

## Principal's Corner

### Did You Know?

The season of Christmas begins at midnight on Christmas morning, and lasts until January 5, the 12th day of Christmas. January 6 is **Epiphany**, observed in church on the following Sunday.

### A CHRISTMAS CREED

I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room, and I confess that my heart still sometimes wants to exclude Christ from my life today.

I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

I believe in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible.

I believe in the one whose cradle was a mother's arms, whose modest home in Nazareth had love for its only wealth, who looked at persons and made them see what God's love saw in them, who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I confess my ever-lasting need of God: The need of forgiveness for our selfishness and greed, the need of new life for empty souls, the need of love for hearts grown cold.

I believe in God who gives us the best of Himself.

I believe in Jesus, the son of the living God, born in Bethlehem this night, for me and for the world.

(Taken from: [www.prayer-and-prayers.info./christmas-prayers](http://www.prayer-and-prayers.info./christmas-prayers).)

## REMINDERS

**\*\*Christmas vacation Dec. 23 to Jan. 8. School resumes on Jan. 9.**

**\*\*Wednesday, Jan. 11, Pack the Place.**

**\*\*Wednesday, Jan. 11, 7:00 p.m. BSJ meeting.**

**\*\*Legos in-school field trip Wednesday-Friday, Jan. 11-13. More info. to come.**

**\*\*Friday, Jan. 13, 8:15 a.m. all school liturgy.**

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Catholic Schools Week Open House on Sunday, Jan. 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

**Winter Gala—Saturday Feb. 11.**

Regarding January Tuition- Normally, tuition is considered late if received after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. However, since we only return to school on January 9, we are extending the grace period for payment. Late charges will not accrue until Wednesday, January 18, 2012. All payments received by the end of the school day on Tuesday, January 17 will be considered on time. Merry Christmas!!

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff,  
we wish every-one a  
blessed  
Christmas and joyful  
New Year!



## STUDENTS EXPERIENCE HUNGER BANQUET

On Friday, December 9, the fourth through eighth grade students got a glimpse into the inequalities that exist in the world. Members of the National Junior Honor Society and its sponsors, Mrs. Raelyn Wall and Ms. Beth Burke, hosted a Hunger Banquet that has been developed by Oxfam America, an international relief and development organization that works to create lasting solutions to poverty, hunger and injustice. The Hunger Banquet is the signature event of Oxfam, and is designed to bring attention to poverty and hunger issues through first-hand experience and stories from around the world.

With the help of alumnus Maddie Wall, the members of the NJHS learned how to conduct the Hunger Banquet by experiencing it themselves first. Then they in turn hosted the experience for all of the fourth through eighth grade students. As students entered the school's cafeteria, they were given random slips of paper to determine their income levels. Groups were formed based on the latest statistics about the number of people living in poverty — 15 percent in the high-income tier, 35 percent in the middle-income and 50 percent in low-income. The underlying purpose was to get the students thinking about some of the inequalities that exist in the world and about how many people in the world live a life of extreme poverty just because of the culture, place or circumstances into which they were born.



Students in the high-income group were seated at a large table adorned with a table cloth and place settings. They were served large portions of salad, lasagna, bread and soda as most of their classmates watched from the floor. Those assigned to the middle-income group received moderate portions of rice, beans and water — all meant to symbolize a simple, low-cost meal. The low-income group was forced to sit on the ground, and was only given small amounts of water and rice, which students had to scoop out of a large bowl using plastic cups. As the low- and middle-income students ate the last of their rice, the high-income table was

served large pieces of red velvet cake with scoops of vanilla ice cream.

During the banquet and while waiting for whatever meal portion was their lot, the students shared information with each other about the character their card described. Students were allowed to share their reactions and reflections in a discussion at the end of the meal and after watching some very moving videos from Oxfam.



Mrs. Wall encouraged the children to perhaps think of forgoing just one Christmas wish of their own and using the money to perhaps help Oxfam help someone else that is living in poverty. Ms. Burke, who narrated the activity, closed with a meaningful quote: "The one thing I would like you to remember is this: Everyone on earth has the same basic needs; it is only our circumstances—where we live and the culture into which we are born—that differ," she said. "Some of us are born into relative prosperity and security, while millions—through no choice of our own—are born into poverty."

In our Advent of waiting for the Christ child who came to save us all, this activity was a most fitting way for the students to think about one small way that they might be able to contribute to saving the world as well.

## Christmas Concert 2011



On Wednesday, December 14, the Pre-School, grades K-5 and the Liturgical Choir joined to present a Christmas concert for their parents and friends. Under the direction of Mr. Joe Mar-torano and accompanied by many talented musi-

cians, the students sang a program of Advent and Christmas music designed to highlight the true meaning of the Christmas season. The lovely melodies and meaningful lyrics helped add meaning to our Advent of waiting for the Christ child.



The 7th graders have been working on their podcasting skills and also doing some research on charitable organizations that offer ways for us to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. The students chose a charity they wanted to advertise and then re-searched the mission of that organization. They also used a site called Charity Navigator to decide if the organization spends most of their donations for the cause rather than for administrative costs. Then they worked either solo or with a partner to craft a "radio commercial" for the charity. As the students finish, Mrs. Yakes is gathering the commercials on a Wikispace so that everyone can listen to them. Please take the time to visit the 7th Grade Commercial Wikispace. If you wish to leave a comment, visit the Discussion page and please post your comment! Thank you!

**PODCASTING BY GRADE 7**  
**CHECK IT OUT!**

## Biography Book Reports

By: 4th Grade



For their October Book Report, the 4<sup>th</sup> Graders read biographies. As part of their reports, they created life-sized drawings of the persons

they read about. In addition, each student created a bio-cube with important information about the life of their subject. The children learned many new things about famous personalities as they shared their work with the class.

