

SS Peter & Paul Parish School of Religion Newsletter



Christmas 2010

PSR Website – www.spp.waterloo.il.us/psr.html
PSR Coordinator Email – anitatoth@htc.net

***“For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you
who is Messiah and Lord!” ~ Luke 2:11***

CHRISTMAS WRITING CONTEST

The Messenger is sponsoring a Christmas writing contest for youths in grades 1-12 who are enrolled in diocesan Catholic schools and religious education programs. Homeschoolers may also enter. \$25 Visa Gift card prizes will be awarded to individuals producing winning entries based on creativity and originality.

Writers are asked to answer the question:
“What is the spirit of Christmas and where/how do you find it?” The completed writing should be no less than 25 words or more than 100 words.

Entries must be postmarked by Dec. 6th and should be sent to: “Christmas Writing Contest”.
By mail: The Messenger, 2620 Lebanon Avenue, Belleville, IL 62221
Or email cathnews@bellevillemessenger.org.

Holy Day - Immaculate Conception Mass @ 7p Wednesday, Dec. 8th

Please note that both campuses will be closed so that you and the PSR Catechists can attend Mass with your families.

First Reconciliation/Communion Retreat - January 8 from 9a-12p

This is a mandatory gathering for the parents and First Communicants. Information will be shared regarding the Sacraments and there will be a mini retreat on the Eucharist. You will meet in church at 9a before breaking off into separate groups (adults in the gym/children in the cafeteria) at SPPS.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

December 1	PSR Classes Reconciliation (Gr. 3-8)
December 5	Jr. High Youth Gathering 6:30p Grades 6-8 @ Youth House
December 6	PSR Advisory Board Meeting 6:30p in the PPC
December 8	Feast of the Immaculate Conception/Holy Day Mass-7p
December 12	5th Grade Family Mass & Reception at 9a Mass
December 15	PSR Classes - Final class of 2010!
December 19	Youth Mass - 5p in church
December 22 & 29	NO CLASS - Christmas Break!
January 5	PSR Classes
January 8	First Reconciliation Meeting & Retreat 9a-12p @ church
January 9	4 th Grade Family Mass & Reception at 9a Mass

Activities in the Classroom...

- The 7th & 8th Grade students made fleece blankets for the homebound of the parish. They turned out beautifully and will be blessed and distributed at an upcoming Mass!
- Thank you to Father Max for explaining and demonstrating the sacrament of Baptism to the 1st & 4th Grades. (The Toth “baby doll” used for each demonstration is now very holy!)
- We teamed up with Bank of America and their “Hearts for Holidays” program. The PSR students made over 100 Christmas cards that will be distributed to the sick children and patients in St. Louis area hospitals to help brighten their spirits this Christmas season!

Confirmation News!

Teaching Mass, Jan 18th @ 7p

January 18th has been reserved for the Teaching Mass for our Confirmandi and their parents.

(Sponsors are welcome to come if available!)

Deacon Doug Boyer leads this very informative walk-thru of the Mass answering many of the “Why do we do that” questions that kids and adults have.

Confirmation Service Projects Available for 6th, 7th & 8th Grades

The upcoming service projects are available to our youth who participate. (Remember that 8th Graders need 14 service projects, 7th & 6th Graders need 3 service projects.) Please bring a copy of the reflection paper for the organizer to sign. You can print a copy of the Reflection Paper which can be found at the bottom of the PSR Website.

www.spp.waterloo.il.us/psr.html

Parents please note - After Christmas the number of project opportunities decreases significantly. Please help your child take advantage of the ones available now!

* December 4 – Drop & Shop babysitting volunteers needed (8th Grade and up) – Contact Trish McGhee at 939-6622.

* December 12 - After 9a Mass - Food/drink servers needed. Contact: Cheryl Doerr @ mcdherr4@htc.net

* Christmas Angel Program - Select a child/family in need and purchase a gift that will be wrapped and delivered on Christmas. Contact: M Knefelkamp @ 939-1541.

* Christmas Angel Gift Wrapping – Child/Parent activity. Please bring scissors & tape if possible to SPPS Gym on Dec 12th from 12p-4p to help wrap gifts. Contact Barb Reinholz @ 939-7115

* Hope Christian Church will be seeking help sorting the food donations dropped off by the Scouting for Food drive. Contact Colleen Goessling @ goose1@htc.net for details.

5th Grade FAMILY MASS & RECEPTION – Sunday, Dec. 12th @ 9a

Each month we will honor students, by grade level, at the 9a Mass. Pews will be reserved for the families in the front of church and the children will have the opportunity to participate in the Mass. A coffee & donut reception for the families will follow in the SPPS Cafeteria. Please mark your calendars!

December 12 – 5th Grade

January 9 – 4th Grade

February 13 – 3rd Grade

March 13 – 2nd Grade

April 10 - K/1st Grade

May 1st – 8th Grade/Confirmation Practice

Ss Peter & Paul - YOUTH MINISTRY Calendar of Events

December 4 – Drop and Shop. Youth Ministry will once again sponsor the annual Drop N Shop on December 4th in the SPPS cafeteria from 8am to 1 pm for children 4 to 10 years old. Please have your child/children bring a sack lunch. We will provide juice & milk. They will play games, make crafts, and watch Christmas movies. Please RSVP by December 1st to Trish McGhee at 939-6622. Any 8th - 12th grader who would like to volunteer for the Drop N Shop, please also contact Trish McGhee.

December 5 – Monthly gatherings @ the Youth House - 6:30p for middle school students; 7:30p for high school students

December 19 – Youth Mass @ 5pm

PRAY WITH YOUR CHILD!

For a listing of prayers and support please see: www.catholic.org/clife/prayers

GIBAULT NEWS!

December 30 – Junior High Trivia Night (grades 7 & 8)

Come join us for some fun during Christmas Break. Bring your own snacks to enjoy while playing trivia with your friends. Tables of 4-8 players. No charge, but an RSVP is required (pherzing@gibaultonline.com).

The event will be in the Gibault Auditorium from 7PM-9PM.

Application for Admission

Applications for admission to Gibault for the 2011-2012 school year go in the mail on December 1. Filling out an application does not commit you to Gibault, but it does ensure that you will receive all the mailings and information about financial aid, scholarships, and registration.

Remember, no family who wants a Catholic education for their children will be turned away from Gibault regardless of financial situation. For additional details, contact Pat Herzing at 939-3883 or pherzing@gibaultonline.com.

Shadow for a Day (grades 7 and 8)

Not sure that Gibault is the right fit for your child? Try us on for size by having your child shadow a current student for a full or ½ day. Contact Pat Herzing, pherzing@gibaultonline.com, for details.

COLUMBIA SQUIRES CIRCLE

The Columbian Squires Circle will hold an Investiture Ceremony on January 5, 2011 at 5:30 at the Odd Fellow Lodge. (The Investiture Ceremony is only open to Knights and Squires.)

The Columbian Squires, the official youth organization of the Knights of Columbus, is a leadership development program for young Catholic men between the ages of 10-18 years old.

Please contact Steve Bushong at 618/304-2669 or sbushong@htc.net by December 31, 2010 to register or if you need more information.

December Holy Hero

(This series helps us recall the lives of godly people who dedicated their lives to spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ to those among them. Please share these stories with your children over dinner some night!)

“St. John of the Cross”

“Mystical” Doctor of the Church

1542-1591 (Feast Day – Dec. 14)

By Stephanie Purcell, SPP Catholic Identity Committee

“Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” These words from the Gospel of Mark (Chap 8, verse 34), sum up the life of St. John of the Cross. John’s father was disowned by his rich and noble family after he married a weaver’s daughter. Juan de Yepes, St. John, was born in Spain in 1542. His father died when he was just a baby and his mother kept the homeless family together as they searched for work. He learned early on about self-sacrificing love and offering up sufferings for the love of Jesus. He went to a school for poor children and at fourteen, took a job at a hospital caring for patients suffering from terrible diseases and madness. It was during these times that John searched outside of this world for happiness and beauty, and found it in God. After attending a Jesuit college, John joined the Carmelite Order. St. Teresa of Avila asked John to help her in reforming the order by returning it to a more prayerful life. Some Carmelites felt threatened by the reform and threw John into prison. In his dark, tiny cell, John knew the cross of suffering. He had nothing left but God. Faith and love became his warmth and light. John grew closer and closer to God and received deep peace and joy in that desolate place. After nine months, he managed to escape. He spent the rest of his life explaining his experiences of God’s love. St. John of the Cross is famous for his spiritual books on how to unite our souls more deeply with God through prayer and charity. These books include: [Dark Night of the Soul](#), [Ascent of Mount Carmel](#), and [The Living Flame of Love](#). He was canonized in 1726 by Pope Benedict XIII and is one of the 33 Doctors of the Church, as his profound, mystical writings are recognized as an important contribution to the Catholic Church.

Let’s ask St. John to help us have a strong faith, especially during the times when God seems far away. We tend to run from the cross of suffering; we want life to be easy and comfortable. We sometimes don’t want to hear words like sacrifice, discipline, and self-denial. St. John’s message echoes the Gospel’s; don’t be afraid to take up your cross and follow Jesus, for only through Him will we find true peace and joy!