

Our Lady of Mercy Academy

October 2008

From The Principal *Living A Literate Life*

On November 20, 2008, Dr. Ailie Pogust from the Rutgers Literacy Collaborative will be here for our first Balanced Literacy workshop of the year. Dr. Pogust will continue the work we began with her last year in Writer's Workshop, Guided Reading and in developing literacy skills in early childhood.

One of our goals is to have every child fall in love with reading and to develop and nourish the intellect and emotions that will enable them to move beyond decoding competency and comprehension into deep processing and fluency. This is what it means to be a reader and to connect

directly with ideas. Reading means asking questions and absorbing information.

A highly literate person constructs meaning before, during and after reading. As Fountas and Pinnell state, "Literacy comprises a network of in-the-head processes that enable the reader to pick up all kinds of information from the text and construct an author's intended meaning."

Learning to read and write is a magical and exciting undertaking for children and we want to encourage them in their endeavors every step of the way; in the classroom as well as at home.

As we work in school to develop our children's reading and writing skills, please continue to encourage them to read and write at home.



Michaela reading to our Pre-K

Go OLMA Cross Country!

We use Morning Meeting to come together as a group and we are working hard in Writer's Workshop. We will be writing to pen pals at Our Lady of Mercy School in New York and adopting a "grandparent" at Arden Court.

We Set The Standards For Excellence

Fall 2008

Upcoming Events

- **Holiday Spectacular, November 19th**
- **Christmas Pageant, December 19th**
- **Principal's Counsel Representatives Election, November 3rd**
- **Thanksgiving, School Closed, November 26th (1/2 day), 27th and 28th**
- **Open House, November 5th & 6th**
- **Conferences, November 10th & 11th**
- **Bake sale to benefit our Cross Country team, October 25th & 26th, after all masses.**
- **All school assembly, "Brain Challenge", October 25th.**

Grade 5- Mrs. Murphy's Class

Fifth grade had a big move from upstairs to downstairs; we love our new home in the middle school wing. We are using our Smart Board learning about our *We Are The World* country, Israel.

In science, we have been

busy learning every aspect of plants and we are closely monitoring our first FOSS experiment. We have planted four different types of seeds with light being our variable. We can't wait for the next FOSS experiment, dissecting owl pellets.

Fabulous First Graders- Mrs. Middleton

The students have "graduated" from kindergarten and are now officially first graders. They have started the school year with great enthusiasm. The class is reviewing kindergarten concepts as a means to build a firm foundation for new first grade concepts.

The students begin every day with a Morning Meeting. Everyone takes turns giving reports for the day, such as weather, calendar and counting the number of days until the hundredth day of school. The students use that number count to make equations, tallies, money and to demonstrate numeration with cubes. Morning Meetings provide a means for students to feel part of a community and to share feelings and thoughts with each other. It is lots of fun!!

In math, the class has been practicing addition and subtraction facts thru ten and will soon be building numbers to 100, comparing and ordering numbers, and finding and extending pat-

terns.

In reading, the students are progressing at an unbelievable pace. Everyone has a sight word notebook and practices every night for homework. The students are currently learning to decode and encode short vowel words and they will soon be working on long vowel words.

In science, the class is currently investigating the FOSS unit on air and weather. They are exploring: the effects of air on various objects, air under water, parachutes, the effects of pushing on air using syringes, and making air and water fountains and balloon rockets. FOSS is fun!!

In social studies, the class is learning to read charts using words and pictures. In October, everyone enjoyed learning about Christopher Columbus and making a map and ship illustrating his voyage. As Election

Day approaches,, the students will be learning about voting for the President of the United States.



Pre-S marching to their own drummer!

Grade 4- Mrs. Henneberry

The 4th grade has launched enthusiastically into our new Everyday Math program. We have been enjoying our journey into the world of geometry naming, describing, classifying and constructing geometric figures. We have learned to use compasses to draw circles and have been inscribing various polygons into the circles. We have also been using games to review basic math facts and now we're ready to use those facts in more complex problems. Our new math program has been challenging and fun.

In reading we are keeping book log folders with our commentaries about books we are reading

outside of our reading program. We can then share our opinions with our classmates about books they might enjoy reading. Some 4th graders have already accumulated an impressive list of good books to recommend to others. We also enjoyed reading *The Indian in the Cupboard* as a class. It was a great fantasy that taught us a little about Native American culture and attitudes and the lifestyle of cowboys.

Science has us studying matter and we proved that even air has mass! We have learned to describe and measure matter and now we are going to learn about changing it both physically

and chemically. Then, we will be ready to delve into the world of energy. Social studies these days is peppered with information and news about the upcoming presidential election.

We are also composing and our writing so far has included a letter written to helpers of Lewis and Clark on their expedition to the northwest and poems about how we have changed since our earlier days. We are learning to enjoy our work and our days and are always looking for opportunities to add some art, music and beauty to our everyday endeavors.

Grade 2— Mrs. Petescia

Here we are in second grade.
It's amazing how much progress we've made.
In math we're learning our number facts,
We're working to become proficient at that.
Studying changes on the earth while using FOSS,
We find that with hurricanes
And tornadoes
weather seems to be the boss.
Families are very different as we did see
When each of us did our family tree.
Each week we bring home a book
and we never have to ration,
Our teacher hopes reading becomes our passion.
There is such excitement
When we're done,

We then get to pick another one.
There's so much to study
In religion too
We learn about God and all he wants us
to do.
Watch for coming events to see what
we're doing
Have fun this Halloween
And do lots of "Booing".
Pre - School 2 a.m.

The autumn leaves are changing into beautiful fall colors as Mrs. Irene's students jump into many fall activities. October began with the annual trip to Sun



Second grade works hard on their number facts.

Pre-S 2 a.m.

High Orchards where the children learned about apple trees, bumble bees and corn although it is the pumpkin picking that makes the trip complete. We are also learning about fire safety. The Whippany Fire Department visited OLM to teach us many fun fire safety facts.

Some things the children will look forward to will be our Halloween parade and classroom party. The month of November will come sailing in with fun topics about Thanksgiving.

Kindergarten

Miss Turrisi

Miss Turrisi's class has been hard at work. In Everyday Math we are hard at work studying patterns. We used many different things to make patterns like colored clothespins and little farm animals. In science, we learned all about our five senses, using apples to help us. We talked about color, taste, and smell and how they sound when we bite into them. It sure was a tasty lesson. We are on our way to a great year.

Miss Moriano

Our class has been very busy the first few months of school. We have been creating sight word books and working very hard in our reading groups. In our journals we are trying our best to write and sound out words. In handwriting, we are learning about the different types of lines as well as writing our names using the proper form. In Everyday Math, we are sorting shapes and learning about patterns. We are enjoying our new science and social studies

Pre-K 3 a.m. Mrs. Irene

programs and learning about the five senses and our families and homes.

Mrs. Irene's Pre-K

The cool wind blows Mrs. Irene's students into many fall activities. October began with the annual trip to Sun High Orchard where the children reviewed all the things they learned about apple trees, bumble bees and corn. The Whippany Fire Department visited OLMA to teach us many fun fire safety facts. It is a good idea to help your child learn their full name and address as part of fire safety precautions.

The kids have been busy since school began reviewing skills that they learned last year. They enjoy the new Everyday Math program with the fun games and hands on learning. Soon we will begin to learn letter recognition and sounds!

Some things the children will look forward to will be our Halloween Parade and classroom party. We can hear the sound of gobbling approaching as November brings lessons of thankfulness to God for our world.



Members of our cross country team getting ready for their meet.

Exciting Happenings in Mrs. D'Anna's Class

Our Pre-K class is welcoming in autumn with open arms. We made squirrels that look so real. Please come by and take a look. They are sitting on the fence right outside our room.

We have been learning about changes that happen in the fall. We know that leaves are losing their chlorophyll and showing their colors. We traced our own hand and arm to make the trunk and branches of our tree. Next, we used our fine motor skills and ripped red, green, orange, and yellow construction paper to make the colored leaves. It

*"We learned how a bee
pollinates each flower."*

was so much fun.

It's rhyme time in Pre-K. Just ask us to recite or sing Humpty Dumpty for you. We are really learning about rhyming words. We had our first cutting experi-

ence and made Humpty Dumpty. He's sitting on our brick wall. Be careful...don't fall!

Our most exciting experience was a class trip to Sun High Orchards. Farmer Phyllis taught us about apples and how they grow. We picked apples. We learned how a bee pollinates a flower. We had a great mini-lesson on corn and we did a mini-experiment. However, the highlight of the trip was picking our own pumpkin. We had a wonderful time!

1st Grade—Miss Romanelli

Welcome to October and the Fall Season! Here are some of the exciting things that we are learning about now:

Learning skills in reading, phonics, spelling, and language arts with fun stories such as "Let's Talk About Animal Friends", "A Hamster for Ana", "A Kid's Best Friend".

Learning Skills in Math include solving addition and subtraction concepts, using cubes to solve addition and subtraction sentences, writing vertical and horizontal addition and subtraction sentences, making models to solve story problems, and modeling addition and subtraction combinations for numbers 7,8,9, and 10.

Learning about Religion, the Catholic Church and what Catholics do, understanding that Jesus is with us when we pray, and learning about objects used in the Catholic Church.

Learning about Social Studies, we are studying different kinds of homes and neighborhoods and recognizing the difference between a model and a map. Happy Fall to Everyone!!



Ciara is learning a lot in first grade.

Pre-S- Mrs. Civello

We had fun visiting Sun High Orchards in Randolph on Oct 7th. The children learned how pumpkins grow and they picked their own pumpkins to take home. A big thank you to Fireman Josh and the Whippany Fire Co. for taking time to teach us all about fire safety. We learned what to do if there is a fire and we got to sit in the fire truck.. The children enjoyed their visit. I also would like to thank Miss Kovar's class for reading to my class and Mrs. D'Anna's class. The children loved having 6th graders read to them. We will continue to do this throughout the school year.

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Grade 3- Mrs. Rouillard

The third grade is off to a great start this year! They have a lot of new and exciting things to look forward to in the next few months. They have already taken a big step and are now writing in cursive. This has been exciting and challenging. They enjoy practicing their writing skills while working in their Writer's notebooks. These notebooks are places where they are free to write creatively and share their thoughts and stories with their classmates.

This year we will be starting with the FOSS kit that focuses on measurement. We will also be working out of the science text-

book and conducting many exciting experiments. The third graders will also be learning Sign Language this year. We are working on the alphabet and colors right now.

The students also wanted to make sure that I mentioned our class pets, Swimmy and Snickers the fish. The students are learning responsibility by taking care of our friends. They are also excited about using the Smart Board for different types of activities. We hope this will be a great year for our third graders!

Grade 6

Miss Kovar

Science (5th & 6th)

We just dissected an owl pellet, to see what animals were eaten by the Barn Owl. Each student identified and classified the variety of animals we found. To top it off, second grade assisted us in this adventure.

Also, we planted some plants using sun and shade as our variables. We will see which variable makes our plants grow.

Around the World—Egypt

The 6th graders like getting their hands dirty by mummifying a chicken that is truly smelly. Our chickens will become a mummy that will show every detail about what a real mummy is.

Math

In math it is challenging yet exciting learning about decimals, lattice, scientific notation, place value, math facts, etc.

Language Arts

Our class is singing and rapping the words to main concepts involved in our 6th grade curriculum. We can help you learn prepositions, nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc.

Literature Circles—We are reading an author series based on Gordon Korman. He wrote books based on Everest, Diving, and Islands. These books are full of adventure and relate to our lives at this age.

6th Grade Extras

Our sixth grade class loves to read especially when we read to younger children. We have read to both pre-school classes as well as second grade. We plan on visiting everyone so don't worry, we'll be there soon.



Mrs. Rouillard and her third grade work hard on their Writer's Workshop