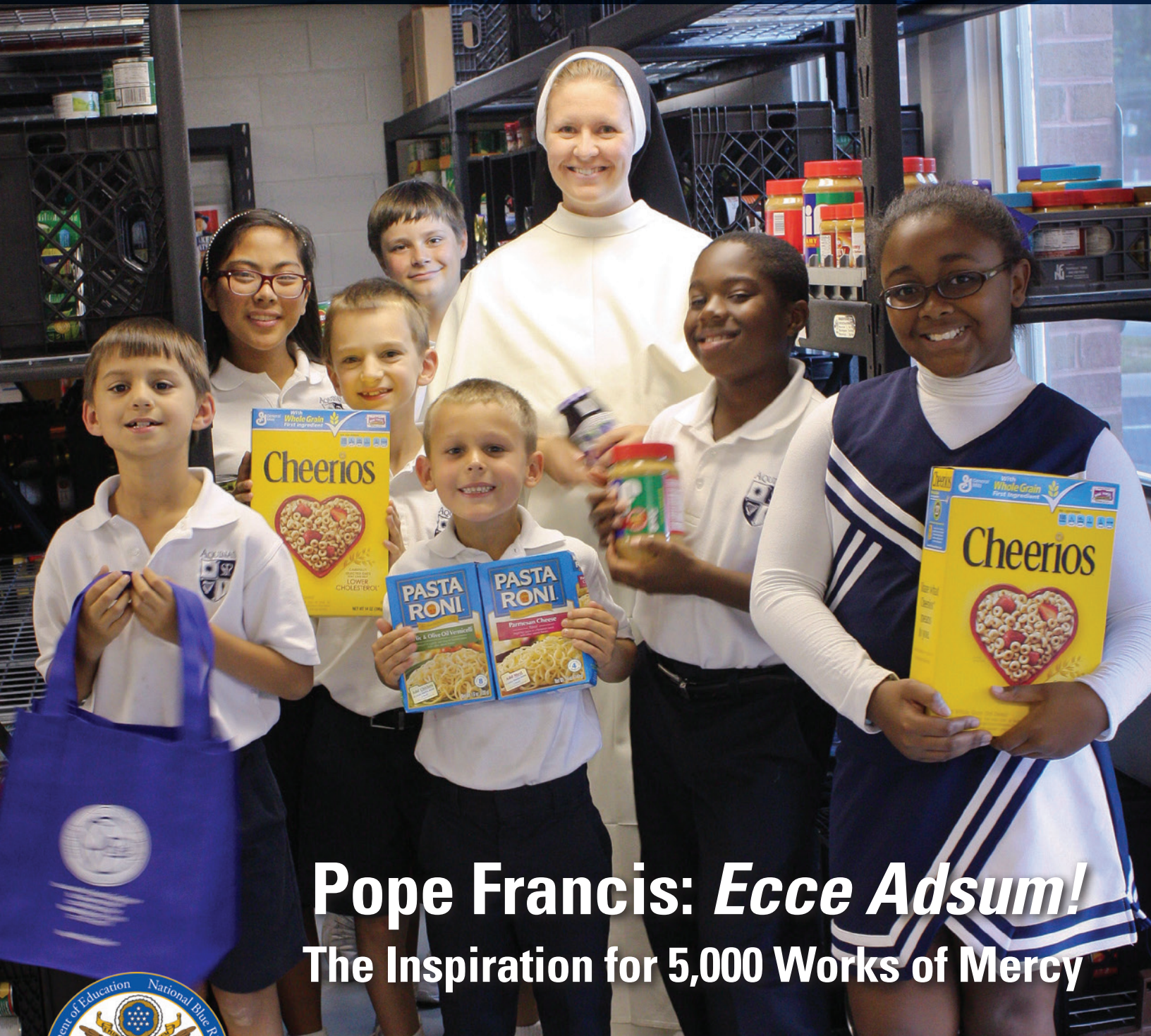


THE CRUSADER

A PUBLICATION OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS REGIONAL SCHOOL

SUMMER/FALL 2013



Pope Francis: *Ecce Adsum!*
The Inspiration for 5,000 Works of Mercy



PLUS

Sunny Day, Sweeping the Clouds Away with WeatherBug
Meet Sister Martha Ann Titus, O.P., our new Principal

LETTER FROM SISTER



“If we want to help others, we must love them—I insist—with a love clothed in understanding, patience, dedication, affection and voluntary humility. Then we will understand why our Lord summed up the whole law in that double commandment, which is really just one: love of God, and love of one’s neighbor, with all our heart.”

—Monsignor Escriva

DEAR FRIENDS,

I am grateful to you for your support of Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional School. My predecessor, Sister Maria Goretti, along with the faculty, staff, and parents have formed this community well into the Body of Christ. Jesus is clearly present here and is made known through the experiences of this school community.

Pope Francis tells us to begin anew from Christ. He gives us three steps. First, we need to be close to Him. We need to talk, pray, and listen to Him. Most importantly, we need to be with Him in quiet and throughout our day. Secondly, we need to take Him to others. We must leave our comfort zone and go out to all that Jesus places in our day. We applaud our parents and benefactors for their gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Their involvement in our school is tremendous. Lastly, Jesus tells us that as we are sent, He goes ahead of us and is with us wherever He leads us. If it is the hungry, the poor, the broken, the rich, the lonely, the faithless, the homeless, those who say they don’t need God, those who don’t know Him, we bring Christ to them with a kind word, a smile, a helping hand, or a discussion of a doctrine of our faith. We all work together to make Jesus and His Word in the Gospel known.

Thank you for being a part of our team. We are the instruments of the Lord that by His grace, He uses to make a symphony of believers. We accept God’s grace to make Him known and loved so that we may all be with Him in Heaven.

May His love and your generous hearts be a light shining in the darkness for all to see that will transform the world into a world of peace, love, and caring. May our Blessed Mother be close to us to guide us always to her Son.

In the Heart of Jesus and Mary,

Sister Martha Ann, O.P.
Principal

This is Saint Thomas Aquinas Regional School because of God’s grace and His work through each of us.

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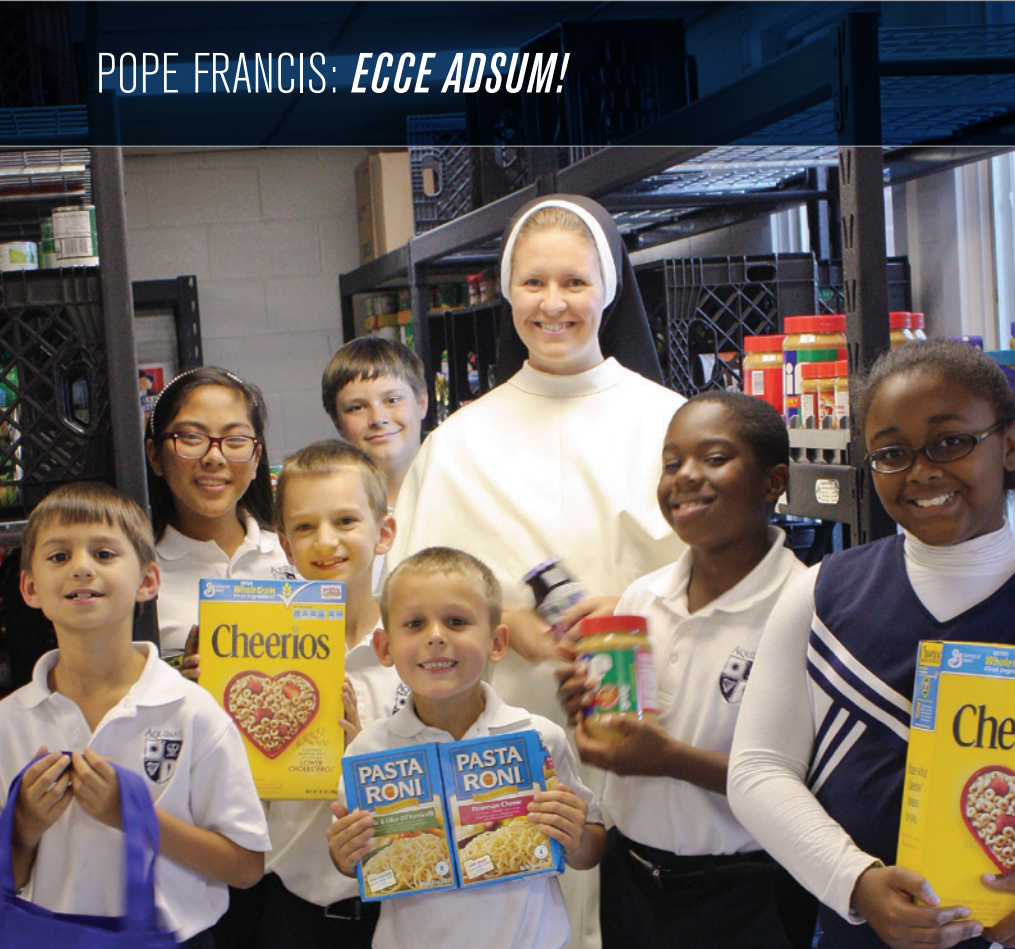
POPE FRANCIS: *ECCE ADSUM!*

04

In March of this year, the former Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, became the new Pope of the Catholic Church. Pope Francis' humble nature and fierce dedication to the poor inspired the Aquinas community to perform 5,000 Works of Mercy.



**2011 Blue Ribbon
School of Excellence**



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Director of Admissions Karen Cardinale

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Photography by: Lisa Julia Photography, Shari Youtz and proud parents

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School
AQUINAS

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Pope Francis:



Pope Francis' first words to his Catholic flock upon his election were, "you know that it was the duty of the Conclave to give Rome a Bishop. It seems that my brother Cardinals have gone to the ends of the earth to get one... but here we are... I thank you for your welcome." The former Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, is a 76-year-old Jesuit who stunned the world by becoming the first pope from the Americas. Chicago Cardinal Francis George told the Chicago Tribune, "I think it all came together in an extraordinary fashion."



Ecce Adsum!

The Inspiration for 5,000 Works of Mercy

Cardinal Bergoglio was rumored to be the runner-up to Pope Benedict during the 2005 Conclave. However, his name had not come up during the week of closed-door discussions among the cardinals before the conclave and he was not a candidate that received any speculation in the international media. Many cardinals indicated that they would not vote for a pope who is older than 70 years old. And yet, Cardinal Bergoglio may have sensed his higher calling. Two days before his election, he went out walking alone in the Piazza Navona wearing a simple black cassock. He ran into Father Thomas Rosica, a Canadian priest who was acting as a Vatican spokesman during the papal interregnum, whom he knew. Cardinal Bergoglio grabbed Fr. Rosica's hands and said, "I want you to pray for me." Fr. Rosica asked him if he was nervous. "A little bit," Cardinal Bergoglio admitted.

Pope Francis later related to the press that when it appeared voting was going his way and it seemed "a bit dangerous" that he would reach the two-thirds necessary to be elected, he was comforted by his friend, Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes. Pope Francis said Cardinal Hummes embraced him and told him, 'don't forget about the

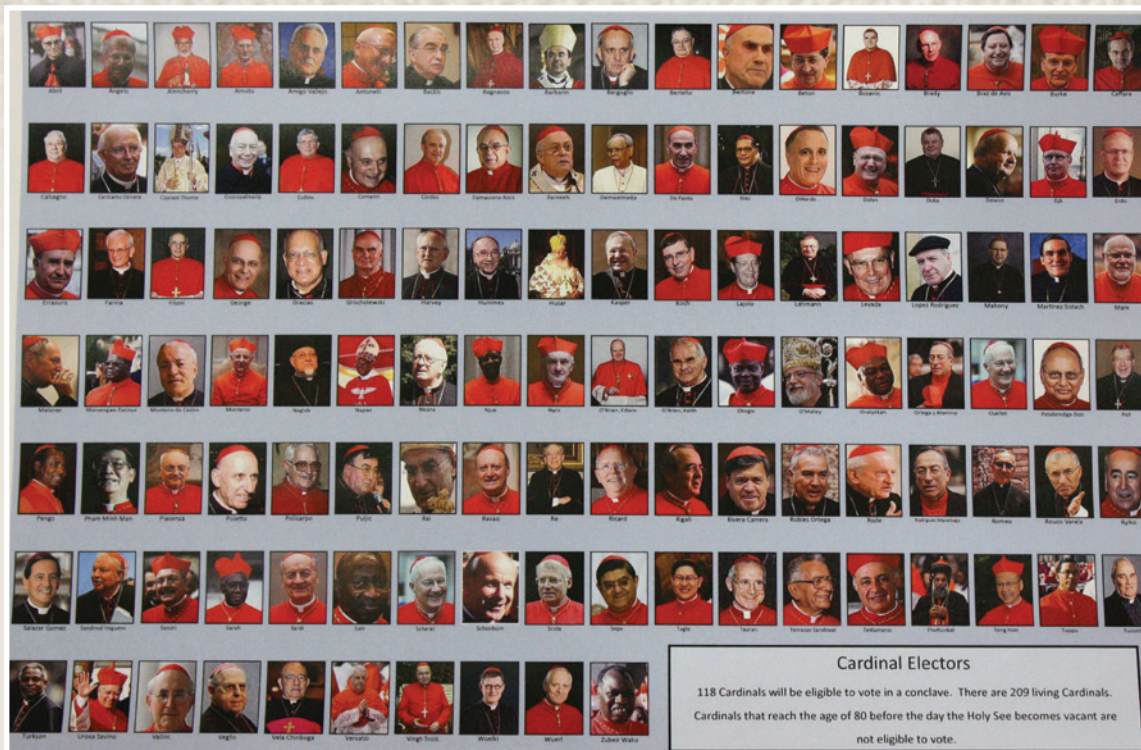
poor.' Pope Francis continued, "and that's how in my heart came the name Francis of Assisi... He was the man of the poor. The man of peace. The man who loved and cared for creation—and in this moment we don't have such a great relationship with the Creator. The man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man who wanted a poor church." Cardinal Bergoglio then took the name Francis.

Cardinal Wuerl echoed the elation of seemingly all of Rome by saying of the new Pope Francis, "The excitement of what he brings to this moment is so palpable! It was such a joy simply to see him stand up now as the newly elected pope, smile and then, of course, as we all saw, when he stepped out onto the balcony and simply greeted the people as you would anyone. He just said 'good evening'..." Jubilation about our new pope spread rapidly around the world and happily infected St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School. Sister Maria Goretti, O.P. (then principal) made the quick decision to allow parents to pick up their children directly from their classrooms and then gather in the school Hall to watch the live telecast of the announcement as a community. There was an audible gasp and even a few happy

tears among students, faculty, staff and parents when Pope Francis was announced. However, this was not the students' first introduction to the papal process.

Upon Pope Emeritus Benedict's announcement to step down, Sister Maria Goretti involved the school by assigning a cardinal elector in the conclave to each student, faculty and staff member in order for that elector to be included in their individual and group prayers leading up to and during the conclave. The students learned about their assigned elector and prayed for them—not that their assigned elector would become pope—but that they would be guided by the Holy Spirit in their work during the conclave. Each morning, the entire school community prayed the following prayer:

O God, eternal Shepherd, who govern your flock with unfailing care, send an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon your Church, especially upon the cardinals as they prepare and gather to choose our next pope. May he be a shepherd after your own heart, and lead us by word and example in the way of holiness and truth. We ask this in the name of Christ, your Son. Amen. Mary, Mother of the Church—Pray for us. St. Peter—Pray for us.



By involving the students in the papal election process, they became more attuned to who would become the next leader of over one billion Catholics. In the days following Pope Francis' election, the students and the world began to learn what an extraordinary man he already was and his apparent plans to continue a mission of piety and extraordinary compassion. Most notable of his prior works was his fierce pastoral dedication to the poor.

"My people are poor and I am one of them," he had often been quoted as saying. Stories of Cardinal Bergoglio's incredible charitable works and willingness to forsake common comforts quickly became common knowledge. Just as he previously lived in a modest apartment and cooked his own meals, Pope Francis has refused to move into the papal apartment in the Vatican and continues to live in the Santa Marta residence, where many different people live.

Pope Francis has asked priests to show mercy and apostolic courage in their ministry by keeping their doors open to everyone. He said the worst thing that could happen to the Church is what Fr. Henri de Lubac called spiritual "worldliness", which means,

"being self-centered". He urges people to read the *Catechism*, and to rediscover the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. Pope Francis makes it clear that if you follow Christ, you understand that "trampling upon a person's dignity is a serious sin."

Sister Maria Goretti embraced this ethos by recognizing that Pope Francis is "a man with a great love and respect for the poor: poor in material fact, poor in spirit, poor in any way." By his example, Sister Maria Goretti was inspired to create a project of 5,000 Works of Mercy to be completed by the school between the Feast of St. Joseph on March 19 and May 1, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker. Each student/faculty member would perform at least ten spiritual or corporal works of mercy in groups or individually. The students recorded their works on individual sheets.

There was a lot of excitement when students assembled as a community to celebrate the Mass of Inauguration on March 19, 2013. The Inauguration Mass was discussed and the students viewed a video about Pope Francis' life, prepared by Technology Teacher, Mr. Benjamin Wage. Two students, Samantha ("Sam") Carley and Juan Pablo (J.P.) Chavez,

were chosen to record a message with the school for the Holy Father to encourage him, offer him the students' prayers, and—since he is a man with a great love for the poor—offer him 5,000 Works of Mercy. In his first homily to the Cardinal Electors the day after his election, Pope Francis said that "we must have the courage to walk, build, and profess Christ crucified." Students were arranged by grade level in the Hall and in turn, they would stand with large, handmade props and say their part inspired by Pope Francis' quote. Grades Pre-K through 2 said together as a class: "We will walk in the light of the Lord."; the middle school said "We will build the Church on living stones!"; grades 3 through 5 said "We will profess the one glory, Christ crucified." The school also had several opportunities for loud, exuberant cheers of, "Viva il Papa!" The School Hall was awash in the thrill of welcoming a new pope and a desire to take up his challenge.

Everyone in the school prayed a decade of the rosary during morning prayers to complete the first spiritual work of mercy, praying for the living and the dead. A school-wide food drive was also begun to feed



“...if you follow Christ, you understand that ‘trampling upon a person’s dignity is a serious sin.’”

the hungry by stocking the food pantry at the OLA Conference Saint Vincent de Paul. Students in every grade brought in food, took it to the food pantry and helped to unload it. As it had been recently re-opened, students were happy to augment the food supplies at OLA Conference Saint Vincent de Paul for the local poor in need. Teachers then directed other works of mercy in their classrooms and encouraged students to find ways that they could perform a work of mercy in their everyday lives.

Sister Maria Goretti said, “It really is a sort of mindset: to look for opportunities to serve others.” Teachers were asked to explore all of the works of mercy with the students and encourage students to be people of service to others. The diversity of each work of mercy completed by students and the expression of love for others was touching. One second grader related how her mother’s ancestral



home was destroyed in a fire and her mother was crying. She hugged her mother and comforted her in her sorrow. This was an example of how easily a small act of mercy could be done with such a meaningful impact.

A video of our second grader was the first to be uploaded to a new “5,000 Works of Mercy” Facebook page that was created to

Top left: Cardinal electors for the papal conclave in 2013 assigned to Aquinas students, faculty and staff

Top center: Deacon Moore offering a blessing over the St. Joseph’s Table

Top right: A sample of student donations for our first food collection to the OLA Conference Saint Vincent de Paul food pantry

Bottom: St. Joseph’s Table with donations to Birthright of Woodbridge



“ Creativity and compassion blossomed in the ever-expanding list of the various works of mercy completed by the school.”

document the school's efforts and to serve as inspiration for others. “We also invite others to join us in following our Holy Father's lead and professing Christ by performing works of mercy in service to our neighbors,” says the Facebook information section about the page. The 5,000 Works of Mercy page became a rich source of works performed by the students in video, pictures and text. The Facebook posts were also linked to the school's Twitter account, so that many followers could enjoy the school's progress towards its goal. The school accumulated many diverse followers, including an orphanage in India and a nun who reviews media in California. The format of the video was usually a reminder that the students were doing 5,000 Works of Mercy for the pope and then they would explain their work of mercy. Viewers were always issued a challenge at the end of each video; students would say, “that's OUR work of mercy, what are YOU going to do?” One follower responded to

the challenge and noted that she donated clothing to the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America to enrich the quality of life for individuals with multiple sclerosis, as her act of mercy.

Creativity and compassion blossomed in the ever-expanding list of the various works of mercy completed by the school. Kindergarteners transplanted flowering plants in decorated cans for a local assisted living facility. The afternoon pick-up lines at school were surprised one day with a lemonade stand and treats for sale by the third grade students. Proceeds from the sale were donated to CHD (Congenital Heart Defect) Research. First grade students proudly decorated brown paper bags to hold a lunch for the local day laborers, in feeding the hungry. They wrote “Que Dios los bendiga!” (May God bless you!) on the bags. The bags were then filled with a simple lunch and delivered to local laborers by their teacher. Third graders also made baby blankets for

Top, left: Mrs. Jacobeen and Mrs. Ranieri help the 1A students assemble lunches for local day laborers

Top, right: Student Council members deliver food and clothing donations to the Hilda M. Barg Homeless Prevention Center

Bottom: Fifth grade students assembled necessity care items in decorated shoeboxes for distribution through the United Way to the homeless, veterans and disaffected youth

Corporal works of mercy:

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

Spiritual works of mercy:

- Admonish the sinner
- Instruct the ignorant
- Counsel the doubtful
- Comfort the sorrowful
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Forgive all injuries
- Pray for the living and the dead

**“ Now, those are many of
St. Thomas Aquinas
Regional School’s 5,000
Works of Mercy... what
are YOU going to do?”**

Joseph’s feast day. Wealthy families would invite the less fortunate people of the village, especially the homeless and sick, to share in their buffet. This year, the celebration was moved to the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, and the whole school participated with the fourth grade hosts in celebrating the completion of over 5,000 works of mercy! Deacon Moore did the blessing of the St. Joseph’s Table and the students presented stacks of their works on paper in a basket. The fourth grade also collected numerous baby items that were donated to Birthright of Woodbridge and included it in the bounty of the St. Joseph’s Table.

a hospital NICU/PICU. Fifth grade students assembled shoeboxes filled with basic necessity care items (soap, toothbrush, etc.) for the homeless, veterans and disaffected youth. Sixth and seventh grade students made rosaries and rosary booklets for the imprisoned explaining how to pray the rosary. Sixth graders also put on a play about St. Joseph for the kindergarten classes and they collected more clothing, food and toys for the local homeless prevention center. The eighth grade students tackled a more problematic work of mercy: counseling the doubtful. In particular, they wanted to respond to a currently popular belief of those who say they are “spiritual but not religious.” They chose the unique format of creating rap lyrics which contained their points. A few students even obliged by providing beatboxing with the rap lyrics, when the students performed them for the class.

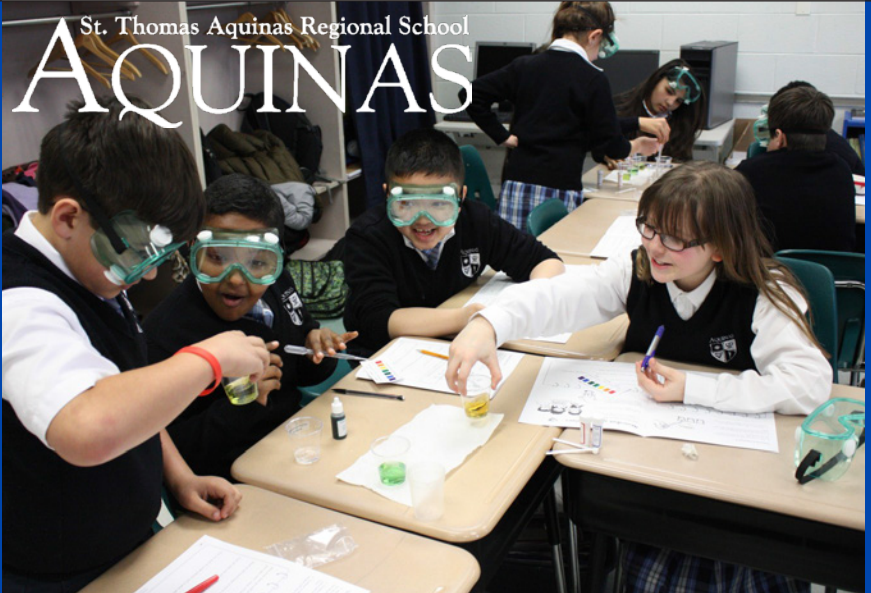
In the past, the fourth grade classes celebrated a St. Joseph’s Table, in recognition of the Italian tradition. During a famine in Sicily many centuries ago, people prayed to St. Joseph and asked for his intercession. Their prayers were answered. A special feast of


thanksgiving was held in commemoration of St. Joseph to celebrate the end of the famine. Certain foods, such as fava beans and fruit bread, became traditional menu items on St.

Now, those are many of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School’s 5,000 Works of Mercy... what are YOU going to do?

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School

AQUINAS






A Dominican Pre-K through Eighth Grade Blue Ribbon School of Excellence
dedicated to providing a love of God and a foundation in the truth.

Upcoming Open House Dates: November 19 and January 28

13750 Mary’s Way, Woodbridge, VA 22191 ~ 703.491.4447 ~ www.aquinastars.org





SUNNY DAY, SWEEPING THE CLOUDS AWAY WITH WEATHERBUG



St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School became the newest member of the WeatherBug® station schools network on February 27, 2013, when the school held a “go-live” celebration with ABC7 former lead meteorologist, Bob Ryan. WeatherBug is the leading provider of consumer and professional weather products and services and it is the operator of the largest weather observing and lightning network. The school installed a new WeatherBug weather station including a 360° high-definition camera, lightning sensor and web-based educational software tools. “We are excited to be bringing a WeatherBug weather station to our school because it will help bring science to life for our students,” said former Principal Sister Maria Goretti.

The weather system measures and records numerous aspects of the weather, including: current temperature, wind speed, direction and average wind speed, wind chill, humidity, dew point and barometric pressure. It notes the times of the sunrise, sunset and moon phase, and rain measurements in one day and over the course of a month. Weather data is instantly plotted on a graph and variables can be changed to isolate specific weather data. The seven day and hourly forecasts are listed, a Doppler map can be animated to show recent changes, and most importantly, our high-definition camera shows the weather at the school without going outside! Parents, faculty and students are able to access the school’s camera image any time of day to



“It’s a great way of learning how science works. It shows students—you make an observation, go outside and each day make different observations and then you can try to make predictions and learn about these observations. ... It’s a way of actually taking the application of what you see to learn a little bit more about science.”



check the weather. Our weather station is able to provide weather data in real time for the meteorological teams at ABC7/WJLA-TV, news stations across the country, broadcast online and on-air. Aquinas has been featured many times as a neighborhood report on daily newscasts on-air and online. The WeatherBug system was purchased through the Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) program and faculty members are able to access the information for integration into their curriculum. Our STEM Coordinator, Kathleen Walsh, told the Arlington Catholic Herald, “A website like this is just a plethora of information for these students.”

The “go-live” celebration was the culmination of not only the physical installation of the weather system and its online debut in front of the school but also the incredible efforts of the faculty and students to decorate the entire school in weather themes. Our special guest, Bob Ryan, and Renee White from the Office of Catholic Schools judged who would win an out of uniform day with their weather display. There was a sunny theme in the lower grades first floor hallway complete with students wearing sun-shaped sunglasses,

yellow balloon creations, student artwork and even a canoe. On the second floor of the elementary wing, it was so windy that some students were “blown” down the hallway. At the end of the hallway was a large tornado and even “Dorothy” from the *Wizard of Oz*. The middle school provided a soundtrack to the darkened, stormy hallway by drumming on their desks. The Fine Arts wing had numerous snowy decorations, eighth graders created a large picture of Bob Ryan and dressed his likeness in winter clothes and our Pre-K class greeted Bob Ryan all dressed as penguins. In the end, the entire school enjoyed either an out of uniform day or a spirit wear day for their efforts.

Sister Maria Goretti introduced the special guest and told the students, faculty, parents and guests that “Bob Ryan has been a broadcast meteorologist for more than 30 years.” She mentioned his love of science and research and noted that he has a physics degree and a Master’s of Science degree in Atmospheric Science. He was also one of the developers of the WeatherBug system used in schools and has helped introduced many students to his field.

Our students greeted Bob Ryan with thunderous applause and loud cheering when he arrived in the School Hall. Bob spoke to our students about how he enjoyed meteorology as a student and went on to make his career in it. He told the Arlington Catholic Herald, “It’s a great way of learning how science works. It shows students—you make an observation, go outside and each day make different observations and then you can try to make predictions and learn about these observations. ... It’s a way of actually taking the application of what you see to learn a little bit more about science.” Bob took questions from the students and when asked, he admitted that his favorite type of weather was snow.

The school then counted down to zero and the live weather data from the Aquinas WeatherBug appeared on the large projector screen in the school Hall. At the same time, lots of balloons were dropped from the ceiling for the students to play in. Before the assembly, the school enjoyed weather-themed snacks of Sun Chips and water and received WeatherBug pencils. Renee White said, “Aquinas really knows how to throw a party!”

PROFILE ON SISTER MARTHA ANN TITUS, O.P., OUR NEW PRINCIPAL



“When things seem to be going well, the Lord sends you out to do different work in His vineyard,” Sister Martha Ann noted. She was assigned to be a principal. Sister Martha Ann was the principal at St. John Vianney for three years and at St. Joseph School for four years. Now, the Lord has asked her to serve at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, “to learn from this community and for us to work together in fulfilling all the Lord has planned in His Divine Providence.”

Sister Martha Ann Titus, O.P. is from a small town in the heart of America where she had a tranquil childhood and grew in her faith. She was born in Lebanon, Indiana, close to Indianapolis. Her parents owned a bakery and she went to kindergarten at Harney Elementary School. Her family then moved to Frankfort, Indiana. Sister Martha Ann attended St. Mary's Catholic School. She really liked St. Mary's Catholic School because it was small. Two grades shared a classroom. The children were taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph. St. Mary's closed after fifth grade and she attended public schools from sixth grade through college.

Sister Martha Ann has a brother, Mark, and two sisters. They all grew up in a small town with a population of about 17,000. She lived in a safe neighborhood where they could play outside until dark, during the summer with the neighborhood children. She enjoyed the change of seasons, especially the beautiful colors of the maple trees that lined their street and the blizzards that resulted in a snow day from school! They swam at the large park pool in the summer where they only paid fifty cents for the whole afternoon. They sometimes stopped at the “Milky Way,” a local ice cream place, to cool off with ice cream.

Her mother was a very devout Catholic. She invited her children to pray the rosary with her. Sister Martha Ann's father traveled for his work and he listened and prayed the rosary from a cassette recording he had made. They always went to church together on Sundays. Sometimes, they went for a car ride in the country on Sunday afternoons. They would visit friends or stop at the “Milky Way.” That was a treat for her family. “Life was simple,” says Sister Martha Ann.

She believes her vocation came from her mother's prayers. Her mom always prayed that her children would be what God wanted them to be. After her father's sudden death when she was twenty, they stayed close as a family. She credits her brother for keeping the family together. She and her siblings all went to college. Her sister, Sister Mary Catherine, entered the Congregation of St. Cecilia first. They would come down and visit her as often as they could. Her younger sister, Sister Mary Rita, entered three years later. At the time, Sister Martha Ann was taking care of her mother because of her declining health.

She remembers praying to the Lord in front of the Blessed Sacrament to go to college. She had felt a tug to enter religious life, but she asked Him to go to college to fulfill her calling to be a teacher. When she finished college, she asked Him to get a teaching position. While she enjoyed teaching, Sister Martha Ann still did not feel content. There was still a sense that there was something more that He wanted from her. The Lord continually sought her out. To respond, she turned to prayer. She remembers driving home for lunch each day from her fourth grade teaching position and stopping to make a visit before the Blessed Sacrament. She would pray for a few minutes and then, she would go back to school. At this point in time, both of her sisters had entered the order. She felt a great joy every time that her family would visit her sisters and her friends would say that they thought she was going to enter. So, after making a few retreats, she asked for papers to enter The Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. The novice mistress at this time told Sister Martha Ann, “maybe you are looking for the perfect man and His name is Jesus.” In reflecting on her vocation, Sister Martha Ann says,

God is so good that He does not give up on us. Finding Him and fulfillment in His will is the peace and contentment that He gives as a gift. Following Our Lord includes the cross, and when I accept it with joy, I find His peace. Five years after my youngest sister entered, I entered in 1993. Everything always falls into place so easily when I do what the Lord asks. It is so easy once we discover that.

Sister Martha Ann goes on to explain that, “our religious formation at St. Cecilia really prepares us to receive our vows and answer yes to God. I learned to pray in a way that my love for our Lord and dependence on Him has grown.” She made final vows in the year 2000.

Sister Martha Ann made her final vows during a pilgrimage that their Mother General had planned for everyone in their Community. Their pilgrimage followed in the footsteps of St. Dominic de Guzman through Spain, France, and Italy. It was a graced filled time for each Sister. The December before this pilgrimage, Sister Martha Ann’s mother passed away. She had just come through a difficult and exhausting time. The pilgrimage helped her to focus on the heritage of the Congregation of St. Cecilia. She has so many good memories of this pilgrimage. She especially loved visiting Caleruega, Spain, and taking time in quiet at the Guzman Tower where St. Dominic’s family lived and grew up. Santa Sabina in Italy will also be special because it is where they renewed their vows. They prostrated in the exact place that St. Dominic prostrated himself. Sister Martha Ann says, “there are many gifts in being a religious in the Congregation of St. Cecilia and one gift is giving one’s life in obedience, poverty, and chastity. Humble submission and obedience helps me to strive to give my life to the Lord selflessly. Formation is a lifetime and there is the opportunity for holiness each day.”

She has been in education for twenty-eight years. She taught for ten years in an elementary school before entering her community. Her first assignment was at Overbrook School where she taught religion to fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.



The next year, she served at St. Henry teaching fifth grade for two years. She moved on to Memphis at St. Paul’s and taught sixth grade. Her next assignment was teaching fifth grade at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Newport News, Virginia, where she stayed for two years. The Lord then asked her to be an instructor in the teacher education program at Aquinas College. She taught there for five years. Sister Martha Ann said excitedly that, “it was a gift to work with many of our young Sisters in education. My greatest delight was seeing the students’ creativity and the excellence in which they strove to embrace the vocation of teaching.”

“When things seem to be going well, the Lord sends you out to do different work in His vineyard,” Sister Martha Ann noted. She was assigned to be a principal. Sister Martha Ann was the principal at St. John Vianney for three years and at St. Joseph School for four years. Now, the Lord has asked her to serve at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School, “to learn from this community and for us to work together in fulfilling all the Lord has planned in His Divine Providence.”

She feels that the greatest part of being an administrator is working with a dynamic faculty

and staff, wonderful children and their families. She said that a school is like a family where everyone looks for the good in each other and strives to see Christ in everyone. In being an administrator, she is most surprised to see how the Lord works through each person. She says, “we all are not our best selves at times, but He gives us the wisdom and strength to be there for each other, to build each other up, and to work out differences. Holiness is to be lived out each moment of the day.”

Already, Sister Martha Ann can see that Aquinas is similar to St. Joseph in that, it has the environment of a family. She knows that Jesus is there working through each person that He has brought to the school. The teachers and staff are dedicated to wanting the best for each child and they work to bring about the good in them. Aquinas has two classes in each grade, like St. Joseph School. The difference lies in the number of students and faculty/staff. Aquinas is much larger in both areas. Sister Martha Ann is looking forward to being a part of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School and working with the faculty and staff of which Sister Maria Goretti so fondly speaks.



UNDER THE SEA WITH DISNEY THE LITTLE MERMAID, JR.



There were plenty of fish in the sea at the Aquinas Middle School musical, Disney The Little Mermaid, Jr. on March 22–23, 2013. Over 100 students participated as cast or crew members and often played more than one role. “There is so much excitement about our spring musical,” said former Principal Sister Maria Goretti. The show proved to be one of the school’s most adventurous musicals to date.

Several of the major characters, including Ariel, Ursula, Scuttle, Flounder and Sebastian, were double-cast so the

audience could experience different shows each night. The school’s music teacher, Lillian Riley, took on the monumental task of bringing mermaid Ariel’s world to life, with assistance from Sister Maria Goretti, and choreography by Sister Christiana. The Aquinas Parent Teacher Organization and many parent volunteers worked tireless hours on the production, from building a real, wooden boat to making numerous costumes. Mrs. Reilly commented that she was known for big productions but said that she “might have met her match” in costumes made by middle school parent, Karen



“I was impressed with the size of the production and the quality of the show.”

Bow, and other volunteers. One middle school student also assisted in animating a costume; Ursula's cloth tentacles would move as if in water by a mechanical device. Aquinas art teacher, Suzanne Blair, painted many of the beautiful sets.

The show was completely sold out both nights and enchanted young patrons, family and friends alike. A pre-school student was thrilled to meet Ariel in person at the show,

when celebrating her birthday at the Friday show. “I was impressed with the size of the production and the quality of the show,” said Justin Youtz, who handled the lighting and sound, with several Pope John Paul the Great Catholic High School students and a team of Aquinas students on the crew. The show was visually stunning and the cast did a wonderful job in performing the beloved songs and story!



GIRLS' SOCCER

The season started with an enthusiastic group of girls with a wide range of soccer skills. Our first game was against one of the strongest teams this year, Linton Hall. I usually have the girls play in different positions than they are used to, in order to let them see a different point of view during the game. This game gave us a few problems but the girls rallied and we got a draw in the end.

After that, we made a few changes and the girls found a rhythm that gelled as we moved forward. The core of the team was based on a strong centerline from the back to the front. Our **goalkeeper**, Stephania Penalosa, developed as the season progressed and she saved the best for last. Playing in front of Stephania were two strong, central defenders, Kalli Perroots and Molly Metzler.

By the end of the season, they both made some good, strong runs from defense to pressure the offense. Maya Winder and Peyton Boyd learned to cover to the middle, as opposed to chasing the ball, and allow opportunities to flow.

In midfield, we had the powerhouse of Kaitlyn Cox and Megan Arata. These two have played together before, so the focus this year was to support each other and share the load, while supporting defense and offense. In the front line, Laura Wenzel was given free rein in the front to make and take opportunities as they arose. She was supported by Alex London who has a great will to compete and always gives her all on the field.

The rest of the players, while not in central roles, were one of the main reasons we were

so strong this year. Naomi Adefris, Sophie Davis, Eleni Tsiamis, Alina Berzins, Caroline Bennis, Kyler Knapp, Kaylani Lee-Green, and Selena Dagdagan were all utility players who played any position to the best of their ability. Our players showed their strength and skill in helping this team to maintain its unbeaten record this season.

We also won the championship at Linton Hall. In the final game, we had a tough first half likely due to overconfidence. After our team talk at half time, we came back in the second half. Kaitlyn scored first and then Laura, Kaitlyn and Naomi each made goals in succession. It was a fitting end to a hard won season. Next year will be my last year coaching at Aquinas and I am looking forward to seeing you all one more time!—*Coach Thomas Dent*



BASEBALL

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Baseball wrapped up a remarkable campaign this season by winning their final game against Manassas Christian School. Led by the strong pitching staff of: Nik Tsiamis, Sean Dumais, DJ Palmer and Michael Kosar, the Crusaders finished the season with a total of six victories and a single loss. The key moment in the season was a solid opening day victory against the perennial baseball powerhouse, Flint Hill School. Our players proved they were the team to watch in winning against Flint Hill School, 7 to 1.

With plenty of talent returning next season with DJ Palmer (rising 8th grader), Michael Kosar (rising 7th grader), and Noah Reale (rising 6th grader), the future on the baseball diamond looks very bright for the Crusaders. I would like to sincerely congratulate all of the student-athletes for all their hard work and effort to make this season enjoyable, memorable and successful.—*Coach Donald Palmer*

SOFTBALL

St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School Crusaders Softball went undefeated all year! The girls worked very hard all season and it paid off in our games. A couple of our players even overcame injuries to continue playing. We will especially miss our eighth grade players: Katherine Mendell, Erin Wolstenholme, and Rachel Cole. They were this year's Aquinas Stars! The remaining, rising middle school players built up their fundamentals this season and I expect them to have another winning record next year. I have enjoyed coaching the girls this spring and sharing an exciting season with them!—*Coach Therese McMahon*

BOYS' LACROSSE

The boys' lacrosse team completed a successful season despite a final record of 0-2. Veteran players, such as Ryan Kelly, Andrew Tillotson, and Lincoln Jones, showed skill and leadership on the field. Younger players, including Alejandro



“I would like to sincerely congratulate all of the student-athletes for all their hard work and effort to make this season enjoyable, memorable and successful.”
—Coach Donald Palmer

Rodriguez and Noah Rymer, showed improvement and determination throughout the season. Despite two losses to Burgundy Farm Country Day School, the team made great strides in terms of individual skill and teamwork. Highlights of the season include Andrew Tillotson's effort at the faceoff X in the first game against Burgundy Farm, and Ryan Kelly's six goals in the second game. Even more so, the team's comeback effort in the second game showed their resilience and growth as lacrosse players.

At the end of the year party, the award for improvement went to Tommy Luizzo, and the award for sportsmanship went to JD Hurst.

Nick St. Amour and Wilson Stearns earned recognition for hustle and groundballs. While Ryan Kelly ultimately received MVP honors, the fortitude and selflessness shown by the team made 2013 a successful season for all of the Aquinas boys' lacrosse players!
 —Coach Connor Reilly

GIRLS' INSTRUCTIONAL LACROSSE

A great group of fourteen girls came out to learn the basics of lacrosse this spring. We spent time on our cradles, passes, catches, shots and ground ball pick-ups. The girls learned how to attack the goal with give and go teamwork, roll dodge to escape a defender, clear the ball after a goalie stop and defend the goal against all of these attacks. There were a lot of calisthenics mixed in to keep the girls in game-ready shape.

Our season culminated in one game versus the Prince William Lacrosse Club 7/8 B Team. The girls were nervous before beginning our game against this older and more experienced team but our opponents were



gracious and taught us a lot about the game including how it should look. We did not keep score but we are pretty sure that—with a little help from an understanding referee who wanted to be sure that the Crusaders got to experience an 8 meter penalty shot—we scored more often than they did!
 —Coach Jenny Coleman



SISTER AMATA CHRISTI TAKES HER FINAL VOWS

This page: Sr. Amata Christi with Mother Ann Marie, after signing her vows on the altar

Opposite page, top: Sr. Amata Christi, Sr. John Peter, Sr. Mary Lawrence, Sr. Mara Grace, Sr. Augusta, Sr. Michaela, Sr. Mary Gianna, Sr. Margaret Mary, Sr. Amelia, Sr. Janet Mary, and Sr. Nicholas Marie stand before the Bishop in the Cathedral Sanctuary

Opposite page, bottom left: The sisters with Bishop Harrington of Winona, Minnesota and Bishop Choby of Nashville, Tennessee, after the Mass of Profession

Among the eleven young women who made their perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia Congregation was our fifth grade faculty member, Sister Amata Christi Lippert, O.P. The Mass for the Rite of Perpetual Religious Profession was celebrated at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville, Tennessee on July 22, 2013. The celebrants were the Most Reverend David R. Choby, Bishop of Nashville, with the Most Reverend Bernard J. Harrington, Bishop Emeritus of Winona, Minnesota. Sr. Amata Christi's parents were in attendance to celebrate their daughter's profession of final vows. Our other fifth grade faculty member, Mr. Connor

Reilly, also traveled to Nashville to attend the celebration with his mother. The St. Cecilia Motherhouse is located in Nashville.

The Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia is dedicated to the apostolate of Catholic education. The community of 280 sisters serves in 32 schools throughout the United States, in addition to Aquinas. The Congregation has mission houses in Sydney, Australia, Vancouver, British Columbia, and Aberdeen, Scotland, where a former Aquinas faculty member, Sister Christiana, is currently on mission. The community recently opened a house of studies in Washington, DC, for the sisters who serve or study near our nation's capital.



SCIENCE OLYMPIAD



The 2013 Science Olympiad team from Aquinas with their proud coaches: Mrs. Mendell, Mrs. Glascock, Mrs. Walsh and Mr. Baum

Young scientists were hard at work at Aquinas preparing and participating in the Science Olympiad in March. The team had the best showing yet winning medals in five events: Road Scholar, Mouse Trap, Mission Possible, Rotor Egg Drop, and Rollercoaster.

This year, we had teams participating in many events. Students designed, built and tested a self-propelled car (Mousetrap). Others constructed an unpowered helicopter device which protected an egg from a 30 foot drop (Rotor Egg Drop). Students worked as teams to disassemble an item and write instructions that their teammate used to reconstruct the

item (Write It/Do It). Others studied new fields in meteorology. We even had our own CS/ team, who were given a scenario, a collection of evidence, and possible suspects which they then had to perform a series of tests using deductive reasoning to solve a crime (Crime Busters).

The students researched, studied, built, and prepared for their events all on their own time and under the supervision of our wonderful faculty which included Ms. Walsh, Mrs. Glascock, Mrs. Mendell, and Mr. Baum. Aquinas is very proud of our budding young scientists! We cannot wait to see next year's results.

1980'S

Julie Decowski McNulty ('81), has worked at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School for 21 years as the Director of the Extended Day Program and the Personnel Assistant. She is also a former P.E. teacher. Julie is married to Shawn McNulty, former teacher, Athletic Director, and Assistant Principal of St. Thomas Aquinas School. The McNultys have

nine children, (Aidan, Tess, Hannah, Mairin, Kiernan, Faith, Maeve, Killian, and Tallulah) all of whom have attended or will attend St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School.

Lt Col Dennis J. Wolstenholme ('85), held his retirement ceremony after 20 years of active duty service with the US Air Force July, 13, 2013. He served in many capacities

in the acquisition career field leading the development and testing of some of the nation's most advanced weapon systems, including the F-22. He is married to the former Kathleen Kiely of Gretna, NE and his children Erin, Brian, Joey, Claire, and Kyle all either attended or are currently attending St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School.



Base in Alabama as a ROTC cadet. He is studying Biochemistry at Villanova University.

Aidan McNulty ('07), works as a substitute teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School. He currently attends NVCC finishing his associate's degree and is working towards a Masters in Psychology. He was recently engaged to Rachael Moran.

Ashley Cox ('09) is attending Slippery Rock University where she is a goalkeeper for the soccer team and majoring in Athletic Training.

Tess McNulty ('09), who graduated with highest honors from Pope John Paul the Great in May, is attending the University of Mary Washington. She is seeking a Masters in Special Education. Tess also works at St Thomas Aquinas Regional School as an extended day staff member.

Patrick Kelly ('11), is a rising junior in the Woodbridge Senior High School's Center for the Fine and Performing Arts. This year,

Patrick was selected to attend the Virginia Governor's School at Radford University in the four week Vocal Performance Program. Patrick was also selected to participate with the Washington National Opera summer Institute.

Starting this fall, Patrick will be joining the Washington Choral Arts Society as one of their youngest members. He will be performing in multiple concert series at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Including Handel Messiah during the Christmas season.

Hannah McNulty ('11), is a rising junior at Pope John Paul the Great where she plays volleyball and basketball. She has also achieved honor roll status every quarter at John Paul.

Left: ROTC Cadet Thomas Ranieri ('07) returning from Field Training

Right: Ashley Cox, goalkeeper at Slippery Rock University, in the center middle with her team

2000'S

Matthew Demas, ('01), was married to Hannah Guthrie on October 7, 2012.

Brittany Demas ('03), received her degree of Master of Teaching in Elementary Education from Virginia Commonwealth University in May 2013.

Thomas Ranieri ('07), completed Field Training this summer at Maxwell Air Force

AQUINAS ALUMNI: HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2013 LIST OF COLLEGES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

U.S. Army
Albertus Magnus College
Boston College
 Christopher Newport University
Clemson University
College of William and Mary (2)
 East Carolina University
Franciscan University of Steubenville
 George Mason University (2)
 Hampton University
 James Madison University (2)
 Kings College
 Longwood University
Marywood University
Marymount University
Mount St. Mary's University
 Norwich University
 Old Dominion University
 Radford University
 Shenandoah University
 Shepherd University
 Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
 University of Colorado-Colorado Springs
University of Dallas
 University of Mary Washington
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
University of Michigan, School of Nursing
 University of Mount Union
 University of South Carolina-Columbia
University of Virginia (2)
 Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
 Virginia Wesleyan College
 West Virginia University/Honors College
 Wells College

* **Catholic**

* **Top 100 nationally ranked school**

SCHOLARSHIP TOTAL: \$789,335



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATING 8TH GRADE CLASS OF 2013

Patrick Barkett	James Gallagher	Joshua Smith	Nikolas Tsiamis
Enrique Botteri	Lincoln Jones	Miranda Smith	Francesca Victoria
Landon Boyd	George Kearns	Andrew Tillotson	Erin Wolstenholme
Genesis Chavez	Ryan Kelly	Brooke Tran	Jeff Yancoskie
Thomas Choe	Nathan Kolkmeier	David Treanor	Bernadette Zapiain
Rachel Cole	Nicole Lane		
Ryan Collins	Philip Mazzocoli		
David Corbett	Isaac McCann		
Joseph Costello	Alena McGuire		
Ethan Dagdagan	Mairin McNulty		
Samuel Davis	Katherine Mendell		
Mariana Delgado	Christina O'Farrell		
Jack Dent	Richard Pena		
Nora Devin	Brooke Pincus		
Kyle Dise	Sommer Powell		
Jason D'Silva	Roman Puglise		
Shawn Dumais	Brooke Puryear		
Cibone Everette	Edward Robledo		
Peter Fischer	Thomas Roder		
Liam Fitzgerald	Myles Sherman		

High Schools Attending:

Paul IV—5
 Bishop Ireton—2
 Bishop O'Connell—4
 Pope John Paul the Great—24
 Gonzaga—1
 Public—9



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THE WOLVES WISH THE CRUSADERS A GREAT NEW SCHOOL YEAR!



*Aquinas middle school students perform their sold out spring musical,
Disney The Little Mermaid, Jr. on the Pope John Paul the Great stage.*

JOIN US!

**Open House: Sunday, November 17, 2013
from 1–4 p.m. (presentation at 1:15 p.m).**



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13750 Mary's Way | Woodbridge, VA 22191



SAVE THE DATES

NOVEMBER
7, 8 & 11, 2013

Parent/Teacher Conferences

NOVEMBER 15, 2013

Race for Education

NOVEMBER 19, 2013

Fall Open House

DECEMBER 20, 2013

Advent Program

JANUARY 28, 2013

Winter Open House

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