



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Faith • Academics • Service

Connections

Volume II: Fall 2013

A note from our Principal

Susan Roffmann

St. Vincent de Paul Elementary School's 125th Anniversary year will soon come to a close. It has been an exciting and fun year filled with much celebration. The anniversary year began with a Mass at St. Vincent Church on Sunday, January 27, 2013, which was also the beginning of National Catholic Schools Week. Following the Mass families gathered in the parish hall for coffee, hot chocolate and doughnuts, an old Catholic tradition! During the last months the children, parents, alumni faculty and staff have participated in and enjoyed many wonderful events to celebrate this special year. Here are a few -



- ◆ 125th Day of School Bubbles Afternoon
- ◆ Dedication of St. Francis Statue on Campus
- ◆ Many extended and extra recesses
- ◆ Float in Petaluma's Butter & Eggs Day Parade
- ◆ Second and Eight Grades 125 Acts of Kindness
- ◆ No Homework Nights
- ◆ 125th Anniversary Social Gala
- ◆ God Squad (school band) concert
- ◆ Team da Vinci Solar Car Races
- ◆ May Crowning
- ◆ And Many More...

Just as the anniversary year opened with Mass, it will close with Mass on Sunday, February 2, 2014 at 9:00 am at St. Vincent Church. We invite all of you to attend and celebrate with us and even enjoy doughnuts after Mass. It has been an amazing 125 years, and we look forward to another 125!

Our Mission Statement

As a Catholic elementary school, a vital ministry of St. Vincent de Paul Church, our mission is to provide an education within a faith-filled community in which all students develop skills as caring and compassionate Christians, critical and creative thinkers, responsible citizens, and lifelong learners.

New policy for the Sacrament of **CONFIRMATION**

This past year, Bishop Vasa removed the diocesan policy of restricting the Sacrament of Confirmation to persons who have reached the age of 16 in favor of an earlier experience of this sacrament. Bishop Vasa has directed parishes to make the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation available beginning in the seventh grade year. Following Bishop Vasa's directive and presuming that candidates have been baptized and have received First Communion, students presently enrolled in eighth grade at St. Vincent's are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation this school year in the spring of 2014. The present seventh grade students will be eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the spring of 2015.

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the Sacrament of Initiation into full membership in the Catholic Church. Since membership and participation in the life of the Church is lived out in the local parish community, Fr. Gary Lombardi, Pastor, has established that candidates for Confirmation consist of students from the parish religious education program and also those who attend St. Vincent Catholic School. However, it has also been noted that those who attend Catholic School are already receiving religious education on a daily basis, just as the parish students are receiving religious education through the weekly Youth Ministry Program. Therefore, it will not be necessary for students enrolled in eighth grade at St. Vincent's to participate in the weekly classes for parish religious education students. But, as candidates for Confirmation, Catholic School students will be required to participate in other elements of the Confirmation Sacramental Program within the parish.



Inside...

⇒ Alumni Comments	page 2
⇒ 125th Birthday Buddies	page 2
⇒ Annual Fund Roll Call	page 3
⇒ Why do we teach cursive?	page 4

You are the best advertising we have as ambassadors for our school. Thank you for encouraging families to come on a tour!

Alumni Feature



The next step

Students of the class of 2013 share comments about their transitions to their new high schools:

Nick Murphy: *St. Vincent Elementary really prepared me for St. Vincent High School. Mrs. DeVost prepared me for the essays and writing portion of freshman year. Mr. Forsell helped me grow in my faith...* (SVHS)

Sarah Mowers: *"I feel like I was prepared for high school academically. High school has been better than I thought it would be."* (SVHS)

Nick Saisi: *"I was prepared for high school. It was everything I thought it would be."* (SVHS)

Hailey Antonini: *"I was very prepared for high school. I'm so glad I put in the work at the elementary school because now my classes are relatively easy and the payoff is ten times as good as I thought..."* (SVHS)

Eric Riley: *"High school is very easy. I was prepared and it was more than I thought."* (SVHS)

Esme Reid-McLaughlin: *"I now go to Sonoma Academy, and let me tell you, Saint Vincent's prepared me amazingly, both academically and socially, everything from (words) like 'oxymoronically' and showing my work to making strong relationships."* (Sonoma Academy)

Fernando Vaca: *"I feel very prepared for high school and all its challenges. It is a lot easier than I thought. I also have made many new friends."* (SVHS)

Alexa Evans: *"I was prepared academically. I am grateful for my experiences at St. Vincent Elementary School."* (SVHS)

Is your comment not here? Would you like to share your experiences with us? See page 4 and stay in touch!

Where did the class of 2013 go?

St. Vincent de Paul High School	18
Petaluma High School	3
Casa Grande High School	2
Technology High School	1
Marin Catholic High School	1
Sonoma Academy	3

Birthday Buddies!



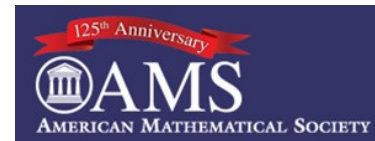
Other respected organizations with whom we share a 125th birthday this year:



Inspiring People to Care about the Planet

International Herald Tribune

The Global Edition of the New York Times



Advancing Mathematics since 1888

NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM:

SVES has upgraded to a state of the art streamlined system from Beehively. We will be using this web-based application to increase school to parent communication. This includes school-wide announcements, an online grading program, calendar events, school files, special event information, and volunteer tracking & sign-ups. Once a parent registers, Beehively provides online access to our school and their student's classroom.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Watch for the complete redesign of our public web site with improved visuals and a priority of ease of use for visitors. The pride we have in SVES will shine! New (shorter to type) address: www.SVElem.org

*The strength that we have can only be ensured in the future
if this generation of alumni and supporters accepts our obligation and duty
to keep this school strong for those who come after us.*



Our sincere thanks to the people below who have supported the Annual Fund during this past fiscal year (7/1/2012 - 6/30/2013). It is still our anniversary year...donations are accepted with gratitude any time.

This list includes the funds donated with gifts of vehicles. Keep our school strong!

Sponsor Level (\$0 - \$99)

Anita Arce
Susan Battit
Barbara Creedon
Geoff and Kristi Kavanaugh
Anonymous
Doug and Susan Roffmann
Hugo and Giovanna Vasquez
Michael and Jeannette Wilhelmsen

Red Plaid Level (\$100 - \$249)

Richard and Kathy Asmussen
Lauren and Maureen Bettinelli
Carolyn Staats Birkenstock
Boeing Company
Timothy and Rose Booth
Philippe and Janice Burgan
Joe and Dorothy Callaghan
Rose DeMartini
Jim and Martha Dougherty
Barbara Frago
Stephen and Rebecca Fuetter
Clarence and Gloria Garzoli
Bill and Heidi Griffin
Leonard and Geri Guidici
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Claire Pass
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Patricia Skinner
James and Kimberly Smuck
Estella Sterner
Craig and Elizabeth Van Zandt
Thomas and Lynn Velladao
Scott and Sue Wilson

Honors Level (\$250 - \$499)

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Robert and Lisa Christie
Brian and Deborah Crosby
John and Maureen Duffy
Trevor and Maria Frampton
Frank and Stacey Gambonini
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Kevin and Marian Healy
Anonymous
Peter Paul Mazzetti
Joseph and Tracey Murphy
Bruce and Nancy Rosentreter
Tim and Amy Schafbuch
Patricia DeCarli Terzian
Rafael and Gabrielle Velez
Steven and Christine Wilson

Scholar Level (\$500 - \$999)

Amir Abolfathi and Vafa Milani
Brian and Amy Bouvier
Peter Byrne
Fr. Michael Culligan
Anonymous
Jason and Nikki Sullivan

Principal's Circle: Angel Society (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Dante and Anne Benedetti
John and Diane Benjamin
Daniel and Shellie Berry
Fred and Emily Carvajal
Santiago and Cristina Centurion
Chu and Yuan Chang
Angela DeCarli
Anonymous
Andrew and Shannon Storms

Principal's Circle: Patron of St. Vincent de Paul (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Will your name be here soon?

Principal's Circle: BVM Legacy (\$5,000 +)

Your support here will honor the Sisters of Charity, Blessed Virgin Mary, our school's first teachers!

Thank you!

125
gifts of \$125
ANNUAL FUND
ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

Be a leader. Be one of the first 125.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ANNUAL FUND

An easy way to donate: give your vehicle to SVES...make one call and everything is done for you! (855) 500-RIDE (7433)

WHAT ARE

YOU

UP TO?

Your news always makes us proud.
Share your updates with *Connections!*

Name:

SVES 8th grade grad year:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Email:

My update is:

SEND TO:

Email: Rawson@SVElem.org

USPS: *Connections* Editor /
SVES / Union & Howard Streets /
Petaluma, CA 94952

Why do we still teach cursive?

These days how often do you receive a letter in the mail? Not a bill, an advertisement or a form letter. We're talking about a handwritten note...something that involved ink and a hand to direct it, full of thoughts and information from someone.

While some folks do get used to printing or typing, we at St. Vincent's still value cursive writing. There is a lot of strong research that suggests it's actually not a dying art that should be ignored, but a valuable skill that promotes clarity and cohesion of thought.

While the new national Common Core Standards do not include

Indeed, the SAT essays written in cursive had slightly higher average scores than those written in print, according to the College Board.

Margaret Webb Pressler. "The Handwriting is on the Wall" *The Washington Post* 10/11/06: Web

cursive since a method of measuring skill level is not available, these same standards do emphasize the importance of expository writing (which we also teach well!) and legible handwriting is the technology universally available to students to facilitate content development. Cursive helps students master written expression and critical thinking.

Recent research illustrates how writing by hand engages the brain in learning. During one study at Indiana University published this year, researchers invited children to man a "spaceship," actually an MRI machine using a specialized scan called "functional" MRI that spots neural

activity in the brain. The kids were shown letters before and after receiving different letter-learning instruction. In children who had practiced printing by hand, the neural activity was far more enhanced and "adult-like" than in those who had simply looked at letters. (Gwendolyn Bounds. "How Handwriting Trains the Brain" *The Wall Street Journal* 10/05/10: Web)

Suzanne Baruch Asherson, a presenter for the Handwriting without Tears educational program and an occupational therapist, states that cursive handwriting stimulates brain synapses and synchronicity between the left and right hemispheres, something absent

from printing and typing.

(Suzanne Baruch Asherson. "Cursive Benefits Go Beyond Writing" *The New York Times* 4/30/13: Web)

These life skills will also help them when it comes time for the SATs. Cursive handwriting stimulates brain synapses and synchronicity between the left and right hemispheres, something absent from printing and typing. So, go handwrite that thank you note. It will mean so much more to the one lucky to receive it.

