

St. Agnes School Newsletter

3886 Chestnut Ave. Concord, CA 94519



925-689-3990

January 20, 2010

www.stagnesconcord.com

Principal's Corner

Our televisions and radios have been filled with the sight of human misery and devastation resulting from the recent earthquake in Haiti. Amid the ruin are the cries and looting of desperate people who have no food, no shelter, no medicine, and no water.

It is difficult for us to comprehend the magnitude of their suffering and despair. Thousands are still trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings. Tens of thousands are injured and unable to receive adequate medical care and still even more tens of thousands are dead and being buried in large holes being dug in what was once the dumps. And we ask why? How could such a thing happen to such a poor, impoverished country?

We live in earthquake country too. What happened in Haiti could also happen here. Are we prepared? Can anyone possibly be prepared for such devastation? How can we help the people of Haiti? Two ways quickly come to mind. One is to lift these people and their loved ones up to God in frequent prayer – just a quick prayer asking God to give strength of resolve and peace of heart to these suffering people. God does listen to our prayers, so be persistent. And secondly, every Catholic parish has been asked to take up a special second collection this Sunday. I would ask that each of us be utterly generous – “the widow gave but a mite which was all she had” and God was pleased. So, let your conscience

be your guide and give. Wouldn't you want others to be utterly generous if we experienced the same from an earthquake?

Two quotes put into perspective our sense of responsibility as a nation and as a faith community: Yeats said, “I have believed the best of everyone, and find that to believe the best is enough to make a bad person show themselves at their best, or a good person to swing their lantern higher.” Americans are good people; so let's swing our lanterns high. And, another quote, “It is more important to do the right thing than to do things right.” (Thoreau)

Important Dates, Information, and Update

Spread the Word

Our Open House takes place on Sunday, January 31st. It starts with the 9:00AM Mass followed by hospitality in Cauchi Hall and Open House. We hope all of you are planning to attend.

Applications for enrollment will be available for the next school year. Please spread the word about our school and encourage your friends to come take a look at us and at our programs. All the classrooms will be open, the Book Fair will be in full swing, and Student Council will be our tour guides. If you will be anticipating another child/sibling

coming into the school as a Kinder, you need to get an application and fill it out as well.

Feast Day

Tomorrow, Thursday, January 21st is the feast of St. Agnes. St. Agnes was born in the year 291 and was martyred for her faith by the Emperor Diocletian at the age of thirteen in the year 304. Pictures and statues depict her holding a palm branch and carrying a lamb in her arms. The palm symbolizes peace and the lamb represents the fact that her name Agnes is derived from the Latin word for lamb “Agnus” (the Agnus Dei that is said prior to communion means “Lamb of God”).

In St. Agnes' honor, the children will enjoy a “Free Dress” day and an extra recess time. Please believe them when they tell you that they have free dress tomorrow.

Scholastic Book Fair

Our annual Book Fair begins on Sunday, during Open House, from 10:00AM to noon in the library. We hope you will be able to visit the fair at that time. “**ONE FOR STUDENTS**” is a program that we encourage all to participate in. There is a flyer attached with all the details. All you do is donate \$1.00 and sign the slip returning it to the office. All the money collected goes towards the purchase of new books for the library and the children to enjoy.

Book Fair Assistance

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Our annual Book Fair is only successful because of all the wonderful volunteers who work it. Mrs. Cesca, our librarian, needs your help. She needs people to work at the Book Fair on Monday, February 1st through Friday, February 5th daily from 8:00AM through 4:00PM. Since many hands make light work, whatever time you can give to this cause would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Melissa Carofanello at 234-2135 or email her at Melissa.Carofanello@hrd.cccounty.us, if you can help in any way. The children appreciate your time in this regard.

Science Fair

The annual Art and Science Fair will be held on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. All students, Kindergarten through 8th grade, are invited to participate and show off their talent in art and /or their curiosity in science. Kinder through 5th grade students must request information or an application packet in order to help us plan the set-up for the projects that will be coming into the Fair. A flyer with all the necessary information can be found in this week's family envelope. Please contact Deborah Macy at 798-1739 with any questions.

Accelerated Reading

Week Sixteen of our Accelerated Reading reporting is here. I am pleased to announce that we increased our score by 1,152 points. Our total is now 14,678 points earned towards our goal of 25000 points by year's end. We are slightly better than 58.7% of our total goal. Please continue to monitor the bulletin board outside the school office. It is being updated weekly. Stay tuned and watch us read!

Six Flags

Don't forget about the Six Flags reading program that St. Agnes School is again participating in. The program is for children in grades Kindergarten through 6th grade. All the children have to do is read a total of six hours before February 23rd. Children who accomplish this task will receive a free ticket / admission to the Six Flags theme parks. Please encourage your children to read as it is a wonderfully healthy brain activity.

Crab Feed

Calling all crab lovers in our reading audience, two opportunities await you. This Saturday, January 23rd you can attend the Crab Feed hosted here at St. Agnes Parish or on Saturday, February 6th you can attend the Crab Feed at St. Bonaventure. Come enjoy a fun evening with good food. A flyer for St. Bonaventure's Crab feed will be forthcoming. No tickets will be sold at the door for either event.

Men's Retreat

Don't forget the wonderful opportunity awaiting the men of our school community—a men's retreat at San Damiano in Danville. All of us need peace and solitude in order to hear God speak. This is a terrific time for you to sneak away from all the bustle and noise that often fills your waking moments and give yourself over to God. Often, a retreat experience helps bring beautiful things into your family relationships as well. There is a flyer in this week's family envelope with all the details. I encourage you to read it with an open heart. The retreat takes place on the weekend of March 5th – 7th; so this gives you time to put it on your calendar now, so there won't be any conflicts.

Progress Reports

We are at the half way mark for this 2nd trimester and that means that progress reports will be coming home. Next Wednesday, January 27th, your children will be bringing home their reports. Please go over those reports of student progress carefully with your child/children and make arrangements to speak with the classroom teacher/s if that is necessary.

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Scouts

Our 4th grade Girl Scout Troop will be visiting the Contra Costa Food Bank on February 24th and will learn how this agency functions. In order to help the lessons be more valuable, we have been asked to have every child bring in at least one can of food. Baskets will be outside the classroom doors to receive the cans and the Girl Scouts will then take these cans with them to the Food Bank and help process them for delivery to the poor. Please stay tuned for the actual dates for the drop off of the canned goods.

Contacts

Each month, a representative from PACE and School Board will make themselves available to speak with you regarding any concerns, compliments, ideas, suggestions etc. you might have. For the month of January, Angie Blackmon will be the PACE Representative. She can be reached at 639-0814. Tom Hand will be the School Board Representative and he can be reached at 776-5740. Please give either of them a call if you would like something to be shared. Thanks!

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thursday, January 21st

Feast of St. Agnes
School Board meeting at 6:30PM in the Ministry Center

Saturday, January 23rd

Work Party
9:00AM to 1:00PM
St. Agnes Crab Feed after the 5:00PM Mass

Sunday, January 24th

Second collection at all the Masses to benefit the people of Haiti

Wednesday, January 27th

Minimum day
12:30 dismissal for teacher articulation
Progress reports go home today