fall season and kindergarten students pose with their Johnny Appleseed caps*

In Mrs. Shapiro's first grade, students have settled nicely into the daily routines of school. They seem to be excited to get reacquainted with their classmates. The children have just begun a new unit on Reading Street. The name of this unit is My World. Over the next several weeks, our class will be reading about and discussing the places and people in a child's world. The Big Question for this unit is: What is all around me? In math, students started Chapter 1: Numbers, Number Words, and Ordinals. They are off to a great start learning about numbers to 12. In science, we are learning about the seasons. Their favorite book is *Fall Is Not Easy* by Marty Kelley. They enjoyed making a fall coloring book and singing Dr. Jean's CD Seasons song.

We are beginning a theme-based literature study focusing on bears. This study will integrate literature while building and reinforcing reading/writing skills. Some of the popular children's books we've read so far are *Corduroy* by Don Freeman, *Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber, *The Biggest Bear* by Lynd Ward, *Blueberries for Sal* by Robert McCloskey, and *Every Autumn Comes the Bear* by Jim Arnosky.

Religion class has focused on the "Golden Rule" and the Sign of the Cross. We recently finished Chapters 1 & 2 in *Blest Are We* (Our Church Community, We Gather to Celebrate Mass) and the children have enjoyed singing the unit songs. We've read *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by E.B. Lewis. It's a beautiful picture book with a powerful message about how even small acts of kindness can change the world. I am happy to say that the students are busy reporting to

me how they have helped someone and having a great first month of school!



*First graders show off their masterpiece fall art pieces.*

**In Mrs. Blefari's second grade**, the class is off to a whirlwind start to school! We have spent much of September reviewing first grade curriculum, trying to undo "Summer Slide." I'm amazed at how much they have retained over the summer months.

In reading, we have already begun our first reading incentive program. Pawsome Readers is the title of our new reading program. Each child receives a tally sheet on Mondays. They are asked to read orally to a parent for 15 minutes per day throughout the week and return the tally sheet the following Friday. Each child who completes the sheet gets a "Scratch Ticket." Underneath the scratchable sticker is a prize listed, which the child receives. The children seem to enjoy this program and it really seems to get them into the habit of reading daily to an adult. The more they practice, the better they will get!

This is a very special year for the second graders who will be receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist. The children are excited and ready to go. We have started off this year by discussing the sacrament that most of them have already received - Baptism. The children have been bringing in their baptismal candles and white baptismal garments to show one another. We've discussed the different symbols on the candles from the different churches and their meanings. We've discussed Original Sin and how, during Baptism, Original Sin is removed. So on Monday, Sept. 24, we went over to the church and took a closer look at the Baptismal Font, and the other elements of the Baptismal Ceremony. The children asked many questions and seem to enjoy their mini field trip. Please keep these youngsters in your prayers as we help them prepare for these wonderful sacraments.

September has also brought plenty of discussion about apples. Many of the children have been apple picking with their families and this prompted a discussion of Johnny Appleseed. We read a story and watched a movie about Johnny Appleseed. We conducted a science experiment on oxidation. We placed a slice of apple

in cups containing water, grape juice, or lemon juice. The children were given observation sheets to check out the oxidation of the apples throughout the day. Our conclusion was that the lemon juice apple had the least amount of oxidation at the end of the day. The children concluded that there must have been "something" in the lemon juice that stopped the apple from turning brown. All in all it was a very enlightening day! I encouraged the children to try it at home with other liquids (with parental permission, of course). The next day I received a container with a half apple in chocolate milk. The conclusion was, "It didn't work so well..."

To finish Apple Week, we made applesauce. The children cut the peeled apples with plastic knives, added the measured amount of sugar, cinnamon, and water and let it cook. The classroom was filled with the scent of applesauce and many students in other classes stopped by to ask what smelled so good. We're off to a great start!



*During science, second graders prepare for study of oxidation in apples.*

**In Mrs. Todriff's third grade**, students have been "busy bees" reading and writing. We are reviewing how to write a complete sentence and finding the information in the text before we answer a question from the book. No more guessing! We can find the evidence, like detectives! Students did a great job decorating the "Homonym tree" in our room with many homonyms. Also, we have been practicing our visualization and sequencing techniques to help improve our comprehension and writing.

**In math**, we have been skip counting, learning place value up to hundred thousand, rounding, and playing with money. What better way to understand value of coins and practice making change? Next, we will move on to addition, missing addends, regrouping, 3-digit addition, etc.

**In science**, students are learning how force causes objects to move and the effects of forces, such as friction and gravity on movement. They enjoyed the experiment with a Ping-Pong ball and a rubber ball!

**In social studies**, third grade discussed the many symbols for Massachusetts. I learned a couple symbols

along with the students! Does everyone know the state cat? (a Tabby Cat) We read a short biography on our state heroine, Deborah Samson. We will be continuing to explore the history of Massachusetts.

**In religion class**, we have been discussing ways to make people, or each other, feel welcome. This can be in our neighborhoods, schools, classrooms, and church. We read about the Sacraments of Initiation and a message from St. Paul about loving one another and including one and all.



*Math work in third grade includes a unit on sequencing.*

**In Mrs. Adams' fourth grade**, the motto is "Work Hard, Be Nice." We are doing a very good job at both. The focus of the fourth grade religion curriculum has been on God's goodness, the story of Creation and the mystery of the Holy Trinity. The students have shared what they are thankful for and seem to have an understanding of the Mass as a sharing of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Word.

**The Language Arts curriculum** (Reading Street) encompasses five strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. The skills we have focused on in comprehension have been sequencing and summarizing. In language, our focus is on vocabulary affixes and suffixes, declarative and interrogative sentences while in writing, realistic fiction. The guiding question for the first unit is, "What can we discover from new places and people?" The students have enjoyed the main selection, an excerpt from *Because of WinnDixie*. Most of them were familiar with the novel and the movie because it was read to them in second grade with Mrs. Blefari.

**In Math**, (Progress in Mathematics), we have been reviewing place value, comparing and ordering whole

numbers, and exploring estimation. We have also been reviewing multiplying single digits and solving word problems. The class enjoys working on their individual white boards for both math and writing.

**In Social Studies**, (My World, Regions of our Country), the guiding question is, "How does geography affect the way we live?" We have reviewed our map skills and the different regions of the U.S.

**In Ms. Young's fifth grade**, the class started off the year strong despite the heat.

In religion, they discussed the need to care for God's creation by acting as stewards toward the environment and to one another, as well as an overview of the Sacraments and the sanctifying grace that brings us closer to God.

The class has reviewed addition and subtraction and is well on their way with multiplication. They are currently working on three-digit by three-digit problems as well as having zeros in the multiplier.

The girls and boys have been working on homographs and homonyms, theme and setting, and plot concepts while reading stories such as *Red Kayak*, *Thunder Rose*, and an excerpt from *Island of the Blue Dolphins*.

In science, the class has been learning about various types of technology and how they affect our lives. They have engaged in an activity where they made a model of a prosthetic arm and tested out grabbing items. The snack cart project is busy, and fifth graders have done a good job acting as the cashiers for morning snacks in the cart.

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

**Math:** Sixth graders have been working on review topics such as place value, decimals, and multiplication. They are working hard and doing a great job. Their next chapter is on division, including decimals. Soon after they will begin working on expressions, equations, and fractions.

**Science:** Sixth graders are finishing up a unit on space, which included concepts of gravity, phases of the moon, eclipses, the solar system, and the different types of galaxies. They will begin a unit on Earth science next. They will begin with the history of Earth and geologic time, and move into plate tectonics and how Earth's appearance has changed over millions of years.

**In literature**, students have just finished reading the classic story, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by CS Lewis. As their final project, they are creating their own "Fakebook" page that details the character traits of their favorite character in the story. They are really enjoying this activity and we will be wrapping that up by the end of the week. In October, we will read another classic, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, by Washington Irving and have a really exciting project planned! Stay tuned for more details.

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

**Math:** Seventh graders were working hard on learning about integers. The skills they learned in this first unit will carry them through most of the year and in eighth grade and high school math. They have just begun working with expressions and equations, and will work with inequalities as well.

**Science:** Students in grade 7 are learning about earthquakes and volcanoes. They work together as a group very well and are doing a great job. The next unit will focus on energy and Earth's resources.

This year, both Grade 6 and Grade 7 are learning the same material in Social Studies - World History from the origins of humans to the Roman Empire. This week, they will have their first test on Early Humans, and by next week we will begin our study of the early civilizations in the Fertile Crescent.

**In Religion,** the sixth and seventh grade students will combine their efforts to work on a variety of community service projects. Our first project will be a bake sale to raise funds to help the Ziembra family of Adams as they work to rebuild their dairy farm after a devastating fire.

We studied the steps in the writing process and used them to write an autobiographical essay. We are also learning to write more clear and cohesive sentences.

**Literature** - We have spent our time discussing the summer reading assignment *A Long Walk to Water*. We learned about the *Lost Boys* who covered Africa on foot, searching for safety.

**In Mrs. Jamros' eighth grade,** we will learn about World History from the end of the Roman Empire to the period of the Renaissance and Protestant Reformation. We are currently finishing our first unit on Rome, and will be starting our final project for the unit within the next few weeks. This project, which has become a favorite over the years, entails the construction of a small-scale Roman city using recyclable materials. Once the project is complete, we will move on to learn about Europe in the Middle Ages.

**Math** - We were lucky to split the eighth grade into two math groups this year, allowing the students an opportunity to get more individualized instruction. The group working with Mr. Lange is just finishing up the first chapter on rational numbers. This has been some mixed review of working with operations involving all types of rational numbers, and also expanding on their knowledge of exponents. This has also included simplifying algebraic expressions. It has been a good challenge for them and they are working hard.

We defined rational numbers, practiced writing them in equivalent forms, and graphed them on a number line. We also identified their additive inverses and absolute values. Next, we worked on finding the greatest common factor, least common multiple, and least common denominator. We are off to a good start!

**Science** - The eighth grade has been working on Earth and space science. They learned about how the Earth moves in space, how its tilt causes seasons, and about the moon's surface. They have also studied the inside of Earth. The next unit will be on the atmosphere, weather, and climate.

**Religion** - We began our study of the New Testament by learning about the people who wrote about Jesus. Students researched the life of one of the Gospel writers or Paul, and they presented a biography highlighting how their writer became a disciple of Christ.

**Language Arts** - We reviewed the writing process and put it to work with a personal narrative essay. We are also working on improving our sentence structure.

**Literature** - We have been having in-depth discussions on our summer reading assignment, *The Pearl*. We also did a "Who Dunit?" activity to see who could come up with the best theory as to who may have been responsible for some of the events that took place in the story.

We have met with our Little Buddies in kindergarten and have had fun getting to know them. It is going to be a fun year!

Also, we have attended the first couple of sessions in the District Attorney's Peer Leadership Program. We look forward to learning skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, communication, and self-reflection.



*A St. Agnes Academy tradition is the eighth grade Big Buddy program with the kindergarten class.*