

St. Luke Catholic School
Love, Care, & Respect For One Another

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September Newsletter

A New School Year: Positive Communication

We welcome all of our new and returning families to St. Luke School.

The school year is off to a fantastic start. The energy our students have has filled the school with great anticipation for what is to come. We are confident that this year holds many great things!

Our faculty and staff stand committed to our mission in providing a quality Catholic education to all our students. We are blessed with a talented group of educators who truly see

teaching as a ministry. Each contribute to our school community in a special way adding to its vibrancy and success.

Our school community believes that we are a team in your child's formation. A positive teacher-parent relationship is key. Communication is essential and there are many modes to keep in contact. Conferences may be scheduled during the teacher's daily conference period. We ask that you make the appointment 24 hrs. in advance by a written note

or simply calling the front office. Every teacher has a School-Notes page that can be accessed via the website where the teacher posts updates on school events and important academic information. You may also request email notification when the teacher updates their page. This is very convenient. Our teachers also have an email addresses where you may communicate at your convenience. We look forward to a fruitful year!

Mrs. Ana E. Gomez, M.Ed.
Principal

Open House : September 3, 2009

Our annual Open House will give us the opportunity to formally welcome everyone back! This year's Open House will take place this Thursday beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the church. We will begin with a general presentation then continue to the school for

individual teacher and department presentations. We will host two twenty minute sessions in the school to allow families with multiple children to meet with their individual teachers.

Our computer lab will also be open to allow

parents to peruse our website and locate the different features available to parents and students. Mr. Rivera, our Computer teacher, will be happy to assist you.

We look forward to seeing you this Thursday!

Inside this issue:

A New School Year!	1
Open House	1
Counselor's Corner	2
Reminders/ Upcoming Events	2
National Gallery of Writing/ Helping Hand	3
Fostering a Christian Community	4
Celebrations	4

School Council Meeting
September 28th
6:30 P.M.
Library





Counselor's Corner

We are off to a fantastic start this school year! I have already made my way to every classroom to welcome the many new faces of St. Luke. The children are excited and eager to learn. For those parents who are new to our school please keep in mind that adapting to a new routine or schedule can be challenging to the child as well as the parents. Be patient! Children who are young typically adjust quicker when the parents are consistent and confident about the child's transition. Parents who demonstrate anxiety or reservation will transfer those doubts

to the child. Older children may take a bit longer to adjust only because they may be missing their former classmates. Regardless of their ages the children are resilient and will adjust in due time.

For the past couple of weeks Ms. Gómez and I have visited with teachers to address any concerns that may come up during the year. Our effort is to be proactive in identifying the special needs that our children may exhibit early on in the school year.

One of the changes that we have made is using an new strategy for our

Character Education Program. We have selected the "Character Counts" program that was introduced to our students last year. This program focuses on 6 pillars of character. The first one we will introduce to our students is TRUST-WORTHINESS. Children will learn the importance of being honest, reliable, and loyal. This concept will be introduced and focused on at EVERY grade-level.

If you have any concerns with your child's behavior, please come by to visit with me Mon-Fri 8 am-12 noon.

Important Reminders

The Parent Student Handbook was sent home to every family. Please take the time to review its contents and return the acknowledgement form by September 8th to your child's teacher. The following are changes or clarifications for the coming year:

- Tuition Policy pg. 7
- Arrival and Dismissal Procedures pg.8
- Early Pick-up Procedures pg. 9
- Dress Code pg. 12-13
- Tardiness pg. 17
- National Elementary Honor Society pg.19
- Testing pg. 20
- Liturgy pg. 23

Weekly Mass begins this week! We are blessed as a school community to come together in prayer once a week. Our students truly enjoy preparing for the Mass. Teachers have been reviewing the importance of respect and reverence throughout the Mass. We ask that you assist with this as well. As stated in the Handbook, we ask that all students be on time and in full uniform. Thank you!

Upcoming Events

9/1/09 (Tuesday) Distribute Carnival Raffle Tickets

9/3/09 (Thursday) 1st School Liturgy 8:30 a.m. Mass is celebrated once a week . Join us!

9/3/09 (Thursday) Open House 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Opening to take place at the Church. Students and Parents Welcome!

9/4/09 (Friday) Teacher Diocesan In-service—McAllen, TX No classes

9/7/09 (Monday) Labor Day Holiday
No classes

9/8/09 (Tuesday) Study Hall begins
3:30 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

9/16/09 (Wednesday) First Quarter Progress Reports

9/22/09 (Tuesday) Picture Day Montessori-1st

9/23/09 (Wednesday) Picture Day 2nd -6th

Picture Day : Say cheese! The photographer will be on campus on the 22nd and 23rd of this month. On these days, students are allowed to wear their Sunday's best on these days. This is not a Blue Jean Day. A proof along with an order form will follow picture day. Thank you for your cooperation.



National Gallery of Writing

St. Luke Catholic School teachers and students will join many across the nation in celebrating the importance of writing through the designation of a National Day on Writing which will occur this year on October 20, 2009.

The National Day on Writing celebrates the foundational place of writing in Americans' personal, professional, and civic lives and emphasizes the importance of writing instruction and practice at every level and in every subject area from preschool through post-graduate education.

The National Council of Teachers of English will maintain a National Gallery of Writing. This will be a website where student's work will be published. We are proud to announce that St. Luke School has been selected to participate and we will host a Local Partner Gallery for this great event. Our theme will be family. We look forward to this great celebration and presentation of our young writers.

We thank Ms. Mary Beth Martin, our lead teacher, for coordinating this event.

Under the Weather...

As we prepare for the upcoming flu season, we continue to maintain a safe and clean environment. Our teachers continue to talk to our student's about personal hygiene and working as teams to keep their classrooms clean.

We would like to remind parents that if your child is not feeling well and running a fever it is imperative that they stay home to rest and if necessary see a doctor. Being proactive is always the best practice. Any students with flu like symptoms do need proper rest and treatment. If your child is going to be absent please call the office to notify and please return with a note or doctor's excuse upon return. Thank you!

SLS a Helping Hand in our Community

A very big part of our school community is our call to service. Our students do an excellent job reaching out to the community. I was so proud of our First graders who initiated our first **Blue Jean Day** this past Friday and designated the collection to the Brownsville PAWS organization. They wanted to help the homeless dogs. We raised \$200.21 which will be used to purchase supplies for this organization. Great job!

Coach Perez has kicked off our **Jump Rope for Heart** campaign for this year. Our students have done a great job in the past. Last year our students were able to collect \$\$\$\$ for this organization which works on research and community awareness on heart disease. Like all of our service projects, participation is on a voluntary basis. Pledges and forms are due to Coach Perez on Friday, September 11th. A celebration will take place the following Friday during the student's recess time.

La Posada is a project started by our 5th and 6th graders. Students along with faculty and staff

members plan and prepare a meal for the less fortunate in our own community. The meal is funded by donations and our monthly collection from the Mission Bag. Once a month, students gather at the Good Neighbor Settlement Home to serve this meal. As many as 150 plates may be served on a given evening. For many who visit the shelter this is their only meal that day. Students are very touched by the appreciation and difference they are making. Hats off to our faculty and staff members who continued this service project throughout the summer months! Thank you for sharing your heart!

Our **Recycling Program** has also been a great success! So much that the container remains most of the week. Many times I am approached by a community member thanking our school for doing so! The importance of recycling is so great and makes a difference globally. Our students continue to learn the importance of recycling and contributing to the wellness of our planet. We thank our Student Council for initiating this program and

Look forward to their continued participation and awareness program they have scheduled for this school year.

Finally, our **Mission Bag** collection assists many service projects and needs of the community throughout the school year. Donations are selected by our teachers or students themselves. Our mission bag is a daily opportunity where many children contribute change for this effort. In the past donations have been made to local families who have experienced a sudden illness or death, organizations such as Projecto Juan Diego of Cameron Park, Monica's House ...

Our students clearly see the importance of service and clearly continue to make a difference. We encourage students to be active in their community and to give of their time, talents and treasure from the heart.



Fostering a Community of Love, Care and Respect

As a school community, we are challenged daily to share Christ with one another by showing love, care and respect. Fostering a Christian community is a challenge in our times but so needed. We battle against what some may see as "cool".

As Christians, we are called to share the gospel values and promote hope in the future. It is by loving one another and transferring that love with acts of kindness and constant respect for each other that this is possible.

As a school community we nurture this by beginning the school day with prayer. Every grade level shares their faith with a daily religion lesson. Our teachers strive

to develop a relationship with Christ for each student through prayer, activities and sharing. Teachers lead the students in prayer before lunch. Classes are encouraged to find times during the day to pray together.

Students in grades 2nd-6th get the opportunity to prepare the weekly liturgy. Here along with their teacher, students are assigned as readers, help with a reflection and the offertory. Students also participate in the choir. Our students in Montessori-1st prepare Prayer Services scheduled throughout the school year.

Class retreats are also planned throughout the year. Our school counselor, teachers and myself select a theme for each grade and prepare prayer, scripture sharing and activities around this theme. Students enjoy this time together to pray, reflect and share.

Finally, Monsignor Bert and Father Oscar are always accessible for special talks or just to pay a visit to our students. Fr. Oscar began the year with us by blessing each classroom, its doorway, teachers and students as we began the school year. This was a great reminder of what we are all about. We dedicate all that we do to building a faith-filled community.

Church and School Celebrations

With the fall season around the corner, we begin to prepare for upcoming celebrations in our community.

Plans and preparations for our annual carnival began in the summer months. We know that this is always an exciting and fun time for all! Our students clearly look forward to coming out for fantastic games, fun and great food! Together with our parish, this time also holds to a time to build community.

Our carnival will take place on October 24 and 25th. Each class will soon begin planning for their respective booths. A Head Room Mothers Meeting will be called soon to begin organization. Mothers who volunteered to assist will be contacted.

Raffle tickets will be distributed to our school families this week. This activity fulfills part of your yearly commitment. Additional tickets are available in the finance office. We thank you for your support. All stubs and payment are due by October 23rd.

We wish everyone luck!

The following are the great raffle prizes:

- 1st : 2009 Ford Focus
- 2nd: HDTV Flat screen
- 3rd: \$500 dollar Shopping Spree at Sunrise Mall
- 4th: Blue Ray DVD
- 5th : Xbox

In the month of October, we will also celebrate Monsignor Bert Diaz's 20th Anniversary in the priesthood. Monsignor anniversary date was August 26th. A special Mass of thanksgiving will be celebrated on Friday, October 30th followed with a reception.

Our community is blessed with dedicated spiritual leaders. We continue to pray for Monsignor Bert on his anniversary and all priests.

SLS School Council

The St. Luke School Council serves as an advisory council to the pastor and principal. Its mission is to help provide quality Catholic education. They may provide advice and direction in aspects of the school including the long range planning and public relations.

We are blessed with dedicated parents who have served on our council. I would like to thank Mrs. Claudia Hernandez and Mrs. Esperanza Hernandez who completed their terms this past school year. Their time and talents are truly appreciated. We welcome three new members and have one vacancy. If any parent or parishioner is interested please see me. The following remain active members on the Council. We thank them for their dedication.

- Ms. Sandra M. Duran
- Mr. Jamie Estrada
- Mrs. Rose Lorenz
- Mrs. Mariana M. Purneda
- Mr. Gilbert Salinas
- Mr. Chris Valadez
- Mrs. Estela Vasquez
- Mr. Luis Zuniga