

THE PAVONIAN

THE MISSION CONTINUES



St. Joseph School Alumni Newsletter

SUMMER 2015

Saint Joseph Catholic Elementary School is an educational community committed to preparing our students spiritually, intellectually, socially and emotionally for the future.

Our shared efforts are directed toward creating an environment rich in diverse opportunities that support academic challenge and that will ultimately lead our students toward self confidence and independence. Our commitment to excellence fosters students who as adults, will possess strong Christian values, be prepared to adapt to an ever changing world, and continue to be guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

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SAVE THE DATE

ALUMNI NIGHT, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2015

Please join us on Friday, September 11, 2015 for Alumni Night at Saint Joseph Parish's 38th parish festival. Come enjoy great food, drink, games and comradery with fellow alumni from the many years of Saint Joseph School history. Hope to see you there!

FROM THE PASTOR, REV JAMES V. PAGNOTTA

Hello to All Alumni; I hope the joys of a leisurely summer are yours.

I am sorry that we weren't able to host the Spring BBQ but we simply did not have a good pre-sale of tickets and the committee thought best to cancel. When we attempt Alumni events we need the assistance of many people; this year we had a great committee but they were small in number and we just couldn't generate more interest. Perhaps we need to change the time of year – we would welcome suggestions from you as to the best venue for future events. I thank those of you who donated the ticket refund to the Alumni Association.

The school year has just concluded: we graduated twenty four students and Michael Sottolano '55 was our Alumnus of the Year. We had a great year with an enrollment of 320 + or - we now use 72 Magnolia as part of the school; we have a waiting list for the 2015-16 term in several classes. Our faculty and staff is returning intact and that makes for a wonderful continuity of education. We continue with our religious sisters teaching "our catholic religion" and moral witness to all students.

The neighborhood is a buzz with all kinds of development. Construction is very much underway two blocks West on the property from Summit Ave to Mc Laughlin Funeral Home (nine stories already up!) There are current plans for two 25 story and two 9 story buildings on the Muller's property; in addition an 8 story building at Waldo & Newark and Baldwin Ave by the bridge. Needless to say some residents are very concerned about the density effect on the area. The parish shares those concerns but we also know both the parish and the school will benefit from new residents.

I am in my forty third year at the parish (thirty-seventh as pastor) and I hope to be years for a few more years, the Lord willing. I thank those of you who maintain a connection to the "Old Sod" and participate in the Annual Giving. Please visit us whenever you like (maybe Alumni Night at the Annual Festival, Sept 11 6-10pm).

Sincerely,

Rev. James V. Pagnotta, *Pastor*

SJS CLASS OF 2015

Nicole Almenana	High Tech H.S.
Janai Artis	Academic/McNair
Justin Bambico	Dickinson H.S.
Humberto Belvis	Hudson Catholic High School
Elizabeth Campbell	Saint Dominic Academy
Iverson Celestin	Undecided
Orlando Cortez	Saint Peter's Prep
Robert Delmonte	County Prep
Ashley Garcia	Saint Dominic Academy
Justin Goode	Hudson Catholic High School
Zion Hollmon	Great Future Charter
Michelle Ikumu	Undecided
Martin Kasilag	Saint Peter's Prep
Anthony Lopez	County Prep
Justin Lozano	Dickinson High School
Jenna Manzo	Saint Dominic Academy
Sirena Morales	County Prep
Mariana Palma	Undecided
Steven Panzariello	Saint Peter's Prep
Chelsea Revollo	Nutley High School
William Reyna	Undecided
Shania Ricks	Saint Dominic Academy
Bryant Tejada	Saint Anthony High School
Aaron Watkins-Moore	Hudson Catholic High School



PRESIDENTIAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Nicole Almenana	Anthony Lopez
Janai Artis	Jenna Manzo
Justin Bambico	Steven Panzariello
Orlando Cortez	Chelsea Revollo
Michelle Ikumu	Shania Ricks
Martin Kasilag	

PRESIDENTIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Elizabeth Campbell	Robert DelMonte
Iverson Celestin	Zion Hollmon

RELIGION CONTEST – CATHOLIC CHALLENGE

1st Place – Bryan Barahona

SCHOLASTIC OLYMPICS – MARIST HIGH SCHOOL

1st Place – History – Angelo Lazaro

1st Place – Art – Juliette Reyes

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL—STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

MARTIN LUTHER KING ORATORY CONTEST

3rd Place - Carla Rubio – Grade 6

Finalist - Mark Rajah - Grade 5

Finalist – Orlando Cortez – Grade 8

Participant – Edward Kelleher – Grade 5



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK CATHOLIC CHALLENGE CONTEST

1st Place* – Bryan Barahona – Grade 7
*(1st out of 62 students throughout the Archdiocese)
Finalist – Jenna Manzo – Grade 8

ESSAY CONTEST ON AFRICAN AMERICAN SAINTS SPONSORED BY ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

1st Place – Carla Rubio – Grade 6
2nd Place – Miya Morrison – Grade 6
Honorable Mention – Trinity Mock – Grade 6



Our eighth grade students were awarded \$288,000 in scholarships to several catholic high schools; including Saint Dominic, Hudson Catholic, Marist and Saint Peter's Prep.

SAINT JOSEPH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

♦ We had wonderful presentations at our Home School Meeting on May 18th. Our *Ballet* students entertained us with a beautiful presentation. The *Dance Club*; led by Ms. Shannon Lamendola, also presented a great performance. The displayed their great talent and were truly entertaining. Our fifth grade students, who have been involved in *Ballroom Dance* instruction for the past ten weeks, also gave an excellent performance.

♦ The fifth grade students performed at NJPAC in Newark on Thursday, May 28th in *Colors of the Rainbow Dancing Classrooms*. We are so proud of them for practicing and hard work the students did over the past ten weeks. They were awarded the Bronze Medal and Trophy. What a great achievement!

♦ Our *Taste of the Town* fundraiser and tricky tray was a great success. We thank all the parents who participated and showed their support. I especially thank our Home School Executive Board – Mrs. Evelyn Rubio, Mrs. Anne Rivera, Mrs. Mchelle Badillo and all of our parents for their help.

♦ Our outdoor *May Crowning* held on May 1st was a beautiful event. Also, during the month of May, each class participated in the rosary in honor of our Blessed Mother.

♦ Our Grade 7 students participated in the Marist *Scholastic Olympics* on May 12th at Marist High School. We are very proud of our two winners – Juliette Reyes – Art and Angelo Lazaro – History. Thank you to all of our 7th grade students who did a great job!

♦ On May 19th, several of Saint Joseph school students were invited to be *Greeters* to the guests at the Annual Dinner for *The Scholarship Fund for Inner City Children* held at the Park Savoy in Florham Park, NJ. The students were very graceful and displayed a respectful and friendly attitude to all the guests attending the dinner.

♦ Our eighth grade students participated in a *Boat Launch* on Saturday, June 6th at Liberty State Park. The students worked very hard the past few months constructing and building their boat. It actually stayed afloat!



♦ Our *Peace Garden* was blessed and dedicated by our pastor, Father Pagnotta, on May 28th. During the dedication, many people who passed away during the year were remembered. We remember, in a special way, Sister Joan McKee, our former principal and Mrs. Phyllis Olson, a teacher for over 25 years at Saint Joseph School for whom the garden and statue of Saint Francis is in memory of.

We thank Sister Eleanor and Sister Maryanne for their help; Sister Barbara for her support and guidance and our parents and grandparents; especially Mrs. Maria Rozier. Our *Peace Garden* certainly looks beautiful with many various kinds of colorful blooming flowers. The *Peace Garden* is a wonderful place to visit for prayerful reflection and meditation.

ITEMS OF INTEREST -2015/16 TERM REGISTRATION

We have 309 students registered for September. By tradition – this number will change: some will transfer and over the summer, especially the last week of August we will register more students. Presently there are five Catholic schools in Jersey City: St Joseph, St. Nicholas, St. Aloysius, Sacred Heart and O. L. Czestochowa

BUILDING UPGRADES

72 Magnolia - New stair well carpets & waxing all floors.

509 Building: Painting rear stair well, all hallways, waxing all floors and refurbishing of all hard wood doors. Hopefully the replacement of the side walk in front of the 509 building.

"SEEDS" ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM

As part of the "Seeds" initiative of the Archdiocese of Newark, Saint Joseph Grammar School conducts an Annual Alumni Giving Campaign. In 2014-2015, we were blest to have the participation of 78 donors with gifts totaling \$21,255. Twenty-one of these donors have donated for three consecutive years. Fifteen alumni have donated for the past two years and forty-two are first time donors.

We are grateful to all and most especially pleased to note that each year our donor base increases. The funds generated from this Annual Giving are kept separate from the general school account. When the donation is "ear-marked" for a specific purpose, it is so used; i.e. scholarships. The remaining donations are used exclusively for our "wish list items" and our summer upgrades to the 509 Pavonia and 72 Magnolia buildings and our classroom equipment; e.g. smart board. We thank Kathleen Rooney Valerius, Class of 1962, for chairing the "Seeds" Annual Giving Program.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I extend to all of you my warmest greetings and best wishes. It is hard to believe another school year has gone by. It certainly was a great year.

We have included in this newsletter some of the events of our school and achievements of our students during the recent months. We are very proud of our children.

As you know, we attempted to have an Alumni Reunion in May. Unfortunately, we were not able to go through with it because it was not a convenient date for people to participate. We apologize for having to cancel. Perhaps it is a busy time of year for people.

Hopefully, we will try to have another alumni event in the future. In the past, they were always fun and successful and all who attended always enjoyed. I am grateful to the committee who were doing a wonderful job in planning this year's event.

I would like to thank our Alumni members who participated in our *Annual Alumni Fund Drive*. We are very grateful for your generosity. Enclosed is information regarding this year's fund drive.

We are, of course, looking forward to next school year 2015-2016. There are over 300 students already registered. We are excited and look forward to another great year.

Please know if you are in the area, you are always welcome to visit Saint Joseph School to see the wonderful things happening here.

I wish you and your family a very relaxing, peaceful and safe summer.

Please make your calendar for our *Annual Alumni Night* at the *Parish Festival* on Friday, September 11th.

God Bless You,

Sincerely,

Mr. John Richards, Principal

ADDRESS TO THE GRADUATES**MICHAEL J. SOTTOLANO – CLASS OF 1955**

Good evening class of 2015. Welcome parents, family and friends. I would like to thank your principal, Mr. John Richards, eighth grade teacher, Mrs. Eileen Deegan, Father Pagnotta and you the graduating class of 2015 for inviting me here tonight to share this important event with you.

Shortly, you this graduating class, and I will have something in common. We will both be graduates of Saint Joseph Grammar School. This is something that I have always treasured and am sure you will continue to be extremely proud of in the future.

This is the first chapter of your educational Book of Life. Graduating from elementary school, and moving on to chapter two, high school. This is a transition that Saint Joseph School, with its very high standards, has prepared you for and, I am sure, each and every one of you will handle it very well. This is not to say that there will not be some challenges along the way. One of your major challenges will be your general attitude, and how well you use the gifts and talents you have. I know, when I was in high school, I developed a "casual attitude". That is where you think you can handle the workload without putting in 100% effort, and you do not continue using the gifts and talents you have been blessed with. I assure you that does not work well. An added challenge today, that was not present in the past is use of electronic devices. Do not allow them to interfere with your studies. High school provides you with the opportunity to participate in many activities as well as to obtain additional educational experiences. To be part of the full high school experience, you must not develop a "casual attitude" and instead, you should be prepared to give you best effort at all times.

I look out at each one of you and can truly say I do not know your likes and dislikes, but I am willing to place my future in your hands. You are the future, and you will determine what type of world we will live in. There is no limit to what you can do. This is your choice to make!

As future decision makers, you must stay well informed. This requires reading on a daily basis; keep up to date with current events, participating in community efforts, and offering to be part of the solutions, and not contributors to the problems of everyday life. Opportunities are there, handle them with care and use them to the best of your ability.

As I look back at my years at Saint Joseph Grammar School, I realize the benefits of the education I received there. When I decided to further my education by going to college, I understood how invaluable that foundation was. Later, I pursued computer technology as a career, once again, the math training I received here was a strong point in programming computers in the business world. In general, Saint Joseph School provided me with a discipline to deal with daily events and responsibilities, whether they were in the business world or part of everyday life. Do not under estimate what you have

learned at Saint Joseph School. It will enable you to be successful in many areas of your future.

As a sports coach for over thirty years, I guess now is the time for my pep talk. The major thoughts I can give you are:

1. Always be positive and avoid negative influences (it is better to say yes I can than, no I can't),
2. Enjoy whatever you are doing, especially in your career choice (life isn't always about making money; it is important to be happy with yourself and what you are doing),
3. Learn by your mistakes (mistakes are teaching moments of great value if you use them to your advantage),
4. Respect everyone and you will receive the respect you desire in return (building someone up has merit; bringing someone down proves nothing),
5. Be productive within your community (the greatest reward is the smile on the face of a person that you have helped),
6. The hardest part of any job is starting (do not put off a task until tomorrow – tomorrow is a long way off).

I have been very fortunate in my lifetime. A number of people have enabled me to do various good things that I probably would not have accomplished. As an example, Father Leo Farley, Pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Parish, asked me to bring Holy Communion to people in the community who were unable to attend church. I reluctantly said that I would give it a try. I was doing the right thing, but at that time didn't understand why. This turned out to be one of the best experiences of my life. The point I am making is, do not hesitate to do good things and you will be pleasantly surprised. Many people will make suggestions to you about various things you might or might not do. It is my opinion, that you should listen intently, but then make your decisions as to whether your choice will be of value in your life or in the life of someone else.

As you begin high school, and eventually attend college, be as open minded as possible. The decisions you make at an early age will shape your thinking process for the future. Some of you may already have a pretty good idea as to what you want to do in the future. I originally wanted to become a tool and dye maker (that is someone who works with heavy equipment and makes machine parts for other processes), why I thought that – I do not know. At that time, it was something that I thought would be interesting. I eventually began a lifetime career working with computers. I am suggesting that you remain open to the many opportunities that will become present in your life. Choose wisely, and I am sure you will pick the career that is well suited for your skills.

After you graduate tonight, you will transition and join all past graduates of Saint Joseph School as you, too, become alumni. As alumni, you may be asked to remember your school and help support its mission for the future. Participate in alumni events whenever possible. Be willing to give a helping hand when needed. This is your school! You have received a wonderful

education! Now it is up to you to see that all you have learned positively affects your future. It is my hope that someday one of you will be asked to share your grammar school and life experience with a graduating class, as I have proudly attempted to do tonight.

As I look around the church, I see parents, family and friends who are here to support you, the Class of 2015. They bring to you their hopes and best wishes for everything life has to offer. Embrace this moment of success; you have earned it. Go out into the world with confidence and a desire to accomplish whatever you put your mind to. May God bless you, and look after you in all your future endeavors.

Once again, I would like to thank the administration, faculty and especially you, the graduating class of 2015, for giving me the opportunity to share this special time tonight with you and your families.

ATTENTION ALUMNI!

Did you recently get married? Graduate? Have a baby? Well, we'd love to hear from you! If you have any stories or news to share, we would like to hear about them to feature in future newsletters. Submit them either by email at alumni@stjosephjc.com or mail to the school office.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS - Please send us your new address when you move including your maiden name if applicable and class year. We LOVE hearing from alumni so please share with us your information so we can keep in touch!

Please take a few moments to give us an update:

Name: _____

Maiden Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Class of _____

You can email this information to alumni@stjosephjc.com or mail it to the school at: **Saint Joseph School**

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SUMMER 2015

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Reverend James V. Pagnotta, Pastor
 John Richards '67, Principal