



The Saint Teresa Times

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Third Grade Parade of Saints

FROM FR. NICHOLAS KIPPER

PASTOR

On October 16, I joined the administrators and teachers from all the Lincoln Diocesan Schools for the annual Diocesan Education Day. The day consists of Mass, breakout sessions, and chatting with fellow educators throughout the diocese.

Bishop James Conley was the keynote speaker for the day, and he used the opportunity to express his vision of Catholic education. He spoke about how his vision is influenced by his own journey.

As many of you know, Bishop Conley did not grow up Catholic. He was drawn to the Catholic Church in college, but this was a gradual process. He entered the Integrated Humanities Program at the University of Kansas, and this program opened his heart to God through beauty and wonder.

The motto of the program the bishop attended was "let us be born in wonder." Bishop Conley pointed out that this emphasis on wonder changed his whole perspective on the world. This happened in real, concrete ways like stargazing, the

memorization of poetry, and even learning how to waltz.

Wonder is the continued desire to know. As we know things, we want to know more. Wonder is the beginning of knowledge, and it can be evoked by almost anything that comes before us: viewing a sunset; listening to a beautiful, well-ordered hymn; observing classical architecture. Wonder must then

be a driving, motivational force in education, and, thus, at St. Teresa School. Education comes from the Latin words *ex ducere*, which means: "to lead out." Wonder is how we lead students out of darkness and ignorance into the truth—a lifelong endeavor.

At St. Teresa School, we give our students many skills to use throughout their lives. We teach skills in reading and math that will help them practically in their everyday lives. This includes the ability to speak and write with articulation and clarity. We want our students to have well-developed imaginations, especially in an age where we are bombarded with so many images on screens.

It's wonder that keeps the learning of these skills from being mechanical, boring, and merely utilitarian. At the beginning of this school year, I told our teachers at St. Teresa School that we are doing our job if we are daily instilling a sense of wonder in our students. Wonder is the vehicle by which our students will come to know truth, goodness, and beauty. Wonder will create life-long learners who desire to grow in wisdom and holiness.



During their unit on the Life Cycle of a Butterfly, 5th grade students marvel at a newly-emerged monarch that they had been observing at all stages in their classroom.

FROM SR. MARY MICHAEL, PRINCIPAL

JOY, THE CHARISM OF CHILDREN

Years ago, primary grade classrooms were primary colors and walls were covered with educational materials. To help simplify surroundings we have some new, beautiful cabinets in some classrooms for teacher storage. The cabinets were in and the knobs just went on, but the shelves were not in yet. They were to go in with simple clips, but with four clips on 6 shelves in two cupboards in two classrooms, it is 96 clips, so I thought I'd help. After a little bit the children hardly noticed I was there.

One finished, one to go, I was just beginning on a tall cabinet when they were coming back from recess. I caught the teacher's eye, just as they were behind the coat rack and slipped into the cabinet, as there were no shelves in it yet.

What fun it was to open the door a few



inches, peek out and let it close. It took a couple reps before one little boy noticed. He giggled a little and looked around at

his friends; they were oblivious. He giggled again and watched as I peeked out again. One of his friends noticed and joined in the joy. A few more peeks and they were all on board. The cheers emerged as did I, and we all had a good laugh.

The surprise to me was how well they were able to settle down after a few minutes. I assured them we can have fun, and have it often, if they can get back to work afterward. They really did....and their work was rather enjoyable too.

As I reflected on our spontaneous blessing of joy, I wondered, "Lord, what surprises do you have in the cupboard for me today? Help me to take the time to enjoy them". How about you, are there blessings in the Lord's cupboard waiting to be discovered?



A COUPLE OF "FINALLY" PROJECTS

We have been working on several pieces of the building updates and progressing with the strategic plan.

Two projects completed in recent years are the gym upgrade and the tuck pointing of the original building. Those were huge projects, expensive projects, finished projects!

Now we continue work with:

GREEN – we have raised beds with retain-

ing walls around the front walk of the school which leads to the main door. Prior to the beds, you really couldn't tell which door was the main one. One visitor said, "I looked for a while, and that one had a '1' beside it, so that was how I guessed it right." We can do better than that, and we have! The trees, roses, grasses and perennials look great. Thanks to the committee for your work in helping bring it to life.

Thanks also to the Men's Club and the Knights of Columbus for helping with funding.

THE SPINNER – It is a net spinner which combines something to climb on with a merry-go-round. It has been very well received by the children. Most members of the school enjoyed the announcement stating, "If you are on the spinner and you don't feel well, please ask for it to stop.

PROJECTS *from previous page*

We'd like to keep it in good shape, the new mat, too. The fence line is a good place to go if you do not feel well. Dirt is a very fine natural absorbent." There was another reason we shifted to recess before lunch, but the addition of the spinner worked into the new schedule beautifully. The spinner is on a new rubberized mat, required for safety. While it is not nearly as exciting as the spinner, it was a lot more expensive! The foundation under the whole area should ensure longevity. Thanks to Matt Schafers for his leadership in the project. This one is the primary motivator for the title, as funding was initiated for this project long ago.....probably not while you alumni were in school, but not long after, possibly...

CABINETS – Twenty-two new cabinets went into various spaces for new storage. For a humorous event as they evolved see the other article from yours truly. Mr. McCabe will be helping us with countertops closer to the end of the year. The cabinets came from another donor. Our friends are the best!

1930 RESTROOMS – I'm not sure who thought painting restroom floors red was a good idea, but in 1930 I'm guessing it was exciting to have restrooms on a large scale inside! Nobody much cared what color the floor was. The Church was in the cafeteria at the time. The red paint is showing through the gray paint which was added later and we are ripe for renovation. We are going for a retro look with hex ceramic tile and pedestal sinks. Funding for most of the project is in hand and we are in the bidding process.

CLASSROOM UPDATES – This one is in the initial phase, we hope to upgrade the fluorescent orange sinks and other linoleum countertops. The wood in our classrooms for about 70 years could use a bit of freshening, also. Sanding and refinishing are on the docket.



It is good to put all this in one place as we can see progress! Thank you Lord for making it possible through Your Grace, benefactors, and a lot of hard work on the part of many people.



Above: During a weekly visit to the kindergarten classroom, Fr. Schwenka uses a science experiment to illustrate how God's love spreads throughout the world.



Below: 4th graders dissect and analyze great horned owl pellets.



Above: 8th grader Aidan Shasserre reads his statewide pro-life contest winning essay on the theme of "Indifference" at the Nebraska Catholic Conference banquet to an audience that included Bishop Conley and Governor Pillen.



Above: In addition to celebrating the Feast of St. Therese with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Conley in the morning and a Eucharistic procession through the school in the afternoon, all students enjoyed a tea party complete with St. Therese- and rose-themed treats and decorations.

Middle right: 5th graders present scenes and read meditations on the Joyful Mysteries during the Living Rosary.

Below right: Band members play the National Anthem before a home volleyball game.

Below left: 5th graders take learning outdoors.

