

The Crossette

December 2009

Holy Cross Regional Catholic School, 2125 Langhorne Rd, Lynchburg, Va 24501 www.hcrs-va.org 434-847-5436

News from the school celebrating 131 years of Academic Excellence, Honor, Tradition, Service, and Christian Values.

From Bill Coursey:

The first semester of our good school is closing –in on a remarkable year. Just yesterday Athletic Director Randy Turille led the recognition of our winning teams in both fall sports of soccer and Volleyball. In the fall 42 students represented Holy Cross on the field or in the gym, playing against VIC's best. Our record of achievement is impressive. In 2009 Volleyball First Team All Conference included Katelyn Duncan; Second team All Conference named Emily Hickey and Sandy Serio to its ranks.

In varsity soccer Cedric Anderson was named to First Team All Conference; Second Team All Conference named Michael Zook, Kenny Sterne, Joe Bruzek and Will Hickey

to its ranks. Additional recognition included Keeper Nolan Mann and Coach of the Year, Randy Turille. In the midst of our winning record is a faculty and volunteer coaching staff that has stepped up our belief in who we can be. At the recent Sports Assembly I was struck by a comment made by Coach Turille when he summarized the fall sports' achievements.

He noted that from his vantage point, this winning season was the beginning of Holy Cross's return to a previous record of high achievement and promise. He spoke of returning to to where we have been before, where we are the leaders. What could that mean?

Coach Turille said it would challenge us, force us to work harder, focus our teams on the end-game. I have been in schools that exude the spirit that Coach Turille describes. A team of science students winning the national first place Seiko Youth Challenge (a prize of \$50,000). Repeating athletic team state winners. Winning because "that's where we belong."

What will come our way will be a competitive spirit three-fold who we are today. It will pervade the sections of the school. It will be recognizable. It will be the educational community we all work for. Thanks Coach for a great summary of a first-rate beginning on the journey to the top.



Dear School Family:

Thank you ever so much for blessing us. After all, we exist because of you and the children, past and present. As a family community, we best realize our goals and dreams when we strive to reach them together.

As we enter the Advent season and focus our attention more directly and passionately on the Incarnate Jesus, may we be mindful of our blessings and of our need to bless each other and our neighbors. The season lends itself to sharing and giving, as does each day, which calls and challenges us to live not only as followers of Jesus, but as imitators of him as well. Advent means "coming" or "arrival" and it is a time that encourages us to slow down in order to reflect and prepare so that we might better examine our lives and our priorities. If not, we run the risk of getting caught up in the many facets of Christmas that are far removed from a savior's birth and of a Christian commitment.

As we remember and reflect upon the birth and life of Jesus, we are mindful of His invitation to come and follow Him. Jesus is truly the most spectacular gift any of us will ever receive. What gift will we give Him in return? How might we be a gift or a blessing to others, especially those most in need? Truth is, in seeking those in need, none of us have far to look! Those who need our help live here with us in this community. We must be willing to go to them and in so doing we live the true meaning of the Advent/ Christmas season. Just think what we could do if every school family did something special for one other person or family. I believe that when we look for God in others, we give others a chance to see God in us! With this in mind, I extend my best wishes for a blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas.

God Bless You,
John P. Jones

Update From the Enrollment Office

Let's give a warm welcome to our two new students from Australia!

Caitlin (5th grade) Quinn and Alexandra (8th grade) Quinn were finally granted VISA approval and will be arriving the first week of December. Both girls attended All Hallows Catholic School in Brisbane, Queensland. With a population of 1400 girls this will be a different experience for them. They are leaving 102 degree weather and the start of their summer vacation! They are very excited. We are excited too!

Congratulations to Cedric Anderson for placing on the VISAA 1st Team All State Soccer; Will Hickey and Kenny Sterne for placing on the 2nd Team All State, and for Joe Bruzek and Nolan Mann for Honorable Mentions. WOW! What a team we had this year!

Congratulations to Katelynn Duncan for making 1st team all State in Volleyball!

Great Job Forensics Team!

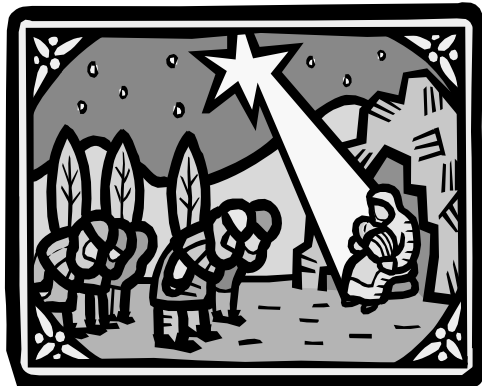
Virginia Catholic Forensics League Meet #1: William Loftus (11th) and Nina Rezai (12th) came in 4th place in the Public Forum event, qualifying them for the state tournament. Will Chavis (10th) and Audra Mayhew (9th) also competed in Public Forum.

SW Virginia Forensics League Meet #1: William and Nina placed 3rd in Public Forum, which qualifies them for the state tournament in that league as well.

Congratulations to our Elementary Student Government Officers

President-Mary Key (grade 5)
Vice President-Joshua Lawson (grade 4)
Secretary-Ben Shoen (grade 5)

The council also consists of Avery Combs (5), Andrew Stokes (5), Sydney Walker (5), Adrianna Burns (4), Leonardo Lupinetti (4), Grace Campbell (5), Glenn Trent (5), Alexandra Casker (3), Alan Leal (3), and Haydn Updike (5).



How Christians Should Celebrate Advent and Christmas

Did you ever notice that dessert is the first dish in line at many buffet restaurants? Yes, you could eat dinner backwards—starting with dessert, then the appetizer and main course. In the end you eat all the food, but it's nowhere near as fulfilling as enjoying each part of the meal in its proper place. Or worse, dessert could fill you up before you eat a balanced meal.

Sometimes we suffer the same temptation with Christmas. Our culture tends to skip Advent and start celebrating Christmas after Thanksgiving—if we're lucky to make it that far! Then it's all packed up and stored away by New Year's. This year, consider returning to the ancient practice of seeing the whole Christmas "cycle"—the period that embraces both the Advent and Christmas seasons—as one unit of joyous celebration. Preparation comes first, then comes celebration extending a few weeks after Christmas Day.

The focal point of the Christmas cycle is obvious: God becoming one of us in Jesus, the Incarnation. All three phases of the cycle—Advent, Christmas and Epiphany—hinge on and celebrate that point. These celebrations help us to name the ways our lives are caught up in the "big story" of Christ. And these feasts tie our lives to Christians throughout history. The tra-

dition of the Church, the living gospel, is the real-life experience of Christians like you and like me, and those who have gone before us.

During Advent, we emphasize the joy that some would compare to the months before a child is born: excitement, wonder, joy, expectation, even exhilaration at the life that is in our midst right now, yet also a hope and longing, and a carefulness to get things into order.

During the Christmas season we celebrate the wonder of the Incarnation. How wondrously we are made that the Word of God would become one of us! God shows us how to live fully: by pouring out our lives for others.

Epiphany and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord celebrate Christ becoming manifest—that is, present—to all peoples. On Epiphany we focus on the three Wise Men symbolizing the many races for whom Christ was born. The baptism of Jesus marks the beginning of his public ministry. God's "Christmas gift" of the Incarnation is a gift for everyone!

John Bookser Feister is the editor of American-Catholic.org. This article is excerpted from Catholic Update, "Advent to Epiphany: Celebrating the Christmas Cycle." How Christians Should Celebrate Advent and Christmas by John Feister

From the Library/Media Center



Christmas Wish Tree 2009

Have you noticed the Christmas tree in the lobby? If you look carefully, you will find titles of books that we would like to get for the elementary and middle/high school libraries. You can donate a book in honor of a teacher or staff, or a loved one. You can even honor a deceased loved one through a book donation. It's a gift that will keep giving for years to come!!

Pick a title from the tree, fill out the back, and return it with the amount listed. (Do not buy the book) We will order the books before Christmas break. The donor and honored individual's name will be listed on a bookplate. If you want us to pick out a book for you, you can send in a donation and we will choose one to fit that amount. Thanks to all the families that support this program every year!

Holy Cross Week at Barnes & Noble:

Thanks to all of the families and friends who came out and shopped at Barnes and Noble to support our Holy Cross book fair week. We haven't received word yet as to how we did, but I know many families took advantage of this opportunity to shop and help Holy Cross at the same time!

Thank you also to Mrs. Schemmel who came out to do stories and crafts, Mr. Jones who read a story, and to "Miss Nessa" and her Singing Angels who spread some holiday cheer with their singing voices. Stay tuned for a report of our profit!



Music Notes

Operation Christmas Child Update

Many thanks to the student body, families and Mrs. Berrier for contributions to Operation Christmas Child. This small school family brought in 136 boxes stuffed and overflowing with treats for children who have never received a Christmas present. In addition to the money tucked inside the boxes for shipping, we were able to send \$293 to aid in getting the boxes to their destination.

If your check is returned because it was made out to Holy Cross rather than Samaritan's

Purse we can collect and send another check from the school for the total if you will send it in to the Business Office.

Thank you for your generous donations.

Ms. Nessa

Upcoming Music Events:

Singing Angels – Rotary Luncheon – December 8th
12:00 noon (uniforms)
Elementary Christmas Concert – December 10th 7:00 PM light reception to follow (nice holiday wear)
Singing Angels – E.C.
Glass with Virginia School of the Arts - December 12th
2:00 PM & 7:00 PM (nice holiday wear)

Crossette Deadlines

Friday, Jan 15
Friday, Feb 19
Friday, Mar 25
Friday, April 30
Friday, June 9th

Judy Steigerwald
oohmom@msn.com (the letter o not zero)



Elementary News

Leadership & Initiatives

By Doug Washington

Kindergarten News

Kindergarten celebrated Thanksgiving with a small feast at school. Each child brought a food item to share. The children also made a Pilgrim-Indian village to share with their family. The children used natural items such as leaves and small rocks and sticks and also painted milk and yogurt cartons. Kindergarteners now turn their full attention to Christmas!

Special art projects and music and books are on the way! Merry Christmas!

First grade

People who can read.....should! It's fun to be reading at school and at home.

We are doing "reading reaction journals" to write about the stories we read. It's a great way to practice writing, spelling, and punctuation. If you can read it, you can write it AND if you can write it ,you can read it!

We collected canned food and will join our Prayer Partners to make cards for the soldiers, too. We are decorating our room during this beautiful season of Advent.

Merry Christmas to all!

Second Grade News

The second graders are really busy this month with many activities leading up to the Birth of the Christ Child.

Monday, November 30, the children learned the Advent traditions and made individual Advent wreaths to take home and share with their families.

Friday, December 4, they helped Fr. Rush celebrate his 65th birthday after First Friday Mass at HCC and the planting of tulip bulbs around the church. Later that day they decorated a German gingerbread house with many different candies and figures.

Monday, December 7, they will begin making Christmas cards for shut-ins and pen pals.

Wednesday, December 9, the students will begin their "Christmas around the World" reports to the class.

Friday, December 11, the children will lace and decorate their own Christmas stockings. They will also enjoy learning the traditions of Mexico and the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Monday, December 14, the children will begin making Christmas gifts.

Wednesday, December 16, the students will shop at the classroom Candy Cane Shoppe, using their earned play money to buy recycled toys, books, and games.

Friday, December 18, the children will celebrate with music and a party the Birthday of Jesus!

One of the newest courses now being taught at Holy Cross is the Leadership & Initiatives course for Middle School students. Students are presented with a challenge that requires focus on four primary components: 1) setting goals; 2) determining who does what (personnel); 3) setting timelines/deadlines; and 4) evaluating strengths and weaknesses.

Students usually tackle the challenge with simple "trial and error" strategies and gradually learn to develop more sophisticated plans. They practice ways to measure and track performance, contend with setbacks, manage changing variables and adjust personnel assignments. They experience first hand what it is like to lead group discussions and to develop consensus. They practice using rewards and consequences as motivational tools.

Related concepts include how to compromise, delegate responsibility, develop contingency plans, and create and maintain group momentum ("The Big Mo"). Students learn how to overcome common trends that tend to detract from group performance. They learn to overcome frustration and deal with increasing pressure as time begins to run out. Eventually, when the group reaches that final moment of victory, each student learns that tough challenges may be met with hard work, pre-planning and determination.

Students also have fun reading relevant quotes from old and contemporary sources, so I will close this with just a few examples:

"Be prepared." Boy Scouts Motto

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way."
Lee Iacoca, Chrysler CEO

"A goal without a plan is just a wish."
Antoine de Saint-Exupery

"Pessimism never won any battle."
Dwight D. Eisenhower

"The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything."
Theodore Roosevelt

"All my possessions for a moment of time."
Elizabeth I

"I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it."
Thomas Jefferson