

January 30, 2009

To the Families of St. Pius X 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Graders,

Thank you to all the readers and gift bearers who were there to kick-off Catholic Schools Week at Mass this past Sunday. You did a fantastic job! Your readings were clear, well enunciated and conveyed meaning. Thank you! Also, thank you to all who have bought or sold our HOPEGRAMS. We have over \$100 so far, but would like to double it by Friday. These messages will be delivered to the Snohomish County Red Cross for encouragement and support of the victims of the recent floods.

January has been busy with lots of practice writing. We began with thank-you letters (for a Christmas present) in a lesson reviewing the proper steps in writing friendly letters. We have also written beautiful poems reflecting on the "Gifts God Has Given Us." These are being submitted to the Catholic Daughters of America for their annual contest. These poems reflect faith, hope and an appreciation of all God has given us. They are beautiful! Illustrated copies are up in the room---stop by and enjoy them some time. We will also be writing essays for this same contest, and anyone who wants may submit art or photographic work as well. Our notes to teachers, staff and our priests have given us further opportunities to practice our writing skills. With lots of writing, we are sure to be improving.

We are prepared for our first spelling bee in years! Although only 6-8<sup>th</sup> grades may enter the Seattle Times contest, our first elimination rounds were whole class events. Some of the 5<sup>th</sup> graders were able to hold their own with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Our finalists for the school spelling bee are: Samuel Gebreyesus, Ian Phillips, Camille Basto, and Vera Okolo. Good Luck Thursday!!!

Grades 6-8 Science, have been studying motion this month. We finished up a series of experiments involving force, inertia, momentum, and friction. There were some fun shuffles and marble ramp experiments. We just need to work on writing up our experiments according to the scientific method. We are moving on to a new series of experiments on simple machines. Science for 5<sup>th</sup> grade involves our study of the "Solar System and Beyond." We have explored images of galaxies and nebulae, drawn diagrams of the sun and explored our solar system. After our test, we will begin an activity unit with several experiments related to astronomy.

Short stories and literature selections have given both grades the opportunity to improve their reading and comprehension skills. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade is beginning another novel: The Indian in the Cupboard. They will be finishing up with another creative book report. Details will be coming after this week.

We will continue celebrating Catholic Schools Week and participate in those fun experiences which help identify us as members of a Catholic community, committed to our faith, to service, and to living the life of Christ.