

The Pelican

January, 2005

Volume 11, Number 5



Surgentes Simul Alis Fidei ac Rationis

The Monthly Newsletter of The Atonement Academy

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FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! Give thanks to God, for the progress of pouring the slab of our new school is proceeding at a dramatic pace. The steel—hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth—is due to arrive next week. When the first walls tilt up into place, you'll be able to hear me cheering, no matter how far away you happen to be.

This year of growing pains has been a difficult year for all of us. Fortunately, the continued growth of the school (both in enrollment and in office space!) will allow us to hire more administrative personnel to manage the school operations with the vigor and care that its recent development demands.

Please, pray for the academy, and those who work and study here. We take great care to use all the natural means to improve our school, but we should rely also on the supernatural means.

Reenrollment time has arrived!

If you want your child to continue at The Atonement Academy next year, it is very important that you exercise your right to preferred enrollment, and pay your \$500 per child enrollment fee by Monday, January 31. After that, enrollment will be opened up to new families, so please exercise your right to keep your child's seat by reenrolling in January.

While this process was discussed at parent orientation, I realize that some parents may have questions about reenrollment. See the section of the handbook on enrollment, or please feel free to call the academy office to speak with Mrs. Adame or me about it.

One thing the handbook doesn't mention: In the past, we have sent reenrollment forms home in the second week of January; this year, all enrollment information will be collected from a form on our web site. This will save us *so much paperwork* here in the office, and save you a bit of writer's cramp. Thanks to dedicated academy dad Thomas Otten, who has volunteered to program the site, the enrollment application form will be available on our web site by the last week of January (if it is ready sooner, we will send out a notice via backpack mail).

*It is important to note that in order for your child to be reenrolled, you must **both** fill out the enrollment*

*application on the internet **and** pay the \$500 enrollment fee at the office.* Next year, you'll be able to pay right there on the web site; for now, you may pay by credit card or check at the academy; if you put an enrollment fee check in the tuition box, please clearly write your child's name and the words "enrollment fee" on the memo line.

While enrollment grew by 64% last year, we will not be able to grow as much this year as we did last year because we'll be full, even with our new building! That's good news, because it means that a larger pool of resources will allow us to continue to improve our faculty, library, athletic programs, etc. But it also means that if you do not reenroll your children during the preferred reenrollment period, you are in danger of losing your child's seat for the following school year.

Please continue to encourage your friends to come visit the academy. Our dramatic growth is a *good thing*, because it allows us to continue to improve the quality of our academy. But again, please don't take a chance at losing your own child's place by being tardy in the reenrollment process.

Our Open House and International Festival is February 1 at 7:00 p.m. Please come, and bring your friends to see how great our school is. The students will decorate their rooms according to a particular culture, and the winning entries of the science fair and literary and art contests will be on display, as well as other student work.

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

Dr. Stephen Hollingshead

A special thanks to those companies who sponsored holes at this year's academy golf tournament:

Atlas Telecommunications, Wes Jennings
ArtCom, Art Flores
San Antonio Spurs, Johnny Moore
Sherwin Williams Paint Co., Gabriel Morales
Art's Paint & Body, John Bustos

We all had a great time! (Oops, sorry, honey, I mean, we were all just out there supporting the academy. *Of course* I would rather have been at home washing the car, but when duty calls...)

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Happy New Year! It is difficult to believe that we have already completed the first semester. Our Pre-K students are progressing nicely and have mastered many concepts. We are looking forward to a great year full of excitement. In Math we will be writing and recognizing numbers one to ten, and learning to express their relationships to one another (more than, less than, same as, and different than). Please practice with your child writing out the numbers without the dotted lines and ask them questions using the new math vocabulary. In Language Arts we will recognize and write letters L, M, N, and O and practice writing letters A - O without the dotted lines. Also, the students will be working very hard on writing their first and last names. Please assist your child in writing his name on all his homework. Thank you for all your support!

God Bless you,

Mrs. Garcia and Miss Crawford

KINDERGARTEN

Happy New Year! Kindergarten will get back into the swing of things by preparing for the International Festival & Open House, scheduled for February 1st. The students will learn about the food, language, and traditions of another country and decorate the classrooms with art projects related to that country. In Math, the children will be learning to add 2 digit numbers, count using tally marks, count by 5's, and use a ruler to draw line segments. They will also make a classroom store so that they can practice buying items using dimes and pennies. While many Kindergarteners have been taking Accelerated Reader (AR) tests since the beginning of the school year, it is now time for the remainder of the students to begin. More information will be provided to parents as your assistance will be essential.

Mmes. Elias and Phinizy

FIRST GRADE

After the wonderful break the first graders will come back into the classroom refreshed and ready to get back to business. As teachers we hope a part of their New Year's resolution will be to continue working hard in school, by always putting their best foot forward. The New Year will bring fresh skills and concepts into each of the subject areas, while they continue to hone the old.

In phonics the students will see the emergence of diphthongs while they continue to build upon their knowledge of digraphs. Working with estimation and three digit numbers will be included in their new math skills as well as moving forward with their subtraction. In Religion the students will also learn about Jesus' rising from the dead and his Ascension into Heaven. In Science the students will begin to experiment with different states of matter by using their science process skills, and in Social Studies they will learn more about communities and jobs. Finally, through their work in other subject areas, the students will improve upon their handwriting and spelling skills. As teachers, we look

forward to this New Year and to the students' continued physical, intellectual, and spiritual development.

Mrs. Otten and Miss Deffenbaugh

SECOND GRADE

Welcome back! We hope everyone is well rested after our Christmas break. We especially want to welcome back our own Mrs. Garcia. We are all glad to have her with us again!

We will be jumping right into our studies as we return to school. In Religion, we will study about the Holy Family and Jesus' ministry. The second graders are all excited about having Mass booklets for daily Mass this semester. Their active participation in the Mass will help to prepare them for First Confession and First Holy Communion later this spring. We have also begun studying the virtues with some at-home work. Each month, the students will learn and practice a different virtue by participating in activities related to that virtue. Our hope is that our children will not only learn the Commandments and what NOT to do, but also form positive habits of DOING that which God expects of us.

In Reading, the second graders are looking forward to continuing our Junior Great Books program with our second semester readers. New books are always fun! In phonics, we will continue our study of digraphs, diphthongs, and combinations to enable us to read and spell many more new words.

In math, we will continue to practice subtraction facts and learn multiplication and division facts. We will even start learning about fractions! We will further progress in our ability to tell time to the minute. The concept of telling time is challenging, so we encourage you to work with your children on this as opportunities arise.

Finally, a second changing of the guard in second grade will occur at the end of January. In anticipation of a very early February baby, Mrs. Henriquez's last class day will be Friday, January 28. She hopes to still be able to attend the parent conferences at the end of the following week. She thanks all of the parents for their support and prayers through the fall semester, as well as for the opportunity to teach the students in her class. We are confident that Mrs. Henriquez's class will have a wonderful experience with its new teacher.

With best wishes for a great 2005,

Mmes. Garcia and Henriquez

THIRD GRADE

Happy New Year! After the nice break, we are ready to tackle our studies once more. We will be multiplying by multiples of 10, solving division problems with two-digit answers, and studying geometric transformations this month in Math. In Science we'll begin to study the physical realm more in depth. We will be learning what objects are made of and the shared characteristics of those objects. In Social Studies we will be keeping with our theme of communities and looking at urban life. They'll have the chance to choose one city and do some research on it. We'll also be creating our own city skylines. In English we will continue to study poetry and write some of our own. They will also be studying

library skills, which should help with research in the library. In Reading class, we'll be reading *Jean Labadie's Big Black Dog*, a French-Canadian folktale, and *Caporushes*, an English folktale. Let's keep up the hard work as we prepare our little third graders to enter fourth grade.

Miss Peacher

FOURTH GRADE

The fourth grade will be starting the new quarter off strong. We will be going through the Saxon Math at our quick pace. The next concepts in English will be outlining and writing a short report. We will finally be starting to talk about American settlers coming to Texas in our Texas History class. Reading will be looking at excerpts from *Alice in Wonderland* and moving into our second semester reader from Junior Great Books. Our adventures in Science will take us to exploring the weather. In Religion we will be discussing King David and Solomon.

Mr. Kelly

FIFTH GRADE

The fifth grade has a lot to look forward to during the second semester. In math, we will continue to work with fractions learning how to multiply and divide mixed numbers. By the end of January we will also be working with some geometric figures such as quadrilaterals and parallelograms. In history, we will finally begin studying the Civil War and eventually cover what happened following the war. In English, we will spend the first part of the month writing fiction and then move on to a short section concerning adverbs. We will also begin the second semester of our Junior Great Books readers, and plan on reading *A Game of Catch*, *The Tale of the Three Storytellers*, and *Spit Nolan*. For Science, we will focus our attention on the study of the earth's layers, and tectonic movement. All things considered, the first semester was a great success. We hope this next one goes as well, and carries with it just as many rewards.

Mr. Kawulok

GEOGRAPHY

In January, the fourth grade students are continuing their adventure on the European continent, and currently enjoying the tremendous cultural treasure that is the Italian Republic. The students will be completing a two page research paper on some aspect of Italian culture for the nine-week project. Research will be conducted in the school library. As the month progresses, we will be studying the "Low Countries" of Belgium, Luxembourg, and The Netherlands. Do you know what a citizen of Luxembourg is called? A "Luxembourger" of course! For some reason, the students always think that's so funny. Then, we'll be visiting sunny Spain and Portugal to warm up our January days!

Fifth grade is spending the entire month at home, studying the United States of America. We are currently reviewing some important historical events: English

colonization, the Revolutionary War, the Westward expansion, and the geographic changes these periods brought in forming our nation. Along the way, we are memorizing the first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence ("When in the course of human events...") and part of the famous poem inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty ("Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free..."). Perhaps the whole family can get involved and memorize these together! In many ways, these two texts embody an image of who we are as a people. Additionally, we will study the geographic features of the U.S., and learn all 50 State capitals. We will also study maps of the world in homework assignments to locate the territorial possessions of the U.S. all over the globe.

Deacon Orr

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

Welcome back from the holidays. I had a wonderful break—I got married, went to Rome, and began the complete rearrangement of my house according to my new wife's wishes. Honestly, I did enjoy all three events. I hope you also had a wonderful Christmas.

In the history courses, the sixth graders and I will be starting the second half of our journey in Asia by learning the histories of China, Japan, and India. The seventh graders have survived the Alamo and Texan Independence. We will see how statehood suits us in the near future. The eighth graders have all proclaimed themselves Federalists and are reading the Constitution at the moment. Soon after, we will begin learning about the early days of our nation. Meanwhile, the ninth graders are comparing the virtues of famous Greek and Roman leaders in order better to evaluate their own lives as well as current leaders.

In sixth grade Math, we will be deepening our understanding of previous lessons as well as venturing into pre-algebra more, and in Religion, we are investigating the meaning of Mass with intensity and perseverance this semester.

Mr. Howell

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL SCIENCE AND SEVENTH GRADE MATHEMATICS

God's Blessings in the New Year! The big news for January in the middle and upper school sciences is of course The Atonement Academy Science Fair. The middle and upper school students are all required to participate in the fair. Their projects are due on January 28th, and will be displayed in St. Anthony's Hall all weekend. Every project should demonstrate the scientific method. This means that the student should begin with a hypothesis, conduct an experiment to test it, collect the data that the experiment produces, and draw conclusions as to whether the data that they have obtained supports their original hypothesis.

Of course most of the "hypotheses" will be about scientific principles that are already understood well—picking the project from a book is just fine. However, students will be graded not on their project's "gee whiz"

potential, but rather on their ability to demonstrate that they understand that even simple experiments have underlying scientific meaning. For example, filling a balloon with helium makes it rise. Why? Well, because helium is less dense than air. The balloon floats on the air in the same way that wood floats on water. Both float because they are less dense than their surrounding environment. So the scientific principle behind helium balloons is density. The student might come up with the hypothesis then that, "I believe that if I fill a balloon with helium, it will float, because it is less dense than air." To test this, the student might fill balloons with several gasses of varying densities and observe the effect that the density of the gas has on the floatation of the balloon. In this way, almost any natural phenomenon can be explained. The students should prepare a display board with their experimental design, data, and conclusions that is no larger than 30 inches square. No potentially dangerous chemicals or materials should be used, and none should ever be brought on campus. The students will not be present at the time of judging, so the display must contain enough instructions that the judges can operate it if need be. The students also should write a 1-2 page report on their project, explaining how it demonstrates the scientific method in regards to its treatment of the subject matter. The students in 8th and 9th grades need to also write a term paper of about 10 pages, double spaced, explaining all of the background information about their projects that they have been able to learn. Term papers will be due January 21.

Preparation for the science fair will be the dominant theme of all science classes in the month of January, for the middle and upper schools. Pre-algebra in the 7th grade is just about half way through the Saxon math book and is coming down the other side!

God's Grace and Peace,

Dr. Vallor

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL ENGLISH, AND EIGHTH GRADE RELIGION

The second semester of English studies will move from the formal study of grammar to the technique and process of writing. The scholars will study, among other topics, clarity, coherence, unity, parallelism, revision, diction, and usage problems. The middle scholars will continue their particular literary pursuits, while the upper scholars will begin Virgil's epic poem, the *Aeneid*, and then move on to the classic writings of Shakespeare.

Mr. Cupp

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

Salvete,

In religion we shall investigate the mysteries of Christ's redemptive sacrifice and the grace that flows from it. For the neophyte Latin scholars we shall spend part of this month practicing the translation of sentences and firmly establishing the elemental forms of Latin into their young memories. The more advanced students will embark anew in their study. Now finishing the more basic forms of speech in Latin, we shall attempt the more

complex, like the participle, and even curiously artifices in speech, like the ablative absolute, for which our native tongue offers only stilted and awkward forgery. Finally, a word on our high school algebraists: we should congratulate their achievement thus far, as they master new techniques not only in algebra, but geometry and trigonometry.

Pax vobiscum,

Magister Ruplinger

FRESHMAN THEOLOGY

Having celebrated the Incarnation, the freshmen turn to the New Testament, early church history, and the catechism.

Mr. Arndt

EIGHTH GRADE ALGEBRA I

Now that we've made a good start on analytical geometry by solving (again and again!) systems of equations by substitution and elimination, we're ready to begin using the slope-intercept form of bivariable equations. Fun stuff!

Dr. Hollingshead

ATHLETICS

The coming of the new year provides each of us with the opportunity to honor the Lord by renewing our commitment to eating right and staying physically fit, and thereby keeping our respective "temples of the Holy Spirit" in their best possible condition. In order to help our students take advantage of this wonderful opportunity, the January Athletics curriculum will be structured to prepare our students for the Presidential Physical Fitness Test by keeping the focus on cardiovascular fitness, upper-body strength, proper nutrition, and cardiovascular fitness. In other words, we will spend a lot of time running, doing push-ups, discussing the elements of a healthy diet, and running. Since laps can be a bit tedious, we will also use basic basketball and volleyball drills/games, obstacle courses, and various other age-appropriate fitness challenges to get our pulses racing.

Sign-ups for baseball and track will begin soon! We will register players only for those teams that already have coaches, so it is especially important that anyone interested in coaching contact me as soon as possible at JLyle@AtonementOnline.com or 695-2240.

Coach Lyle

