

THE CRUSADER

A PUBLICATION OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS REGIONAL SCHOOL

SPRING/SUMMER 2017



Milestones of Faith



PLUS

**Middle School Musical: *The Lion King Jr.*
Baby Chicks Hatch at Aquinas**

LETTER FROM SISTER



“Young people of the third millennium must be a source of energy and leadership in our Church and our nation. Therefore, we must provide young people with an academically rigorous and doctrinally sound program of education and faith formation designed to strengthen their union with Christ and his Church.”

—Statement by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

DEAR FRIENDS OF AQUINAS,

As we look back and reflect on the 2016-2017 school year, we are mindful of the many graces and blessings that our Lord has graciously poured out on our school community this year. We started the year by welcoming over 100 new students and their families to the Aquinas family, as well as several new faculty and staff members. Throughout the year, our students have grown in knowledge, virtue, and holiness.

The Language Arts were a focus for our teachers and students this year and our teachers started the year with training in both guided reading strategies and the Excellence in Writing method. With the help of new strategies and activities, our students have made great strides in these areas, as evidenced by their many writing samples and their test scores--our 8th graders averaged scores higher than the diocesan averages in Reading and Language Arts and over 60% of our students reached their goals for growth on Scantron. To foster the formation of the whole child, additional extracurricular opportunities were offered, especially to involve some of our younger students. These included beginner and intermediate Chess Club, the Soccer Players Academy, and a Strings Program. Focusing specifically on the spiritual formation of our students, a Virtue All-Star Award was initiated to recognize and encourage the practice of virtue by our students. All of these offerings were added to the already manifold lessons, events, and extracurriculars that our students participate in each year, thus supporting their formation as intelligent and thoughtful young men and women of faith and virtue.

Evidence of the activity of the Holy Spirit here at Aquinas was clearly manifest in a particular way this year as we welcomed seven of our students (and one Aquinas parent!) into the Catholic Church. Over the summer, before the start of the 2016-2017 school year, one returning student came into the Church at a weekday Mass. At this year's Easter Vigil, two students and their mother came into the Church. Finally, at two separate all-school Masses, a total of four students received all three Sacraments of Initiation, giving witness to their faith before their families and school community. We hope that this is evidence of our fidelity to the Church and the call that we received to be “first and foremost [...] a place to encounter the living God, who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth (cf. *Spe salvi* 4)”.

Aquinas is proud of the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, and staff and we highlight a selection of these accomplishments in this edition of *The Crusader*. However, we know that none of this good could be achieved without the support and friendship of the parents and benefactors of Aquinas. We remain ever grateful for our partnership with you as we work together to lead our students to the fullness of humanity to which they are called. You remain in our daily prayers. May our gracious Lord richly bless you for your support to the mission of Catholic education through St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Kateri Rose Masters, O.P.
Principal

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School of Excellence**

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AQUINAS

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TEACHING WRITING: STRUCTURE AND STYLE

“In the Catholic school’s educational project there is no separation between time for learning and time for formation, between acquiring notions and growing in wisdom. The various school subjects do not present only knowledge to be attained, but also values to be acquired and truths to be discovered.” —*The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, #13*

In a world of digital technology, texting, and emojis, it seems that spelling, grammar, handwriting, and language skills in general, have gone out the proverbial window. With school systems and public opinion pushing technology and digital skills in schools, one might begin to wonder, “Why do we bother with Language Arts in school at all?” Great question! In fact, many public schools, having asked themselves this question, no longer teach handwriting or spelling or composition. When writing, emphasis is placed on creativity and ideas, while correctness in grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and word usage is ignored. We here at Aquinas believe that this is a great injustice to the developing minds and souls of our students, which need logic and order if they are to reach their full potential and achieve a creativity that expresses truth. For, “when originality and creativity are esteemed above all else, basic skills decrease and true artistic expression becomes impossible; however, when basic skills are taught in an appropriate and effective way, creativity flourishes” (Pudewa, 2013). That is why, during the 2016-2017 school year, a renewed emphasis was placed on the Language Arts and teachers and students of Aquinas began learning to write using the Institute for Excellence in Writing (IEW) method of writing.

The IEW program is entitled *Teaching Writing: Structure and Style*. Through this method, students learn just that—how to write with correct structure and with exceptional style. Foundational to this way of teaching is an understanding of the capabilities of young children when it comes to writing. Nine times

out of ten, when a student is struggling to begin a writing assignment, he will say it is because “I don’t know what to write about.” IEW introduces the writing process by giving the students a source text, a quality piece of writing that uses rich language but is at or just below the student’s reading level. The students then learn how to create a “Key Word Outline” from the text using only three words from each sentence. From the Key Word Outline (KWO), students *verbally* retell the passage using the key words. Students are not required or encouraged to strive for an exact retelling but are encouraged to use their own words. The next step in the process is to rewrite the passage, again, with emphasis on using one’s own words and the KWO as a guide. Public speaking is then worked in when the students stand up before their classmates to read their passages. This process of creating and writing from a KWO is the foundation of the IEW method. From this structural foundation, students take off learning to retell narrative stories, to write from pictures, to summarize a reference for research, and more. Thus, it is the KWO that provides the structure, but what about “style”?

Once students have mastered the KWO process, the IEW program introduces what are called “Stylistic Techniques”. There are two primary types of stylistic techniques that are introduced one at a time to the students, and once mastered, each technique is then required at least once in every paragraph that the student writes. “Dress-ups” and “sentence openers” are the two primary types of techniques that the students learn.

Dress-ups are words or phrases that add pizzazz to a sentence and may be found at various places in the sentence. Some are simple, such as a “strong verb” or a “quality adjective”, while others are a bit more advanced, such as an “-ly adverb” or a “clausal” dress-up. Sentence openers are stylistic ways of opening a sentence to add variety within a given paragraph. This tool is particularly valuable, as it is a well-known pitfall of young writers to craft every sentence using a simple subject-verb pattern. While this is one of the sentence opener options, other options teach students how to begin a sentence with a preposition or an adverb or an -ing word or a clause. At this point, you may be thinking that this method of teaching writing lends itself to an authentic way of learning grammar within the writing process, and you would be right. An added bonus!

All of the above are simply steps in the process of teaching students how to prepare and present an excellent piece of writing. Opportunities for individualizing work and providing enrichment are built into this process, enabling students to achieve their unique potential. Although this was the first year that the entire school was trained in and used the IEW process, teachers have already begun to see a difference in the quality of students’ writing and in their ability to write with style and creativity. This can only continue to improve with the gift of time and repetition. We look forward to seeing how our students grow and improve in their written expression in the years ahead!



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS
OF PROVIDING A QUALITY
CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

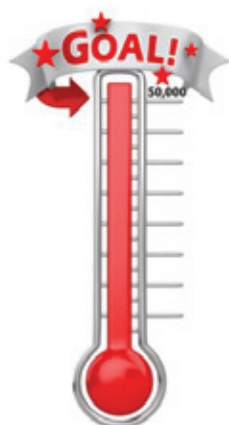
PLEASE PLAN TO JOIN US AS WE
CELEBRATE OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY:

Fall Festival—October 13

Advent Program—December 20

Auction and Dinner—February 24

Race for Education—March 16



THANK YOU!

Through the generous support of our
benefactors, we have exceeded our
2016–17 Annual Appeal goal!



Second grade is an important sacramental year. Forty-two of our second graders received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion for the first time this year!

SACRAMENTS AT AQUINAS

This year, Aquinas celebrated with seven of our students who became members of the Catholic Church. Each of these courageous students made a personal decision to accept all that the Catholic Church teaches and to follow Christ more closely by becoming Catholic. Most of these students received all three sacraments of initiation in one ceremony during an all school Mass. Congratulations to Jordyn, Jonathan, Amaya, Andrew, Anika, Jacob, and Abby!





GALE DATABASE

Remember when writing a research paper meant spending hours in the library scouring books or microfilm for useful information? The process was exhausting and if you didn't know exactly what you were looking for, it was like finding a needle in a haystack. Today, information is just a click away and can be accessed from almost anywhere at any time. Yet the same problem exists and in some ways, it is even more daunting to find the right material given the seemingly endless volume of data available on the web. The amount of information is overwhelming and is, in many cases, unreliable or inappropriate.

We realize students will conduct most of their research electronically and want them to be effective and ethical users of information. To help them succeed, it's important they have access to tools that allow them to locate authoritative and age-

appropriate material. The Library of Virginia, in partnership with Google and Gale Cengage (an education publishing company), provides school libraries free access to an array of electronic databases that would normally cost thousands of dollars annually. Mrs. Beda, our librarian, attended a workshop on using these databases and then worked with a representative from Gale to set up the databases on our network. She trained teachers on using them and students were shown how to use Kids InfoBits, National Geographic Kids, and Research in Context.

Current, appropriate, and valid information from biographies, news and magazine articles, primary sources, and in some cases, whole books is available. Content is arranged by grade level allowing students to limit their searches to material they can read and understand. There is also a language translation and audio option. Information

in articles can be highlighted and students can take notes to email or download for later use. All articles contain source citation information allowing students to easily create bibliographies or Works Cited pages.

Throughout the year, teachers collaborated with Mr. Wage, our technology teacher, for their classes to use the databases during computer class to research geography, countries, animals, and the United States for class projects. Students used information and photographs to create PowerPoint presentations and for written reports.

The databases are available on all school computers but can also be accessed at home through the library webpage, available through the Student Life tab or Teacher Pages, Mrs. Beda on the Aquinas homepage. There are over thirty databases for teachers and parents available if you click on the "Aquinas Link to Gale Database".

PTO NEWS

SILENT AUCTION

The PTO held our first online only Silent Auction. It was a great success raising almost \$6,000. Get ready—the full auction and dinner event is coming February of 2018!

FAREWELLS

We said farewell to the following PTO members:

- **Gene and Suzanne Shelling**—
Athletic Chairs
- **Mario and Charlotte D'Sa**—
Spiritual Life Chairs
- **Bill and Jeanne Moore**—Academic
Enrichment Chairs

Thank you to these wonderful couples for all their hard work in support of the school!

RAFFLE TICKETS

Make sure you purchase your tuition raffle tickets. Only 300 tickets will be sold. The lucky winner of this raffle will receive \$5,000 towards their 2017–18 school tuition. Tickets are \$100 each and will be sold in the school office and at the Back to School nights in September. The drawing will be on September 13th. You do not need to be present to win. See the school website (aquinastars.org) for more information.

SPIRIT NIGHT AT DC UNITED

On September 23, the PTO will host a school spirit night at DC United. Tickets will be sold in the school office and are only \$25! This is an awesome deal for a professional soccer game. All seats are in section 113 which is right on the sidelines (check out the stadium map on the DC United website). Fifteen lucky students will have the opportunity to participate in the team tunnel; we will draw names to determine the winners. Plan to join us for this fun night!



RACE FOR EDUCATION

The Aquinas PTO hosted the 7th Race for Education this April. Students walked and/or jogged around the track for one hour; at the end of the day the Aquinas student body had walked over 639 miles—the equivalent of walking from our school to the Motherhouse in Nashville, Tennessee! A big thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who supported this event.

Through to the hard work of our students and their families and the generosity of our sponsors, the Race was very successful. After expenses, we netted over \$21,000. We were pleased this year to be able to offer our families a second fundraising option in addition to the traditional labels and mailers. Through our online donation platform, we added crowdfunding providing families the opportunity to customize an online page and reach out to potential sponsors via email and social media. We were excited to see that over 40% of the funds raised were donated online.



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Aquinas joined Catholic schools across the US celebrating Catholic Schools Week. Highlights included the annual faculty vs. students basketball game and All American day. The week culminated with the Youth Rally. Our students celebrated their faith with a day of praise and adoration.



LION KING, JR

The curtain closed on our Middle School musical to rousing applause from an exuberant audience. Students wowed the crowd with their outstanding performance of the “Lion King, Jr.”! Three shows were held—Friday night, Saturday afternoon, and Saturday evening and attendance at all three exceeded expectations.

The highlight of this year’s show was the phenomenal costuming. Sister Kateri Rose explained that the biggest challenge of producing the “Lion King Jr.” is the costuming. Well, our Aquinas team really came through! Incredible masks for Scar, Mufasa, Simba, Sarabi, and Pumba were made by Brian E.W. McNulty of Sharkbyte Productions and our own, very talented, Sister Maria Faustina. Mr. McNulty also designed zebras, gazelles, and lionesses

along with an elephant, a rhinoceros, and a Zazu puppet. We certainly can’t forget Mrs. Riley in all this. She cut, pinned, sewed, painted, and taped more costumes than we can count creating beautiful birds and graceful grasslands just to name a couple! Along with our own wonderful group of talented individuals, we also benefitted from the generosity of St. Pius V School in Providence, Rhode Island (Sister Kateri Rose’s former school). They performed the “Lion King Jr.” last year and graciously shared their costumes with us. As all of these masks and costumes were being assembled, there was a short time before tech week when the Aquinas office began to resemble an African Savannah!

For months leading up to the performances, Mrs. Riley, Mrs. Weber, and Sister Kateri

Rose worked tirelessly with the cast and crew choreographing musical numbers, learning lines, and just in general preparing these talented students to take the stage. Each one of the three shows was unique, characteristic of live theatre, and was made more so by the double casting of many of the main roles. What fun to see both Audrey and Lindsay play Young Simba or both Mya and Moira play Pumba, each one personalizing the role to match their own style. Congratulations to all of our middle school thespians on a successful production!

We are excited to share that we have already selected next year’s spring musical. Our talented students will be heading to Cherry Tree Lane to perform “Mary Poppins” in the spring of 2018. It is sure to be a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious show!

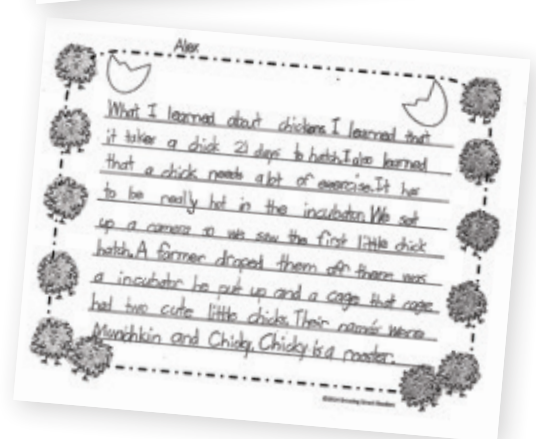
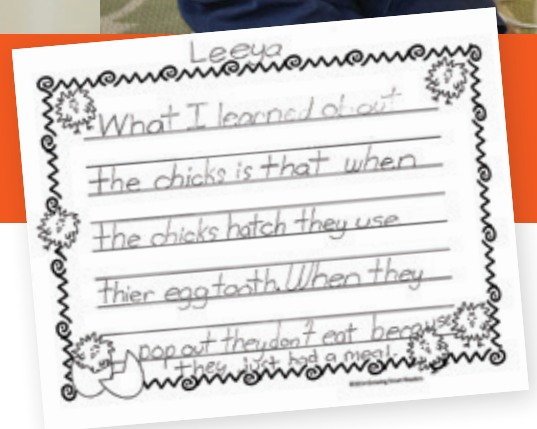




BABY CHICKS

Learning was alive this spring in 2nd grade! In order to enhance this grades' inquiry into animal life cycles, the two second grade classes were able to observe the very beginnings of a chicken's life. Starting in mid-April, the students eagerly anticipated the development of the baby chicks as they welcomed 7 farm eggs in their classroom. Over the following three weeks, the students were able to view the embryo of the chicks by using a candling light. This allowed the students to see the step by step growth occurring inside the eggs. The students learned about how each part of the chick's body grows, and how it is equipped with all it needs for growth while inside the egg. Anticipation rapidly mounted as the students

saw the first pip, or break in the shell of the first egg. In mid-May, the students were able to see the first chick break through and hatch via a live streaming link that the school's tech department created. Shortly after the first chick was hatched, it was followed by the birth of three other chicks. The students were surprised to see the different coloring of the chicks' feathers and to note the differences in behavior as the little chicks grew over the course of the next few days. The students thoroughly enjoyed this glimpse into animal life and gained much knowledge through this hands-on experience. Their wonder at the gift of life as seen in this tiny creature created by God was an awe-inspiring experience for all.





FUTURE CITIES

STARS students participated in the Mid-Atlantic FutureCity Regional (DE, DC, MD, & VA) competition in Baltimore, MD on January 21, 2017. This competition challenges students to imagine, research, design, and build cities of the future. We had a great showing bringing home the following prizes:

Most Futuristic Ground Transportation Plan—Faith M, Lauren B, Elyse L, Regina N, and Karina S

Most creative application of futuristic technology and scientific principles in the design, operation, and management of all modes of ground transportation that is safe, clean, efficient, sustainable and practical.

Best Utility—Sponsored by Advantage Engineers—Garrett V, James C, Kiduse G, David L, and Rafael V

Best use of innovative systems in the overall transportation infrastructure to promote both mobility and transport of goods and services for a community

Most outstanding SimCity Slideshow—Faith M, Lauren B, Elyse L, Regina N, and Karina S

Awarded to the team with the best score in slideshow presentation

Each of our groups was given a "School Spirit" award including two of our 7th graders Christian X and Michael C.

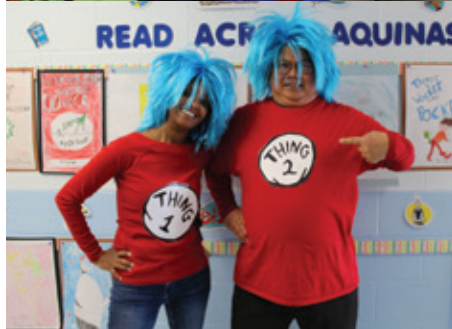


PRO-LIFE MARCH

On January 27th, our 8th graders walked with an estimated 800,000 pro-life marchers in Washington DC praying and sacrificing for an increased respect for the gift and dignity of all human life.

READ ACROSS AQUINAS

Aquinas celebrated Dr. Suess' birthday with a day of reading. Parent volunteers came in and read to the students. Students got to dress up as their favorite book character—even some of the parents came in costume! We finished the day with a special presentation sponsored by the PTO featuring Jeanne Pettenati. Dressed in period costume, Ms. Pettenati presented a program for students on Galileo's Catholic Faith, Science, & The Renaissance.



NEW YORK CITY TRIP

The 8th graders enjoyed a fantastic day in NYC, beginning with Mass at St. Patrick's! After dinner, they stopped in front of the Minsciff Theater to relive their Lion King memories, including a singing of Circle of Life and then saw Anastasia at the Broadhurst Theatre. It was a great day in the city!

DRESS-DOWN DAY!



Donate \$1.00 on
Thursday, May 25th
and you can wear
ORANGE
in honor of Colby
Smith whose
birthday is this
Thursday. He would
have been 13.



ALL DONATIONS GO TO COLBY'S RIDE!

COLBY'S RIDE

On May 25th we remembered our friend Colby Smith; this would have been his 13th birthday. Olivia Benton, a classmate of Colby's, helped coordinate a \$1 out of uniform day to raise money to donate to Colby's Ride. This charity, created in his memory, purchases bikes and helmets for children in need so they can participate in the activity he loved. The out of uniform day raised \$580, all of which was donated to Colby's Ride.



MAY CROWNING



KINGS DOMINION COASTER MANIA COMPETITION

For the 2nd year in a row, our STEM students participated in the Coaster Mania Team Competition at Kings Dominion as part of education days—a partnership between Kings Dominion and the MathScience Innovation Center of Richmond to bring classroom learning to life. Our students won three awards—2nd place overall roller coaster, 3rd place overall roller coaster, and most creative roller coaster.



NEW CITIZEN

Congratulations to Mrs. Jessica Hernandez, our receptionist, on becoming a U.S. citizen!



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

2nd and 3rd grade students went on a special field trip to see Beauty and the Beast performed by the talented students at St. John Paul the Great Catholic High School.

AQUINAS WINTER SPORTS IN REVIEW



BOYS JV BASKETBALL

Student Reporter: Marcus Ong

Coach: Mr. Crisp (Parent, Staff)

Highlights of the season: Our record was 4 and 4. We defeated St. William of York twice and Holy Family twice. We lost to Holy Cross twice, Linton Hall once, and St. Patrick once.

Biggest improvement: We really made progress on working together as a team.

Favorite moments: Going out and playing for our school, winning and losing as a team, all of our practices, high scoring games, and working hard together.

Graduating 8th grade team members:

David Londres, Anish Pothireddy, and Ashish Pothireddy

BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL

Student Reporter: Joey Wolstenholme

Coaches: Coach Winston (Parent)

From the Coach: "I really enjoyed coaching the boys' basketball team this year. They are a great group of young men. Thank you for the opportunity and good luck next year."

Highlights of the season: Winning the VCAC Championship in a decisive victory was the highlight of our season. Joey Wolstenholme won MVP honors. Congratulations Joey!

Biggest improvement: Sharing the ball and getting multiple people taking shots.

Favorite moments: Going 8-2 in the regular season.

Graduating 8th grade team members:

Ethan Eddy, Kiduse Gezehagne, Brandon McWherter, Dylan Sereno, Jonathan Taye, James Tillotson, and Joey Wolstenholme

CHEERLEADING

Student Reporter: Emma Burke

Coaches: Coach Collins (Parent, Staff)

Highlight of the season: Cheering at the Basketball Tournament

Biggest improvement: The girls went from having a simple routine that wasn't very clean to having a more advanced routine that they learned on their own and were able to perform well by the end of the season.

Favorite moments: Getting to spend time with the team and seeing the younger girls improve over the year.

GIRLS JV BASKETBALL

Student Reporter: Elizabeth Eckman

Coaches: Coach Eckman (Parent)

Highlights of the season: Working hard and having fun; learning to work together as a team.

Biggest improvement: Working together as a team.

Favorite moments: Running our plays correctly and smoothly resulting in points and congratulations from our coach.

GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL

Student Reporter: Jordyn Grandberry

Coaches: Coach Grandberry (Parent)

The girls had a great season coming in second place during the regular season. They went to the VCAC tournament where they brought home the second place trophy after a hard fought game that came down to a 2 point victory for Holy Cross. A big thank you to Coach Grandberry who has been coaching the girls' basketball team since his daughter was in the 2nd grade (7 years). We will continue to see Coach Grandberry as he has moved on to coach girls' basketball at St. John Paul the Great Catholic High School for his second year.

Highlights of the season: Beating the boys during a practice game!

Biggest improvement: Everyone working together as a team on shooting, passing, and dribbling to win games.

Favorite moments: Having the last team lunch before the tournament, Anastasia making a shot in the game, Alissa winning MVP at the tournament, Jordyn playing point guard for the first time.

Graduating 8th grade team members:

Gabrielle Brisbin, Jordyn Grandberry, Maya Lennon, Faith McNulty, Jenna Norko, Nina Stolmeier, and Alissa Turne.



AQUINAS SPRING SPORTS IN REVIEW

6TH GRADE TRACK

Student Reporters: Victoria Dichoso, Elizabeth Eckman, and Michele Togbe

Coaches: Coach Eckman (Parent)

Highlights of the season: The practices and improvements we all made when we worked together and practiced hard.

Biggest improvement: We learned how to throw the shot put and Coach Eckman taught us better running form.

Favorite moments: Experiencing our first district track meet at Bishop O'Connell High School.

practice when we were running relays it was very chaotic because we didn't quite know what was going on. By the end of the season though, we were running the relays smoothly.

Favorite moments: Playing sharks and minnows at the final track practice.

Graduating 8th grade team members:

James Choe, Jordyn Grandberry, Achim Koso-Thomas, Maya Lennon, William Riggs, Alex Saint-Victor, Karina Savidge, James Tillotson, and Rafael Villagomez.

Thanks to the Parents for your support of the baseball program and the players. Thanks for stepping in to help with coaching during the games and practices. A special thanks to Bernie Kotarski for being the Assistant Coach. Thanks, also, to Mrs Ferguson, Athletic Director, and Mrs Reale, Assistant Athletic Director, for their work to get us the games, playing fields, equipment and umpires and helping to give us a great baseball experience.

Lastly, a big thank you to Maria Burset, our Coordinator. Maria worked hard to keep us all informed. She worked particularly hard at arranging the carpools to get our players to and from practices and games. Thanks, Maria!

7TH AND 8TH GRADE TRACK

Student Reporter: Karina Savidge

Coaches: Coach Mulcahy

Highlights of the season: The boys relay team winning first place overall.

Biggest improvement: For some of the members on the team, it was their first time participating in track. For example, at the first

BOYS BASEBALL

Student Reporter: Alexander Saint Victor

Coaches: Coach Johnson (Grandparent) and Coach Kotarski (Parent)

From the Coach: Our players were fantastic this year and it was a pleasure being their coach. They played with a lot of enthusiasm and skill and I hope they continue with baseball as they move ahead in school.

Biggest improvement: We started the season with a number of new players and by the end they were playing like pros.

Favorite moments: Hitting balls at practice!

Graduating 8th grade team members:

Sean Carley, Christian Johnson, Alexander Saint-Victor, Dylan Sereno, James Tillotson, Raphael Villagomez, and Joey Wolstenholme

GIRLS SOCCER

Student Reporter: Deborah Zawolo

Coach: Mr. Rivas (Parent)

From the Team Parent, Mrs. Cherry-

France: On May 30, 2017, in Bristow, VA twenty plus young ladies coached by Walter Rivas won 3rd place in the soccer tournament. The Lady Crusaders' of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School were able to pull off a well-deserved victory. This team was very young at heart with several players playing for the first time. Even though this team struggled with winning, they discovered that TeamWork does make the DreamWork, but it is the inner determination of NOT giving up and believing in yourself and your team that results in success.

Games of sport that involve the skill and strength of the opponents and the humiliation of defeat and the pride of victory are in

themselves sufficient enough to define the struggle of a true athlete.

Well done Lady Crusaders....Well done.
Coach Cherry-France

Biggest improvement: Passing and communication

Favorite moments: Practices

Graduating 8th grade team members:

Gabrielle Brisbin, Jordyn Grandberry, Jenna Norko, Sophie Novitsky, and Deborah Zawolo

GIRLS SOFTBALL

Student Reporter: Natalie Sutton

Coaches: Mr. Sutton (Parent) and Mrs. Ferguson (Staff)

From the Coach: Despite a rain-shortened season, the girls' softball team had a productive and enjoyable experience. In the opening game, Aquinas defeated Alexandria

Country Day School 6-0, owing to outstanding pitching by Hannah Bassett, quality batting and base running, and a solid defensive effort. In the season finale, Aquinas suffered a hard-fought loss to its arch-rival Flint Hill 6-1, despite excellent pitching by Chloe Musman. Team practices were always energetic and the girls improved their batting and fielding techniques dramatically. Most importantly, everyone had fun and returning players are looking forward to an even more exciting season next year. Congratulations to all the team members!

Biggest improvement: The biggest improvement was teamwork and learning how to play. The new girls learned very quickly and even the older girls learned some new things.

Favorite moments: Everyone having fun at practice and putting their best effort forward.

Graduating 8th grade team members:

Sofia Quint, Quinlan Sinkhorn, Nina Stolmeier, and Natalie Sutton



- Administered and staffed by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia
- Daily faith formation and the instilling of virtues through our Virtues in Practice Program
- Cultivating a love for the Eucharist, Our Lady, and the Church
- A tradition of academic excellence meeting the needs of diverse learners through our regular, resource, and accelerated programs
- Largest middle school athletic program, an award-winning band and chorus, and extracurricular clubs

OPEN HOUSE DATES 🎵🎵

Thursday, November 16, 9:30 AM and 6:30 PM

Thursday, February 1, 9:30 AM and 6:30 PM

**RSVP: admissions@aquinastars.org
or call 703.491.4447 ext. 216**

A Dominican Pre-K through Eighth Grade Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

13750 Mary's Way, Woodbridge, VA 22191 | 703.491.4447 | www.aquinastars.org

*Fostering
a Love of God
and a Foundation
in Truth*



A smile is a window on
your face to show your
heart is at home.
—Unknown



Smiling is infectious,
You catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling, too.

I passed around the corner
And someone saw my grin
When he smiled I realized
I'd passed it on to him.

I thought about that smile
Then I realize its worth,
A single smile, just like mine
Could travel round the earth.

So, if you feel a smile begin,
Don't leave it undetected
Let's start an epidemic quick
And get the world infected.

—Unknown



AQUINAS ALUMNI HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2017 LIST OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES:

Belmont Abbey College
Carnegie Mellon University
Christendom College
Colgate University
Community College
George Mason University
James Madison University
LaSalle University
Marymount University
Missouri Tech
New York University
Northern VA
Shepherd University
Stanford University
University of Dallas
US Marine Corps
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Tech



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2017

High Schools Attending:

- 1-Bishop O'Connell Catholic High School
- 2-Gonzaga College High School
- 33-St. John Paul the Great Catholic High School
- 1-Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (Governor's School)
- 4-Other Private High Schools
- 13-Public High Schools

Lauren Bly	David Londres	Sean Carley	William Riggs
Daniel Bringas-Fonseca	Faith McNulty	Judah Carr	Alexander Rubio
Gabrielle Brisbin	Christopher Mendell	Lacey Feducia	Alexander Saint-Victor
James Choe	Griffin Mulcahy	Jordyn Grandberry	Karina Savidge
Kareem Dhillon	Jenna Norko	Troy Guo	Dylan Sereno
Ethan Eddy	Anish Pothireddy	Emma Madorma	Quinlan Sinkhorn
Kiduse Gezehagne	Eric Rivas	Brandon McWherter	Natalie Sutton
Christian Johnson	Raphael Rodriguez	Regina Nappo	Jonathan Taye
Harrison Kelly	Nina Stolmeier	Sophie Novitsky	Joshua Llido
Achim Koso-Thomas	Tennel Thoronka	Ashley Offenberg	Garrett Vowinkel
Elyse Lanquaye	James Tillotson	Leo Pavon	Joseph Wolstenholme
Maya Lennon	Alissa Turner	Ashish Pothireddy	Deborah Zawolo
Sarah Lewis	Rafael Villagomez	Sofia Quint	
	Kodie Wilkins	Erin Reilly	

AQUINAS & John Paul

BUILDING TRADITIONS TOGETHER



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 2017!

Patrick, Enrique, Thomas, David,
Joseph, Jason, Samuel, Nora, James,
Nicole, Mairin, Christina, Kyle, Brooke,
Myles, Joshua, Andrew, David,
Erin, and Bernadette!

WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2020!

Lauren, Daniel, Judah, James,
Kareem, Ethan, Lacey, Jordyn, Achim,
Joshua, David, Emma, Faith, Brandon,
Jenna, Erin, William, Eric, Raphael,
Alexander, Karina, Dylan, Natalie, Jonathan,
Tennel, James, Alissa, Rafael, Garrett,
Kodie, Joseph, and Deborah!



Join Us!

Fall Open House: Sunday, November 5, 2017



Please visit jpthegreat.org today!

Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School
17700 Dominican Drive, Dumfries 22026

703.445.0300 • Admissions@jpthegreat.org • 106.3FM WJPN (local)

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS



From left to right: Katherine Mendell, Brooke Tran, and Miranda Smith (not pictured is Jeff Yancoskie)

Congratulations to these Aquinas students who graduated from Bishop O'Connell High School this year:

Brooke Tran—Valedictorian—Stanford University
Miranda Smith—Colgate University
Katherine Mendell—New York University Tisch School of the Arts
Jeffry Yancoskie—Shepherd University

Congratulations to **James D. Gallagher, Aquinas 2013!** He earned an academic scholarship to the University of Dallas. James graduated from Saint John Paul the Great High School with Highest Honors on June 2nd; he will begin attending the University of Dallas this fall and plans to major in Biochemistry.

Alumni, do you have exciting news to share with our Aquinas community? Please email alumni@aquinastars.org and we will share your story in an upcoming issue of the Crusader.



From left to right:

Anna Davis—George Mason University, Communications
Clare Donohue—University of Michigan, Nursing
Emma Spadafore—James Madison University, Psychology with a minor in Spanish Criminology
Kelly Sabol—George Mason University, Communications

Anna Davis, Clare Donohue, Emma Spadafore, and Kelly Sabol are 2009 Aquinas graduates who have been dear friends since they were little girls. All four graduated from college this spring. Congratulations Ladies! Well done.



Thomas J. Liuzzo, III, a 2014 graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School and currently a rising Senior at St. John Paul the Great High School, attended the 2017 American Legion's Boys State of Virginia sponsored by the American Legion Post 364 from Woodbridge, Virginia. This event took place at Radford University during the week of June 18-24, 2017. Virginia Boys State is a non-partisan program hosted by The American Legion. Participants cultivate leadership skills, learn about state government and develop pride in American citizenship.

While attending Boys State, Tommy ran for office and was elected as a Delegate for the General Assembly at Boys State. He participated in drafting mock legislation for the State of Virginia as well as voting on other proposals.

Nearly 800 boys attend Boys State representing all parts of Virginia. Each year, two of the approximately 800 participants are chosen to be Senators to represent Virginia at Boys Nation and two are chosen as alternates. Tommy was fortunate enough to be selected as an alternate for Boys Nation, and as such, received a \$1,200 scholarship.

Tommy is scheduled to graduate St. John Paul the Great High School in 2018 and hopes to attend college to pursue a major in Cyber Security; he also is interested in a career in the Military.



FIELD DAY FUN!!

Bounce houses, water games, relays, a middle school dodgeball tournament, face painting, dancing, and treats. What a way to end the school year!



LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

I'm a little bit excited.

I'm a little bit sad.

I'm a little bit nervous.

I'm a little bit glad.

I'm a little bit older.

It's the end of the year.

I'll miss this class.

I'm glad I was here.

—Amy Ludwig Vanderwater



St. Thomas Aquinas Regional School admits students of any race, color, and national origin.



SAVE THE DATES

AUGUST 25

Meet and Greet at 1 PM

AUGUST 28

First Day of School Noon Dismissal

SEPTEMBER 6

Back to School Night—
Middle School 6 PM

SEPTEMBER 13

Back to School Night—
Elementary School 6 PM

SEPTEMBER 23

Aquinas Night at DC United

OCTOBER 13

Fall Festival

DECEMBER 20

Advent Program

AQUINASTARS.ORG