

The Pelican

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Surgentes Simul Alis Fidei ac Rationis

The Monthly Newsletter of The Atonement Academy

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FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your recent chorus of confidence and support. *De gustibus non disputandum est.*

Open House Success and Awards

I want to congratulate all of the students, teachers, and parent volunteers who made our International Festival and Open House such a success. I've heard plenty of warm praise for everyone's efforts, as well as a few ideas of how we can improve this event next year.

Congratulations to Miss Peacher's Third Grade, which wins the newly invented award for the best Lower School room at the open house. Their display on India was wonderful. The costumes were terrific—especially Miss Peacher's! And the idea of having a passport you can have stamped is something we'll expand to the whole academy at next year's event.

Dr. Vallor's Seventh Grade takes the honors for the best display in the Middle School. That Italian *ristorante* was a master stroke that the whole academy is still talking about.

At Shrove Tuesday's pizza luncheon, the third graders and the seventh graders will be rewarded for their efforts with an ice cream treat (notice how we sneaked that in just before Lent!). Congratulations!

Reenrollment

Reenrollment is going well, thanks especially to the on-line registration system written by academy dad (and teacher spouse) Thomas Otten.

Open registration begins February 7, so if you haven't reenrolled your students, you should do that very soon in order to make sure that they do not lose their places. Two consecutive years of record growth (we're the fastest growing Catholic school in San Antonio, and probably in all of Texas) will mean that classes will fill up earlier than ever this year. Please don't lose your place by being tardy with reenrollment!

Remember: Your student is not enrolled unless you BOTH fill out the online form AND pay the \$500 enrollment fee. We have a number of people who have paid, but not filled out the form, or filled out the form, but not paid. You are not registered until you do both.

Tuition Increase for 2005-2006

The price parents pay for education at The Atonement Academy is going up, on average, by only 1.9% (increasing by \$5 per month in prekindergarten through first grades, \$10 per month in second through eighth grades, and not going up at all in the Upper School). This modest increase of nearly 2% is about what you should expect every year. With small annual increases like this, we should never have need for a large increase.

Thank you for the privilege of helping you educate your children.

Dr. Stephen Hollingshead

Thanks, Science Fair Judges!

Dr. Meghan Carmody-Bubb
Mr. Patrick Dempsey
Mrs. Eileen Grass
Dr. Stephen Hollingshead
Dr. Martha Leatherman
Mr. Jay Long
Dr. Anna Vallor
Dr. Jana Villemain

Science Fair Winners

Best in Show:

Clare McDonough, freshman
Sixth Grade
1st Place – Kylon Betts
2nd Place – Emily Howard
3rd Place – Zenaïda Wentz

Seventh Grade

1st Place – Katherine Wright
1st Place – Timothy Nystedt
2nd Place – William Madalinski
3rd Place – Charles Bernsen

Eighth Grade

1st Place – Evan Howard
2nd Place – Blaise Greer
3rd Place – Ryan Cassidy

Freshmen

1st Place – Clare McDonough
2nd Place – Pili Ortiz
3rd Place – Mary Zinsmeister

Literary Contest Winners

Upper School

Poem: Pili Ortiz
Essay: Juan Gonzalez
Story: Clare McDonough

Middle School

Poem: Ali Alvarez-Calderon
Essay: Ryan Murata
Story: Jane Wallace

Lower School

Poem: Joey Dolan
Essay: Emily Knodell
Story: Megan Winfrey

Art Contest Winners

Prekindergarten Isabelle Christianson
Kindergarten Isabelle Florence
First Grade Sarah Collins
Third Grade Anthony Lawinger
Fifth Grade Liam McDonough
Sixth Grade Caitlin Dudenhofer
Eighth Grade Alanna D'Antonio

Honorable Mention

Jade Montez
Christopher Dudenhofer
Wesley Morris
Nicholas Collins
Jameson Moore
Celena Cupit
Gabriella Garcia

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

We hope your second semester has been going well for you. The International Festival was a great success. The children worked very hard on their projects, and learned a lot about Ireland and Cuba.

In the month of February, the children will learn letters P, Q, R, and S. The children will also continue to learn numbers 16, 17, 18, and 19. In Religion class, the children will learn about how the Church prepares for Easter by living the liturgical season of Lent.

God Bless you,

Mrs. Garcia and Miss Crawford

KINDERGARTEN

Wow, 2005 is underway, and we have been very busy in Kindergarten. We prepared many things for our classrooms for the International Festival and Open House. It has been fun learning many new things about another country. We have even learned some new words in another language! We will be returning to the study of our Five Senses soon in Social Studies. In Math, we will continue to count coins, add two-digit numbers, tell time to the half-hour, recognize one-half and one-fourth, and much more! We are close to finishing all our letters and sounds in Language Arts and will be learning how to blend these letters into many new sounds; we will also learn new spelling rules. In Religion, we are examining the lives of the saints and learning about the special things they did for God. We have really taken off in AR reading and thank our parents for all the help at home with this important part of our education.

Mmes. Elias and Phinizy

FIRST GRADE

After weeks of studying their assigned country and working on projects across the curriculum pertaining to it, the first graders saw all their hard work pay off at the International Festival and Open House. The First Graders will continue the pursuit of their AR goals throughout the month of February, while at the same time improving their reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Students will learn to use comparative adjectives and prewriting skills in English, and be exposed to various realistic fiction and fiction stories in Reading. In Science, the first graders will continue their hands-on exploration of the three states of matter, which will then be followed by adventures into the fascinating subject of sound. Social Studies class holds exciting information about communities and the students will use the story "Stone Soup" to demonstrate their importance. Finally, the students will continue to express their creativity through weekly art projects.

Mrs. Otten and Miss Deffenbaugh

SECOND GRADE

The season of Lent will begin this month. All the students will decide what they will sacrifice during this time. It is important for all to remember the most important sacrifice of all, which was when Jesus died for each one of us on the cross. Please encourage your

children not to forget that what they are giving up for Lent is nothing compared to sacrifice Christ made for us.

During this month, we will begin to discuss the Sacrament of Penance, and the different steps that are followed during confession. The students must understand how important it is to be truly sorry for our sins. In our English studies we will continue to learn about adjectives and nouns. In Science, we will continue to discuss physical science, including the properties of sound, heat, and light. We are quite pleased with the progress the students have made with math. Some of the new concepts we will learn this month include the number of days in each month; feet, yards, and meters; and making and drawing arrays. We will continue to work on our math facts each day.

We would all like to congratulate Mrs. Henriquez on the birth of her baby boy. Both mother and baby are doing well, taking their needed rest. Please continue to keep both in your prayers.

Thank you for continuing to work with your children each day at home. If you ever have questions, please do not hesitate to call or email.

God Bless,

Mmes. Garcia and Ruplinger

THIRD GRADE

This month in Math we will be tackling division problems with three-digit answers and multiplication problems with two-digit numbers. Keep studying those flashcards! We will be exploring suburban life in Social Studies this month looking at the differences and similarities with rural and city life, the causes of growth of the suburbs, and traveling back in time to see how one suburban community was built. They'll be writing character sketches and then we'll begin part 2 of our English studies: grammar and mechanics. In Art class we will be finishing our beautiful skylines of cities such as New York, San Antonio, and Houston. They are practicing their focusing and writing skills in Penmanship this semester with timed writing. This should help with note-taking in other classes. Finally, in Religion we are beginning to study the Ten Commandments. Hopefully, the new knowledge the third graders gain from this will translate into good moral character.

Miss Peacher

FOURTH GRADE

February will be fun in Texas History. During this month we will be talking about Texas's fight for independence. Science class will focus on our knowledge of the earth and the oceans. The class will start to discuss the New Testament and the sacraments during Religion class. We will be moving along in our Junior Great Books for reading, and will be keeping our pace in our Saxon Math. English class will have less writing this month and more grammatical concepts like adjectives and verbs.

Mr. Kelly

FIFTH GRADE

First off, I would like to thank all of my students as well as their parents for all the hard work that went into preparing for the International Festival. I know it took a lot of hard work and it is much appreciated. I hope that you all enjoyed your visit to Japan as much as I did! I know that I am not alone in saying that the third quarter is going by rather quickly. I cannot believe we are approaching the last quarter of school. Nonetheless, there is still quite a bit of material we still have left to investigate. In math, we will continue to work with fractions and decimals. We will also learn how to compute the area of triangles and circles. In history, we will be moving on to the reconstruction period after the Civil War. In English, we will begin by covering a grammar section concerning prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. We will also begin our next writing section, which will focus on speaking and listening skills. For reading, we will read and discuss "Lucky Boy," "The Secret of the Hattifatteners," and "The Happy Prince." We are still scoring high marks in spelling and vocabulary. Keep up the hard work! In science, we will move on to a chapter concerning the earth's resources, and, I hope, begin a chapter on climate. In religion, we plan on covering some more aspects of Christ's atonement, including His sacrifice for us as well as His resurrection. I hope you all have a wonderful and blessed Lent in preparation for Easter!

Mr. Kawulok

GEOGRAPHY

Our European scholars in fourth grade are beginning the month with the completion of their quarterly project on Italy, and oral presentations to the class. Our attention is then turning to the Atlantic defense alliance called N.A.T.O., born in the aftermath of World War II. "N.A.T.O." is short for North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In our discussions of N.A.T.O., we'll focus on the geographic changes since the end of the Cold War with the reunification of Germany, and the demise of the Warsaw Pact Alliance. A test over Spain, Portugal, Italy, and the Low Countries will be taken on February 15. Then, our trek continues eastward to Poland and Ukraine (a nation very much in the news over its disputed presidential elections). Can you say Viktor Yushchenko? He's the new president-elect of the Ukraine.

In fifth grade, after our month-long study at home in the US, we'll be traveling west to the island nations of the Pacific. Such exotic places like Fiji, Micronesia, and Papua New Guinea will be on our itinerary, as well as the nations greatly affected by the recent tsunami, especially Indonesia, where over 100,000 people were swept away by a massive wall of water following a powerful earthquake. We will finish out the month studying other Pacific-rim nations such as North and South Korea, Japan, and the People's Republic of China. The ideology of Communism will be explored in relation to China and North Korea, and its impact on Asian geographic and political changes during the last 50 years. Trade relations will also be discussed. Japan and China are the world's second and third largest

economies, and it would do us well to learn more about these oriental people and their impact on our lives.

Deacon Orr

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL HISTORY, AND SIXTH GRADE MATHEMATICS AND RELIGION

Hello Middle and Upper School Parents,

The spring semester is underway, and we are seeing some sprouts shoot up out of the ground in history class.

In sixth grade, our well planted seeds of ancient history are helping us journey around the world. Our stops in February will take us to Japan, India, and Africa. Likewise, we will be building upon geometrical and algebraic concepts to begin actual calculations in those two fields of mathematics, and we will be relying upon our core doctrinal learning to help us investigate the lives of saints.

In seventh and eighth grades, we have finally reached completed and organized governments. We will see how the State of Texas interacts with the young United States federal government and its Civil War, while the eighth grade will investigate the same events from the federal level instead.

And last but not least, the ninth graders will continue to inspect the lives of famous Roman and Greek leaders for virtue, and compare them to current political leaders to note how virtue does not change with time.

Mr. Howell

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE AND SEVENTH GRADE MATHEMATICS

It's almost Lent! Where does the time go?

Well, in the Middle and Upper School sciences, it's been going into the Science Fair, which came off beautifully. A special thanks to all of our scientific judges for their hard work.

Class work continues unabated. The sixth graders are in the midst of learning about the atmosphere and weather, and will subsequently exit the terrestrial milieu altogether and journey into space. The seventh grade is wrapping up their anatomy lesson with a fetal pig dissection, and will move into reproduction and development to see how all of the systems that they learned about are integrated. The eighth graders have taken a step backwards to review some of the fundamentals of chemistry, and will shortly be inquiring as to the different types of chemical reactions. This will lead into more and more "live and unplugged" science as we actually watch some of the reactions occur in the lab. As a bonus, they are picking one element each class period to review from the handy book "Nature's Building Blocks," by John Emsley. Finally, the ninth graders are finishing up on reproduction and development, and entering into anatomy and physiology.

The seventh graders are also driving ahead in their pre-algebra course, and are beginning to learn some of the fundamental concepts of algebra, proper.

God bless,

Dr. Vallor

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL ENGLISH, AND EIGHTH GRADE RELIGION

I would like to thank all the students for working creatively and diligently on their submissions to the literary contest. The entries were a delight to read and were some of the most thoughtful and imaginative pieces of student writing that I have read as a teacher. I would also like to thank the homeroom teachers and judges for their hard work and for making the contest a success.

While we will continue our study of grammar in English, the curriculum for the next few months will focus on writing techniques and strategies. We will work on our reasoning skills and develop the art of research. The Upper Scholars will begin a paper project in which they will work to understand the particular texts of Homer and Virgil as parts of a whole literary tradition known as Myth. A myth is a culture’s means of expressing truth about man through the use of story. The pagan myths were limited in their scope, for their authors did not have the benefit of Revelation; yet the images, struggles, and insights they communicate to us are brilliant nonetheless, and point to the ultimate Truth and Light Himself. The pagan myths also set the groundwork for the Western Literary Tradition.

I hope that in time the young scholars may come to understand and appreciate the words of C.S. Lewis: “In reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like a night sky in the Greek poem, I see with a myriad eyes, but it is still I who see. Here, as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself; and am never more myself than when I do.”

Mr. Cupp

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL LATIN, FRESHMAN ALGEBRA II, AND SEVENTH GRADE RELIGION

Salvete,

Soon we shall begin the Lenten season. The study in which we engage will seem good matter for penance for a few. In Latin II, we have now begun the study of participles and will continue with infinitives and even probe the subjunctive mood with the freshmen. To understand these requires of the mind care and attention, habits useful for most any occupation or leisurely activity. Moreover, this sort of study helps students to make distinctions well. Translation of these more complex forms solicits understanding of the differences in tenses and in voices and help to realize the full meaning of what we say. In algebra the students continue to amaze me with their firm grasp of ever more abstract and complicated problems. Each advance we now make requires that they make calculations in their mind which a year ago would have taken great struggle to work out even on paper. In religion we shall review for most and introduce to some the sacraments.

Pax vobis,

Magister Ruplinger

FRESHMAN THEOLOGY

Having studied the gospel of John and the Acts of the Apostles, the freshmen are now poised to study the history of the early church. A Short History of the Catholic Church will be our main text for the next month.

Mr. Arndt

EIGHTH GRADE ALGEBRA I

“Curiouser and curiouser,” said Alice.” Now that we’ve entered the wonderland of factoring, we’re prepared to begin solving quadratic equations. By the end of the month, we’ll study Pythagoras’s famous theorem, and see how it relates to the difference of two squares theorem.

Dr. Hollingshead

ATHLETICS

February will be a busy month for our Athletics program. We will be breaking in some exciting new equipment (including parachutes for the younger students); using several different games and activities to learn the basic rules and skills necessary to enjoy Track and Field events, Softball, Kickball, and Soccer; preparing for the Presidential Physical Fitness Test in March; exulting in the glory of “National Dental Health Month” – but only until Ash Wednesday; brushing-up on our people skills with our “Manners-o’-the-Week”; and starting up our extra-curricular Track, Baseball, and Softball seasons.

And as if that weren’t enough, we have a few further notes and reminders. First, please keep in mind that our space for Athletics is limited, and park as close to the Church as possible when visiting. Second, the students are allowed to wear sweats if it is cold outside. However, both the sweatshirt and sweatpants must be ALL BLACK. And lastly, for those students interested in our extracurricular spring sports programs (Track: PreK – 8th grade, Baseball: PreK – 3rd grade, Softball: Middle and Upper School girls), we will still be holding registration sessions outside of all morning Masses on February 13th. In addition, we will be sending home an information sheet and registration form early this month.

Coach Lyle


