



May 16, 2019

Dear Families,

I hope that you had a wonderful weekend and week. As you know, the end of the year is full of activity. Someone gave me the heads up at the beginning of the year that May at SJB is a whirlwind, and now I totally understand what she was talking about. Please find a synopsis of some of our recent happenings.

First and foremost, thank you to our Parent Club and families for honoring and celebrating our teachers and staff last week with the fantastic surprise welcome message on the porch, darling SJB tumbler with gift card and packets to quench our thirst, treats, kind words and cards, and additions to the Nacho Ordinary Staff Nacho Bar. We are fortunate to partner with you and definitely felt appreciated.

Our fishing field trips were a huge success. All totaled during the week, a record high of 721 fish were caught and released. A huge thank you to Mrs. Norton for providing this unit of study and coordinating the field trips. Thank you to the following parents and families who served as chaperones for the 4th – 8th grade field trips: Sandy Cabrera, Colleen Kent, Liz Maslona, Brian Schwarting, Dan Smith, Nikki McCall, Gennetta Dawson, Mary Starmach, Erica Cabrera, Tony Zagotta, Kirsten Sidelnyk, Christie Baldner, Mari Positano, and Mike Momot.

Our eighth grade students were honored at the end of our All School Mass on Tuesday. They received their class ribbons which brings them one step closer to graduation and are highly symbolic as a representation of their spiritual, academic, and collective growth while students at St. John the Baptist Catholic School. The Baccalaureate Mass is on Thursday, May 23 at 7:50 AM in church, followed by the

Awards Breakfast and ceremony. Graduation takes place later that night at 7:00 PM in church. Please keep our eighth grade students in your prayers during their memorable last days at SJB!

One of the supplementary experiences we offer our students in Kindergarten through sixth grade is Junior Achievement. Junior Achievement, JA, is the world's largest organization which is dedicated to providing students from kindergarten through high school with knowledge and skills that they need to establish their own economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA is typically delivered by corporate, community, and parent volunteers and provides hands-on experiences in financial literacy. Thank you to our parents and parish volunteers for teaching the financial literacy lessons and making it such a great experience: John Weitz (3rd grade), Selena Emlen (4th grade), Susan Hagerty, parishioner (5th grade). Some of our teachers are or will be teaching the program in another grade this year. Thank you, Mrs. Gudanick, for working with our Junior Achievement representative and teachers to ensure that we continue offering this valuable program at SJB!

On Tuesday, Mr. Valenta and I had the privilege of joining Lily Gonzalez and Sadie Smith and their families for the BP Student Ideas Awards Ceremony at the Chicago Cultural Center. Rahm Emanuel spoke about the inception of his idea for the Architecture Biennial which partners with BP and offers the competition as a learning initiative. It asked students to respond to the following question: How would you transform a vacant or underused space in your community? It welcomed submissions that explored ideas about architecture and the built environment from a wide range of disciplines including design but also the humanities, visual and performing arts, and STEM fields. I am pleased to announce that Sadie and Lily were awarded Honorable Mention and each received a framed certificate, admission tickets to the Chicago Architecture Center, and one hundred dollars. Ninety-nine projects were submitted and thirteen were invited to the Awards Ceremony as the top and finalists. It should be noted that Sadie and Lily were the youngest recipients. Congratulations to both of them for their submission of their idea of creating a playground accessible for disabled children. Their poster will be framed and displayed in the school in the near future. They also received a congratulatory letter from Illinois House Representative Amy Grant who was unable to attend the ceremony. Thank you to Mr. Valenta for sponsoring our seventh graders in the project. We are so very proud of them and beyond proud of Sadie and Lily.

Yesterday, John Weitz, Rick Loechl (a parishioner and member of our Marketing Committee and Chair of the Parish Council) and I traveled to Springfield to participate in the help Save the Scholarship Campaign. The Diocese of Joliet's Catholic Schools Office asked each of the schools to take part in the effort. We had a full day of meeting and speaking with the legislators about how the Tax Credit Scholarship benefits our school and why it should be protected to ensure that there are no cuts in this year's budget bill. As you may know, this is the second of a

five year scholarship program and our governor has suggested phasing it out. Many thanks to John and Rick for their gifts of time (over 13 hours) and representing our school so well!

Today our fifth grade students graduated from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education, or D.A.R.E., Program. We were fortunate to have Sergeant Grimaldi here to present the certificates. D.A.R.E. is a police officer and teacher led series of classroom lessons over twelve weeks that teaches students how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives. We were fortunate to have Chief Schar and Officer McIntyre from the Winfield Police Department assist with the program. Congratulations to Page Bradley, Gianna DiGiovanni, Abby Goddard, Eliana Mains, Mia McCall, Sammy Moesch, Nora Newell, Gracie Perry, Sophia Resendez, and Delaney Starmach. Each wrote an essay demonstrating what they learned and pledging a drug free life. Eliana and Sammy were selected to read their essays at the graduation. Congratulations to all!

Today we also recognized students in fifth through seventh grade for their achievements on the following Catholic Math League Contest Tests:

Grade 5

1st place - Mia McCall

2nd place – Gianna DiGiovanni and Eliana Mains

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Grade 6

1st place – Elizabeth Weitz

2nd place – Christopher Momot

3rd place – Nathan Moesch

Grade 7 - Pre-Algebra

1st place – Lily Gonzalez

2nd place – Mia Gravina

3rd place – Natalie Doyle

HELP! CAN YOU SPARE A HOSTA OR TWO?

As you may recall, one of the stations for our upcoming FIELD DAY is on Thursday May 30: is SERVICE! One of the grades will be asked to plant a few plants around the SJB

grounds! Hopefully the weather will cooperate this week – it may turn out to be the perfect opportunity to divide your hostas, or any other perennials you may have in your yard! Leave your plant donations in the glass room of the Parish Office or bring to the School Office. Thank you!

Lastly, two special events are taking place this weekend. Our musical, *The Little Mermaid*, opens tomorrow night, Friday, May 17 at 7:00 PM at St. Francis High School's Kuhn Cultural Arts Center, 2130 W. Roosevelt Rd, Wheaton. Performances are also on Saturday at 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM. Tickets are still available and can be purchased at the door. Please join us, a real treat is in store for you! To our cast, break a leg! Please don't forget that tomorrow is an Under the Sea Dress down day for \$1.00. Proceeds benefit the play.

The championship meet for Track and Field is on Saturday, May 18, at Bolingbrook High School. Good luck to Page Bradley, Abby Goddard, Mia McCall, Gracie Perry, Sophia Resendez, Liz Weitz, Melanie Dawson, and Annia Blasi who qualified for the meet.

As you can see, the end of the year is filled with activity and abundant blessings. What a wonderful time of the year and time to be an SJB Wildcat! May you have a fabulous week!

With joy,

Joanne