

The Principal's Vine

Saint Augustine of Canterbury School



FALL 2016

The Year of Mercy Opens and Closes with Great Joy



CATHOLIC LOVING CARING LEARNING CREATIVE LEADING INSPIRING

During this month of November, we celebrated Proclaimed Saints, the souls in Purgatory and the living, called by name to live our Baptismal call faithfully. November began with Father Bob celebrating All Saints Day Mass with our entire school community. Grade 8 entered in procession with their Confirmation Saints' banner in hand, to the Litany of the Saints sung by our school children, teachers and parishioners who joined us for Mass. The students did a magnificent job in writing and preparing slides for each Saint chosen.

This month was filled with gratitude, praise and joy. The reception of the Blue Ribbon Day was indeed a lifetime achievement for Saint Augustine of Canterbury School. The end of the month concluded with a Special Spreading Blessings through the Kindergarten Parent Day Celebration that gathered families together to pray, feast and learn together. The spirit was one of Thanksgiving and family. The month has been overflowing with joy, laughter, kindness, good works and creativity as the Year of Mercy comes to a close.

Thankful Hearts Reach Out to Touch Others

Thankful Tuesday, November 8

The first Thankful Tuesday of November was overflowing with gratitude and praise for the blessing of the Blue Ribbon received on November 8 in Crystal City, Va. from the United States Department of Education. St. A's was always a Blue Ribbon School without the Blue Ribbon and now we have the Blue Ribbon to confirm it. It is a dream come true during this Year of Mercy. Gratitude and praise is extended to our Most Reverend James F. Cheechio, Bishop of the Diocese of Metuchen and the staff, our founding Pastors, Father James Reilly, Monsignor Capano and for the past two decades of our history, Father Bob Lynam, former Principals and present day Principal, Sister Mary Louise Shulas, MPF, faculty and staff, parents, alumnae, students, parishioners, benefactors and South Brunswick Township Community. We made great efforts to receive this honor and now the challenge is to continue to be a Blue Ribbon School and to celebrate and share our story.



Veterans' Honored

Pre-K 4, Kindergarten and the Middle School Reach Out to the Veterans.



The small hands of our Pre-K class made gifts for the veterans while the Kindergarteners wrote their own prayer and sent them on their way to the Veterans in Residence in Edison. The middle school students wrote letters of appreciation to them. Their sentiments were so beautifully expressed it brought tears to your eyes. We are unable to share them in this newsletter but you *can read many of them posted in the writing folder on our website*. We are very proud of our students. Mrs. Borowick, our Middle School Language Arts Teacher and her daughter delivered them to the Veterans' Home in Edison.

"When the power of LOVE is more important than the love of money, religion and power, and people realize that the most important things in this life are NOT things, the world will finally know peace."
— **Tanya Masse**



Our 7th and 8th Grade students had the privilege of speaking with Veterans of WWII, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Mr. Modzelewski told the students that the stories and information they were hearing from our Vets was "a living history of our country, and could never be learned from reading a textbook." The students were captivated and attentive when each Vet told their story, and they were

provided with information from primary sources in a real and meaningful way that they can now apply to the Social Studies Curriculum.



Dear Hero,

When I think of the word veteran, what comes to mind? I think of a shield.. *a shield of bravery, wisdom, and knowledge.*

I think of hope.
The hope that you keep us safe. The hope that all veterans stay safe as they protect us.

I think of light.
A bright light that shines brighter than anything..a light that no evil or darkness can ever extinguish.

"No one has greater love than this, to lay one's life down for one's friend" John 15-13

I thank you, dear friend, for being willing to make the biggest sacrifice of all. I appreciate you in every way. Thank you for what you do. You will never be forgotten.

Anthony

Dear God,
I love you for taking care of our veterans. Keep our men and women safe.

Kindergarten

Dear Veteran,

Thank you. Thank you for sacrificing everything to save strangers. You so bravely gave up everything. Nothing can replace the time you gave our nation. We can not give you the time back, we can not turn time back the clocks. All that we can give you is our sincerest thanks. I know that it isn't enough to show our gratitude, but it is heartfelt.

You are silent heroes. We seem to sometimes forget that there are always people fighting for us, no matter how near or far they are. To be honest, you still don't get enough credit. Sometimes we forget who is truly there for us, and who we should be thankful to. I hope you never feel as if your service isn't appreciated. Please remember that many people (including myself) are grateful for your service.

With thanks,
Rachel

Dear Veteran,
Thank you for keeping us safe. You are all amazing.

Grade 1



Dear Veteran,

"No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for a friend." -John 15:13

You are role models. You are heroes. Veterans everywhere inspire me to be a better person. They teach me that there are things bigger than just myself. You took part in being a bigger thing than your own self. You are selfless and you have done many great things for us. Thank you and Happy Veteran's Day! You deserve it!

In Gratitude,
Zoe

Dear Veteran,
Thank you for keeping our country safe. We hope to be brave like you.

Grade 1

Dear God,
Thank you for protecting American's veterans.

Kindergarten.

In the spirit of our Thanksgiving Food Drive here at St. Augustine, this past Thursday the Kindergarten classes read a touching story called Maddi's Fridge. We discussed how we could help others, emphasized working together, and importance of keeping open communication with trusted adults. Below is a brief synopsis of the touching story.

Maddi's Fridge

With humor and warmth, this children's picture book raises awareness about poverty and hunger

Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school, and play in the same park, but while Sofia's fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi's house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi's family doesn't have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she'll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she's faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi's empty fridge. Filled with colorful artwork, this storybook addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons in friendship, empathy, trust, and helping others. A call to action section, with six effective ways for children to help fight hunger and information on antihunger groups, is also included.

Please help fill Maddi's Fridge
with **HEALTHY** foods.



Mrs. Young and Ms. Bash's class each designed their own versions of a healthy "fridge" for Maddi. During this activity we also touched upon healthy foods that are good for solid nutrition as well as examples of non-perishable items, which are needed for the food pantry.

~~ Alisa Mullen

Food Pantries Stocked by Generous Hearts and Hands

The South Brunswick Food Pantry and our Out Reach Food Pantry shelves will be stocked with many items that the students have been donating. The generosity of our parents has been overwhelming. The items are delivered to the programs by willing and loving hands.



Helping Hands Reach Out to Haiti Far Away

Mrs. Karen Wagner's third grade class jumped right in this fall with helping Haiti to recover from the earthquake. Each day the students dropped their extra change from lunch time in a jar. The class donated \$200.00 to Catholic Relief Services.



STREAM DONATIONS A BLESSING

Thank you is too small word to thank Joanne L. Kopcho, aunt of Sophie Kerr, who donated \$3,000 towards our program with a promise of a matching contribution of \$2,000. Thank you to Anitha Bethusamy, parent of Advika Gopal, for a \$500.00 donation for STREAM. May God bless your contributions over and over again for investing in the precious treasure of our students.

Saint Augustine of Canterbury Blue Ribbon School STEAMS Ahead

STEM



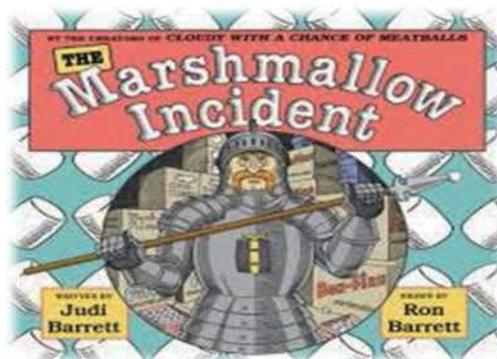
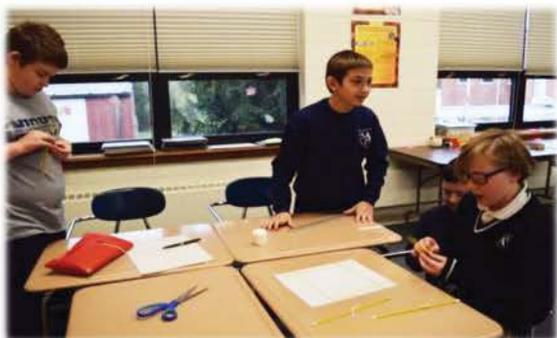
STEAM

STREAM

All three words include Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. At Saint Augustine School, Art and Religion are included in our studies. Our Faith is at the heart of everything we love, learn and lead in. It is not an unknown word or concept in our school. STREAM is beginning to be integrated into the curriculum seamlessly as was technology. Slow, Steady and Sure we have taken steps in this direction over the past several years looking forward to expanding the program this winter. Twenty-first

Thinking Skills have been a priority. These skills are now being used to create and innovate. Our creative teachers have participated in workshops and are making efforts to include the information in the lessons.

Students across the country were invited to participate in the Marshmallow Challenge, a STEM activity hosted by educator Jen Wagner. St. Augustine 6th Grade students happily accepted the invitation. We modified the activity a bit, making it a STREAM lesson, incorporating Religion and Art. In Mrs. Falk's Language Arts class, students listened to the story, *The Marshmallow Incident*, written by Judi Barrett. Students discussed elements of the story such as problem and solution. They also made text to text and text to self connections. In Mrs. Pucci's Math Class, students used spaghetti, string, and masking tape to work collaboratively to construct a free-standing tower that could support a marshmallow..



Pre-planning was critical. Students discovered that the important elements were a supportive base and reinforced support beams. They also discovered that using triangles in their structure

added to its strength. In Mrs. Falk's and Mrs. Pucci's Religion classes, students discussed elements of the story and how they apply to our own lives.

In the story, two towns were divided by a line that separated the right handed people from the left handed people. Students related this to times in our own lives when we use our differences to divide us. We know that we are called to be followers of Jesus and make Good God Choices. We are all made in God's image.

THE FIFTH GRADE PARENT DAY TURNED INTO A MAKER DAY



In late October, the 5th Grade Students and their Parents came together to collaborate on different stations involving Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science; but it quickly turned into a Maker Day, when the students and their families used our littleBits and Snap Circuit Jr. kits at the Science station to create, invent, and make. They also visited the Language Arts station where they chose the correct parts of speech to complete a story. At the Social Studies station, they used their Chromebooks to log into their Discovery Education account and create an interactive

board about a Native American group they had learned about. Lastly, at the Math station, using their Chromebooks again, they completed a Carmen San Diego assignment on their Go Math account. Not only did the students get to share their love of learning with their parents; they also got to share a sweet treat snack with them as well.



1ST GRADE STEM ACTIVITY HONORED SAINT FRANCIS

To honor St. Francis on his feast day, the students in Mrs. O'Donnell's First Grade class brought in their favorite stuffed animal. They used cubes to measure the animal's arms, legs and head and recorded their results on paper. Finally, they shared their answers with the class

4th GRADE STEM WITH "THE RUNAWAY PUMPKIN"

The students in Ms. Fama's 4th Grade class listened to the story "The Runaway Pumpkin." They then collaborated to answer the question "Will a higher incline make your pumpkin roll farther?" The groups worked together to design their inclines using textbooks and measure the height. Their next step was to test the incline, the pumpkin was rolled three times and the distance the

pumpkin traveled was measured and recorded. In closing students answered question explaining how the height affected the distance the pumpkin rolled and how the design could be improved. Everyone had fun!

3D PRINTER HELPS SIXTH GRADERS LEARN ABOUT ANCIENT EGYPT

Over the past three weeks, Sixth Grade students have been exploring Ancient Egypt through research on many important topics including the Nile River, Pharaohs, Society, and Culture. Students have created slide presentations and songs based on life in Ancient Egypt. Tony DeBari, our Technology Coordinator, has experimented with the 3D printer to remake The Great Pyramid of Giza and a Sphinx which has spiked the students interest! To get us more in depth with Ancient Egypt and ‘walk like an Egyptian’ we created our very own 3D printed hieroglyphic tablet.

Each student had to look at the hieroglyphic alphabet which is based on letters and sounds to figure out which symbol created their name. After putting all the letters in order in the 3D modeling program Tinkercad, students sent their finished hieroglyphic name to the 3D printer where it takes up to six hours to print one student’s tablet! It was an amazing project that we were so fortunate to do with the help of Mr. DeBari and the amazing technology that we have at this Blue Ribbon School. We are always striving to do big and better things each day at St. Augustine. Even though we have completed our unit on Ancient Egypt, students will always have their hieroglyphic name to remember their life as a Pharaoh in Social Studies Class and St. Augustine School.



Kindergarten Parents and Students Work Together to Create a Native American Habitat



Our Parents seemed to have as much fun as our students creating. Awesome Role-Models! Thanks Parents.

