



Volume 4 – Number 4: November 1, 2010

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It is difficult to believe that we are in the second term of the school year and that by the second week of December, the interim reports will be in the process of being created. Although many of you wait for these reports, with the use of EdLine, you and your child have a golden opportunity to be on top of grades, missing assignments AND, more importantly – HOMEWORK – on a daily basis.

Each of you should have received your personal/confidential password for accessing your child's account earlier this year that was sent home with your child. In most school that use the EdLine program, interim reports have been eliminated for students in grades 3 through 8 because of the convenience of on-line monitoring.

When students are absent because of illness or other obligations, parents often request homework slips although the very same information can be found on-line, too. Yes, even when you child is absent, you (or your child) can access this website for the daily homework assignments.

Using the EdLine site you also can monitor whether any homework or other assignments are missing. It will tell you whether that test you signed ever made it back to the teacher. I encourage you to check this site on a regular basis -- (I do) so that you are always aware of progress to celebrate and deficiencies that need to be addressed.

Thanks in advance!!!

A MONTH OF CELEBRATIONS IN "CHURCH AND STATE"

November is "bountifully filled" with many important days of celebration for both the **Church** and the State.

November 1 is the Feast of All Saints, instituted to honor both known and unknown saints who might be ignored in celebrations throughout the year.

November 2 is a solemn feast in the Church commemorating all who have died and are now being cleansed of their venial sins before entering heaven.

Because **November 21** falls on a Sunday, **the Feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple** will not be celebrated. However, this day commemorates the day Mary was consecrated to God by her parents, Joachim and Anna.

Last, but not least, **Feast of Christ the King**, signals the end of the Church year and the Sunday before the beginning of Advent. It is a beautiful feast proclaiming Christ's kingship over individuals, families, society, governments, and nations.

National Holidays are also bountiful in November.

On November 11th we celebrate **Veterans' Day** – both nationally and at JP II Academy. This is a day set aside to honor all the men and women who have served in the Armed Services. Veterans' Day was originally termed Armistice Day – and commemorated the end of WWI that occurred on November 11, 1911 at 11:00 AM. The Academy will be celebrating a special Mass on Thursday, Nov. 11, for all veterans and holding a reception for veterans and their families.

Let us remember to pray for all our Veterans and their families on Veterans' Day.

PRAYER FOR VETERANS' DAY

We ask for blessings on all those who have served their country in the armed forces. We ask for healing for the veterans who have been wounded, in body and soul, in conflicts around the globe.

Give us all the creative vision to see a world which, grown weary with fighting, moves to affirming the life of every human being and so moves beyond war.

Hear our prayer, O Prince of Peace. Amen

THANKSGIVING. – OKAY – here is your opportunity to shine in the area of Thanksgiving – Trivial Pursuits.

- George Washington originally established Thanksgiving Day on October 3 in 1789.
- Until the 1800s, Thanksgiving was celebrated anywhere between August and December – and even sometimes twice in one year.
- Abraham Lincoln moved Thanksgiving Day to the last Thursday of November.
- In 1939, President Theodore Roosevelt established the fourth Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day so that the start of the Christmas retail season would not be “shortened”

If you need to find things for children to create for the holidays, the noted site will help you with crafts and facts: <http://familycrafts.about.com> Knowledge of the above facts may not replace the football watching but you may get someone to do the dishes in your stead for answering incorrectly!!

HONORS FOR FIRST QUARTER

As teachers complete their grades, first quarter honors will be calculated. These honors are always the most difficult to determine because: (1) much of what is covered in the first half of that term is “review”, and (2) students often push limits in behavior to see if teachers (and often, the principal) are serious about consequences.

Although academic achievement is important, achieving honors also carries with it behavior implications. As the handbook states: “Conduct and effort grades must be either O or S.” This means that O, S+, and S are acceptable but S- is not.

I can attest to the struggle that teachers have each time honor calculations arise, especially at the primary level where assessment is often subjective because of the nature of learning rather than clearly a right or wrong answer.

By the time you have your conference with your child’s teacher, the honors will be set. This will be a good time to discuss how, together, sustaining the grades or improving the grades can be achieved.

CRISIS DRILLS – PRACTICE AND ACTUAL

On Monday, November 8th, I will be speaking to all students, (class by class) to discuss our crisis drill procedure. We have set and practiced the two regular drills –fire and tornado – that are required either on a monthly basis or during specific months. I am thrilled to report that our students can exit the building in less than a minute during a fire drill and are in position for tornado drills in about 30 seconds to a minute.

The crisis drill we will prepare for is one that requires students to be prepared for an intruder in the building, an intruder outside the building, and evacuating the building quickly. The last drill will follow the format of a regular fire drill.

Let me say at the outset that all doors are locked immediately after students arrive at school – and unless it is raining or snowing, the only accessible door is the one to the main office. No doors are ever left open when school is in session UNLESS there is someone at that door – ie. dismissal. For the most part, any room where a child would be is set in the lock position.

For the youngest students – PK through 2, the key explanation for drill one is to “hide” in the classroom so that I cannot see them. Students in the other grades are taught to hide, and to know that if I can’t see them, neither can an intruder. In the event that an intruder is outside the school, students on the first floor exit their classrooms and remain seated in the hall. Students on the upper floor sit on the floor in their classrooms unless the condition warrants otherwise.

WHAT’S ON THE AGENDA?

The Student Council has planned a **Food Drive for the week of November 15th through November 22nd**. All food items collected will be divided between the SVDP Food Pantries at Saints Peter and Paul and Saint Therese. The food drive is competitive among the classes so look for a flyer from the Student Council regarding the items being collected each day. Even one item will make a difference!!

Yes, Virginia, there will be a **Christmas Pageant** at John Paul II Academy. Circle **December 10th at 7:00 PM** for our public performance. What a wonderful way to prepare the way of the Lord by joining us for both drama and song!

Planning for Home for the Holidays Classroom Baskets – You will be receiving a note specifying the type of basket your child’s classroom will be creating. We are trying to keep the choices simple and inexpensive. Please check the yellow folder or your child’s book bag for this item.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- November 11** Veterans Day Mass;
Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 12 Parent/Teacher Conferences until noon
15 – 22 Food Collection
21 PTU Mass at St. Therese (10:00)
24 through the 26th Thanksgiving Break
28 First Sunday of Advent
- December 2 – 4** Book Fair
4 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
10 Christmas Pageant
St. Therese Church – 7:00 PM