

***MISSION STATEMENT:** Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools are dedicated to providing a Catholic education ensuring educational quality for all families willing to enter into a partnership to develop each child to his or her fullest spiritual and academic potential.*

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Deadline for submissions to this newsletter is Thursday @ 11:00 a.m.

Please email information for the SF newsletter to Kathy Hunt at khunt@gtacs.org

Please email information for system-wide distribution to Maureen DeYoung at mdeyou@gtacs.org

Christ – Above All Things

From the Principal

Report Cards:

Report Cards will not be going home with students on Monday. As we adjust to our new software we thank you for your patience and understanding.

Catholic Schools Week and an Article on Adoration:

With the beginning of Catholic Schools Week the Diocese asked us to write an article about adoration at the High School. Below is what I wrote and I thought it appropriate for the beginning of the week.

"The Church and the world have a great need for adoration because this is what will bring about God's kingdom on earth and an everlasting peace to all mankind" (Pope John Paul II). Following the exhortations of Pope John Paul II and the writings and examples of the great saints, we knew that the holiness of the Saint Francis High School family was and is rooted in our devotion and love of the Eucharist. Accordingly, an effort was made in the year 2005 to bring adoration into our school through the beautiful tradition of exposition. That is, students and staff began taking time out of their day to sit in the presence of the Most Holy Eucharist as He was exposed in a monstrance.

Since we had no permanent chapel in our school, the students' first experience was in a make-shift chapel. I can still remember senior Leslie Talbott coming out of her time with Jesus. I met her in the stairwell and asked her about adoration. Her face beamed with joy as she declared, "that was awesome!" Her soul was filled with awe after communing with Our Lord. She had experienced what Saint Maria Faustina wrote in her diary, "We are to let the rays of mercy from the monstrance pass through us and go out through all the world. We are to be icons of mercy, radiating love and mercy to others. There is no greater way to energize ourselves to this task than by spending time in the Presence of the Source of Love and Mercy, Our Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist."

Still, without a dedicated space for worship and a tabernacle, our exposition was only twice a year before Christmas and Easter. This remained the norm until the Saint Clare Chapel was built in 2007. It is our belief that this chapel was built in large part through the prayers and heroic suffering of one of our students Katie Heintz. She, along with a group of our students, went down to the University of Steubenville for a retreat. Her experience of Jesus during exposition was profound and left her desiring this at our school. When she was diagnosed with Leukemia, she offered her suffering to bring souls to Christ. Devotions in our school and Church increased as hundreds of rosaries and hours of adoration were devoted for Katie. She continually turned these prayers over to God for his purposes. Katie passed into eternal life in August of 2006, and we are confident that his holy young women's prayers are still interceding for us.

At our last staff meeting, Mr. David Peck explained to our faculty the link between Katie's suffering and death, the building of our new chapel and our now weekly exposition. The connection between love, suffering, and adoration was powerful. I think of Katie every week as parents, faculty, and students voluntarily spend hours growing in faith and the love of Christ as they gaze at our Great Redeemer. Further, this has slowly and dramatically changed the culture of our school. There is no doubt that Christ is the center, and I have no doubt that any gains in holiness are in large part as a result of this adoration and our two weekly Masses. This chapel is now used for adoration daily, that is, students and staff take time with Jesus as He is reposed in the tabernacle, and exposition is held for five hours on Wednesdays.

Last June as school was coming to a close Mr. Bill Strong, our freshmen Morality teacher surveyed his students asking them what helped them grow in holiness. Adoration /exposition was the most frequent response. The students crave the silence, the time away from their noisy, busy lives. Sarah Arthur, a junior remarked, "I love being in the quiet; I really connect with God. I feel really good when I leave." It is my belief that the students enjoy this devotion due to the fact that it is non-threatening. They do not have to speak or sing in front of other people; they can simply be in the presence of the greatest possible good. Although often unperceived, the work that is being done on their souls is a primary reason that they return.

As I adore with our students, I am struck by their humility. They know at some level who they are with and their reverence shows it. As two students enter and two leave, I find great joy knowing that this silence, this humility, this great Sacrament of Love will impact their sanctity and the sanctity of our school more than any program that we could run. In the end it is our prayer that sitting with Jesus stirs their souls to love him more, a love which flows in their actions, a love which anchors their lives, a love which will usher them into the eternal Beatitude, that is, joy with God forever.

Kiwanis Student of the Month

Congratulations to Alexandra & Erika Michelin for being chosen January's Students of the Month

Girls Tennis Meeting

Next Monday—Feb 1st I need all interested tennis girls to meet me in the gym at 12:50 for a quick 5 minute meeting

Catholic Schools Week Activities for the High School

Canned Food Drive competition all week - Help Father Fred and feed the poor and needy in our community.

Class Competition:

- 1- Canned Food Drive – winner 20 points; 2d place 15 points; 3d place 10 points; last 5 points
 - 2- Spirit Week daily winners: 5 points per day times 4 days – a secret (designated teacher) will determine the class with the most spirit for the day.
 - 3- Tug of War - Winner 10 points, 2d place 7 points, 3d place 4 points
 - 4- Class with the most points wins an awesome prize (and bragging rights!) Can the Senior class go out on top like they always do?!?!? What could the prize possibly be?!?!?!?
- All canned goods delivered before school to class advisor rooms.
 - Daily count during lunch – class officers deliver accurate count to Mr. Taplin's room prior to 6th hour class
 - Final tally class winner will be announced.

Catholic Schools Spirit Week!!!!

Feb 1 - Monday – Hat Day/Pajama Day

Feb 2 - Tuesday – “Tacky Tuesday!” crazy hair/crazy sweater day

Feb 3 - Wednesday – Patriot (Red, White, and Blue) Day

Feb 4 - Thursday – Sports/College Pride Day

Feb 5 - Friday – School Uniform

CSW Winter Olympics – Friday, 5 Feb – after lunch to 2:30 at Thirlby Field

(Schedule will be published separately with diagram of event locations)

- Hot chocolate sales will be available at Thirlby (Student Council)
- All sign-up sheets/team rosters are due at lunch on THURSDAY, 4 FEB in room C210 to Mr. Taplin
- Student Event coordinators will ensure equipment is available and provide rules.
- Staff coordinator will supervise event.

Event

1. Frozen Football
2. **Tug of War (class competition)**
3. Broom Hockey
4. Snow Sculpture Contest
5. Frozen Field Kick Ball
6. Open skating

GET YOUR DISCOUNT CARDS NOW!

The St. Francis Sophomore Class is selling Discount Cards as their class fundraiser. We have a limited supply so ACT NOW! The cards are only \$15.00 and you will enjoy the following AWESOME DISCOUNTS!

-GOLDEN SHOES, 10% off regular priced merchandise

- CHINA FAIR, 10% off any purchase
- ARBY'S, Buy 1 value menu item, get 1 FREE
- QUIZNOS, 10% off dine in or dine out
- EDIBLE ARRANGEMENTS, 10% off any arrangement, pick up orders only
- JIFFY LUBE, 10% off any purchase
- CREMA, 10% off any purchase
- THE CHEF'S IN, buy 1 sandwich, get 1 small beverage FREE
- MODE'S BUM STEER, 10% off Monday thru Thursday only
- CHERRY HILL BOUTIQUE, \$10 off a \$50 purchase
- COLD STONE CREAMERY, \$1.00 off any signature creation
- BOON STREET AUTO WASH, \$3.00 off any Full Service Wash

Please feel free to contact Diana Matuszak at 929-3448 or at dica8080@gmail.com to purchase your discount card. Cards can also be purchased from any Sophomore Class Officer. Thank you for your support!

SF Sophomore Class Officers:

Diana Matuszak
 Bailey Ray
 Olivia Wurm
 Addey Meachum
 Lissa Stachnik

Christian Service Hours

If your student is looking for a way of fulfilling his/hers Christian service hours, St. Francis church has many opportunities for them. A good time for this is when there is no school or even before school. Contact Bob Kuhlman at the parish for jobs and times.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2/1-5 Catholic Schools Week – (see attachment in this e-mail for activity schedule)
- 2/3 (Wednesday) CTC Visit for Sophomores
- 2/12, 13 & 14th HS Musical Bye Bye Birdie
- 2/11 (Thursday) Late Start Thursday
- 2/15 (Monday) No School – Inservice
- 2/19 (Friday) Jean Day to benefit RIGHT TO LIFE
- 2/19, 20 & 21st HS Musical Bye Bye Birdie
- 2/24 (Wednesday) Parent Meeting for Incoming 9th graders (Kohler) 6:00 PM
- 2/26 (Friday) Incoming 9th graders come to visit
- 2/24 (Wednesday) 8th Grade Orientation
- 2/26 (Friday) 8th Grade Visitation
- 2/27 (Saturday) Snowcoming Dance @ IC 8-11 PM Tickets: \$15.00
- 3/9-11 MME Testing for all Juniors at K of C Hall

