

## PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

**There will be no school on Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, which is an in-service for our teachers.**

Dear Families,

Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup>, marks the beginning of **Catholic Schools Week** and a host of activities designed to display student learning as well as plans for additions to the curriculum in the 2008-2009 school year for which we will be registering soon. Rather than trying to fit everything into one week, our timeline will take us through the month of February. Please watch for a flyer that will be coming home to you within the week. **In the meantime, we invite you and your family to join us in celebrating Mass this Sunday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church.** Our students will play an important part in this Mass. What better way to begin our celebration for **Catholic Schools Week?** Thanks to Mrs. Andres and Ms. Padilla for their leadership in preparing for this Mass.

**Would you like to earn an extra \$25 toward your tuition? If you do...read on.** We are inviting all of our parents to take some time to write a letter stating **WHY you chose St. Michael School for your child(ren).** We will choose eight (8) letters that tell the story of this important educational decision for the life of your child(ren) in a most engaging way. We will ask a team of people that are not directly related to the school to read them and give us the top twenty (20) letters. The eight (8) winners will be chosen from those letters. Whether you are a winner or not, we would like to be able to use your letters to share with new families who are thinking about registering their child at St. Michael's for the 2008-2009 school year. We also would like to be able to use quotes from your letters in our new brochure that we will be publishing. **The deadline for these letters will be Thursday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Please send them to my office. You may hand write them or type them on the computer. Please place them in an envelope addressed to Ms. Lee. Awards will be granted on February 8<sup>th</sup>.**

**Report cards will be distributed to students on Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup> if all goes well. Otherwise, they will be sent on January 28<sup>th</sup>.** Since returning to school after the Christmas break, our server was down for nine (9) days. It made it impossible for some of our students to complete some of their assignments that are kept on internet. For the most part, our internet service is up and running. We have been unable to update the website due to many problems with our internet service this year. We will be doing that soon. **If your child has a failing grade in any subject, teachers are being asked to call you to discuss a plan for improvement. You may also request a conference with the teacher here at school. We will have conferences after the third quarter report cards are completed.**

**Congratulations to our Geography Bee First Place Winner—Imani Thomas—one of our fourth graders who outwitted eleven (11) other competitors.** Mrs. Flanagan, our social studies teacher in Grades 6-8, sponsored the Geography Bee this year. Two interested candidates from each classroom in grades 4-8 spent their recesses studying with Mrs. Flanagan for several weeks. Competition took place this past Friday. It was a challenge to all participants. **Nelson Velazquez, one of our fourth graders, was our Geography Bee Second Place Winner. Gerardo Acosta, one of our eighth graders, was our Geography Bee Third Place Winner.** Imani will now take a written exam that will be sent to the state. We will update you on her progress. In the meantime, we are proud of our other contestants—Jasmine Alvarez, Nicholas Carter, Mae Loon, Donald Jeroski, Jessica Sanchez, Adrien Cook, David Jeroski, Jerome Barker, and Chukwuemeka Akwarandu. Stay tuned to news about our Spelling Bee during the month of February.

**Cafeteria Special will be on Thursday of this week. All money must be in by Wednesday morning.**

We have been blessed with a \$75,000 grant from the Patrons Program through Big Shoulders—the organization that has also given us over \$70,000 in tuition scholarships this year. Close to \$18,000 was spent on a new server as well as a cart of (26) laptop computers for use in grades 5-8. We are currently searching for a part-time computer teacher so that we can begin computer classes at the start of the third quarter. Another \$10,000 is being spent on the “Print Rich Initiative” which is an effort to get a variety of new books in each classroom so that our classroom libraries are delightful and challenging. Many of the books in our classroom libraries need updating. We also want those libraries to include books that are of interest to students who love social studies and science topics. All of our teachers will be eagerly searching through catalogs as they shop for their libraries. We hope to complete this project by the end of February.

**Today Ms Lammie, one of our Kindergarten teachers, begins jazz dance lessons with 22 interested students in grades 5-8.** I am grateful that she is willing to bring the arts to our students in dance form. I am also grateful to Mrs. Jeroski for all of her work with our folklorico dance group. Such wonderful opportunities. Mrs. Stell will begin a pilot project with a small group of students who will participate in Math Pentathlon games designed to deepen student understanding of mathematical thinking and language. We hope to expand on that project next year. I am also grateful to Ms. Agnew, our middle school literature and writing teacher, who will begin teaching pre-algebra to thirteen (13) eager 7<sup>th</sup> graders. That program will be expanded to include students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall who are ready for this type of mathematical thinking. There are other new happenings on the horizon. Watch for further news.

Blessings be on you and your family. We keep you in our daily prayer—please let us know if you have a special prayer intention you want us to remember each morning as we gather for school prayer.

Peace,