



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

EXCELLENCE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

FIRST TRIMESTER 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

EMPOWER ILLINOIS SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to the generosity of several donors, 19 St. Joseph students were awarded scholarships through the Illinois Tax Credit Scholarship Program - Empower Illinois. Applications for the program continue to be accepted. Anyone who donates to Empower Illinois can help a child get funding for Catholic Education and receives a tax credit. Please contact Rita Stasi for further information.

ACADEMICS

We are pleased to announce that our students continue to perform significantly above average based on national standardized testing. The 2018 IOWA Testing confirmed that our students are well-prepared for success! We are proud of our teachers and students for consistently striving to do their best each and every day.

PRESCHOOL

2018 Best Preschool Award



We are honored and blessed that our SJS families and community voted us Best Preschool in the *Suburban Life* Reader's Choice contest. Thank you for the privilege to teach your children in a faith-filled environment!



PreK4 Plus

Our inaugural PreK4 Plus class is having a blast in and out of the classroom. They've enjoyed trips to local parks, visits from the Downers Grove Library staff, and participate in music, gym, art, Spanish and LRC as part of their extended day!

KINDERGARTEN



Science Days

Our Kindergartners have so much fun during Science Day! In September, they learned about sink and float, building apple structures, tasting apples and making an apple volcano! In October they did Halloween experiments including candy corn sink or float, candy pumpkin STEM towers, build-a-monster, and making slime! Thank you to our parent volunteers that help make Science Days a success!

Children's Farm Field Trip

The Kindergartners enjoyed a field trip to The Children's Farm in Palos Park where they explored the working farm and a variety of animals. They also got to pick their own pumpkin and took a hay ride!



Community Workers

We had special visits from a few Community Workers who are near and dear to us. Firefighter and SJS parent, Tom Farr, taught us about fire safety. Mrs. Boyle's dad, Dr. Balesteri, talked about ways to stay healthy and take care of our heart. SJS parent, Dr. April Finan, spoke to the students about being a veterinarian. The children then discussed which community helper they might like to be when they get older.



Presentations

It's never too early to learn the fundamentals of giving a good presentation! Our Kindergartners practiced the 4Ps (Prepared, Posture, Projection and Polite Participation) then presented to their classmates about their families. In November they'll present about Family Holiday Traditions.

FIRST

Bat Facts

Did you know that bats have thumbs? Or that they are the only mammals that truly fly? Our 1st graders have been reading books and watching videos to learn about bat facts! They wrote facts on bat cutouts and hung them around the room. We finished out the unit by writing an informational piece about bats!



SECOND GRADE

Downers Grove Museum Trip

Our 2nd graders went to the Downers Grove Museum to learn more about the history of our community. They were able to see what it was like to live in the late 1800s and even played some of the games kids used to play! In class they compared what life was like in the past to what it is like now.

Buddy Program

The 2nd grade students enjoy reading to their PreK4 buddies each week as they get to model their fluency skills.



THIRD GRADE

Adios Mariposas Day

As part of the "Symbolic Migration" program that unites children across North America through the migration of symbolic ambassador butterflies, our 3rd graders recently created symbolic monarch butterflies to send to Mexico. We celebrated "Adios Mariposas Day" when our students walked to the Downers Grove Post Office to send their butterflies to Mexico for the winter. Children who live beside the monarchs' winter sanctuaries in Mexico will protect the paper butterflies and return them in the spring.

Saints Museum

To celebrate All Saint's Day, our 3rd graders researched a saint and created living art to display at a "Saints Museum". Through their research and respectful representation of the saints, the students were able to feel a human and spiritual connection to our beloved saints.



FOURTH

U.S. Regions – Cranberry Bog Presentation

As part of their U.S. region studies, our 4th graders recently learned about cranberry bogs while studying the Northeast region. They had a very special visitor come in to tell all about her experience visiting a cranberry bog - Mrs. Wojciechowski, our wonderful school secretary! She shared pictures and fun facts, cut open a few cranberries to see the air pockets, and we held a bag of cranberries to see how light they are. It was so fun!



FIFTH



Silk Road Activity

Have you ever wondered what it must have been like to travel and trade on the Silk Road? Our 5th graders recently traveled on their own Silk Road in social studies class! They all started at different trading centers and carried their items across deserts, mountains, and even had to watch out for dangerous animals and bandits! Each student had to wait their turn to move. Once they got to a new trading center, they greeted each other in their home-city language and traded items. The first one back with all five of the different items was the winner!

Buddy Program

Our 5th graders make great role models for our Kindergarteners! The students attend the all-school mass together once a month and recently had a lot of fun celebrating Halloween!



SIXTH



Ancient Mesopotamia Activity

Our 6th grade social studies class recently simulated what happened in Ancient Mesopotamia. The class had limited supplies and time to build levees, channels, and reservoirs. To test their work, marbles were rolled down the center aisle (the river).

Ancient Egypt Activity

To learn about Ancient Egyptian society, our 6th graders participated in a role-playing simulation activity. Topics included interdependence, surplus and shortage, rationing, bartering, the effects of yearly flooding of the Nile, paying taxes to the pharaoh, and achieving basic needs. Each student had a role in the community such as farmer, woodworker, merchant, clothing maker, etc. They had to gather resources, then produce the needed items, and barter with each other to get what they need. They were given targets or goals. At the end of each round, the amount of flooding of the Nile was determined randomly with dice, followed by visually seeing how it affected their goods or products. There was a written reflection at the end for formal assessment.



Camp Tecumseh Outdoor Ed Trip

Many of our 6th graders went to Camp Tecumseh in Indiana for a 3-day Outdoor Ed experience where they studied and experienced Environmental Science first-hand. They enjoyed various outdoor activities including hiking, archery, canoeing, and learning about different animals and the food chain.

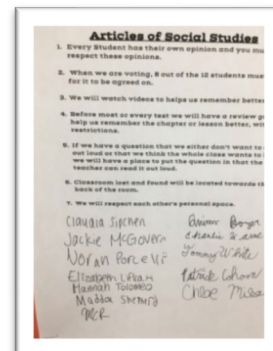
Volcano Project

As part of their Earth Science studies, our 6th graders worked in groups to make models to help them learn about the different

types of volcanos. Then, they got to make them erupt using a carefully combined concoction of yeast, water, hydrogen peroxide and liquid dish soap! It was a "blast"!



SEVENTH



Classroom Constitution

Our 7th graders recently held a "classroom constitutional convention" in social studies to set standards for the classroom to benefit all students and teachers throughout the year. The student-signed "classroom constitution" is now posted in the classroom.

Downtown Downers Grove Main Street Cemetery

The 7th graders walked to the Downers Grove Main Street Cemetery to collect data (names and years of birth and death). The groups worked together to carefully and neatly gather their data in an organized list so they could calculate lifespans. Then they categorized the information in a frequency table and used that to create colorful histograms with descriptive titles.

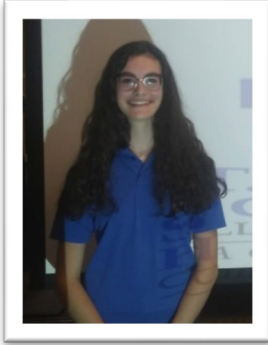


Argonne National Laboratory Field Trip

The 5th and 7th graders enjoyed the Compute, Code, Create! Learning Lab at Argonne Labs. Students worked in teams using Lego Mindstorm EV3 robots. The teams wrote instructions (code) so their robots could accomplish challenging and rewarding tasks. They used the computational thinking skills that Argonne scientists use when tackling society's greatest challenges with one of the world's fastest supercomputers. Students learned that struggle is an important part of the scientific and engineering process. The lab culminated as the teams' robots completed the required tasks to earn points for a school total.

High School Visitors

7th and 8th graders had the opportunity to hear about four different Catholic High Schools in the area - Benet, Montini, St. Francis and IC Catholic Prep. It was great to learn about these excellent schools and to see several SJS alumni!



Junior Achievement

Volunteers from a local business, HAVI, worked with Junior Achievement to teach our 7th and 8th graders about financial literacy and business. 8th grade learned about developing their own personal brand, choosing a career, mapping out a plan to get the career they want, and developing soft skills. 7th grade learned about the global marketplace and trade.



EIGHTH



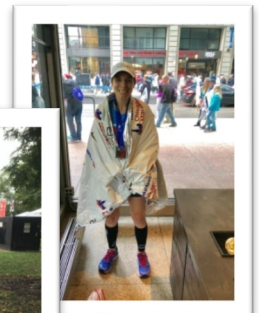
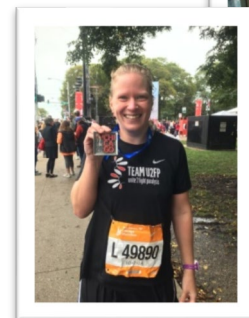
Argonne National Laboratory Field Trip

During a recent field trip to Argonne National Laboratory, our 8th graders learned about investigating a mystery material by observing the light pattern of a laser's light scattering through the material. They also competed for the fastest time when creating their own magnetic linear accelerators. Before leaving, they had the special opportunity to tour the advanced photo sources (APS) electron accelerator. They look forward to a second Argonne trip in the Spring!

TEACHERS

Chicago Marathon

Congratulations to Miss Biernat and Mrs. Bordens, who recently ran the Chicago Marathon for the first time. Both of them reached their goal of completing the marathon in under 5 hours and plan to run it again someday. They ran in support of U2FP (Unite 2 Fight Paralysis). We are so proud of them for putting into practice the virtues of perseverance, determination and charity.



ATHLETICS



CRUSADERS
ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL



Cross Country

Congratulations to all our runners on a great season!

Football

Our Varsity and JV Football teams both finished the season in 2nd place. Congratulations to all the players and coaches on a terrific season!

Volleyball

The 8B Girls Volleyball team participated in the "Volley for a Cure" at St. Raymond School. They played a great game supporting a great cause and came home with a win!



8A and 6B Girls Volleyball Teams Earn League Championships

Congratulations to our 8A and 6B Girls Volleyball teams on their Championship wins and to all our volleyball teams on a wonderful season!



Wrestling Clinic

DGNHS wrestling coaches hosted a wrestling clinic at SJS. There was a huge turnout for the fun and informative event.

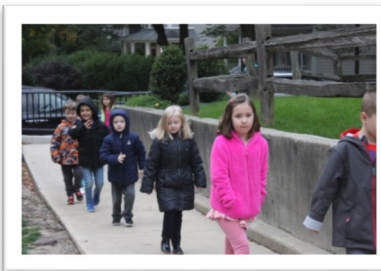


VIRTUES PROGRAM

Our Virtues in Practice program continues this year with a focus on Charity. We kicked off the year with Charity in September followed by Friendship in October. During the month of November, we will focus on Courtesy.

Socktober

SJS students are doing their part to make a difference! As part of their Charity Virtue project, our 4th and 5th graders raised money to buy socks that will be donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Happy Socktober!



Move Your Feet

On a brisk October morning, our students "moved their feet" by taking a walk around our school campus to raise awareness for Catholic Education and funds for student scholarships. Together, our students raised \$505 for Catholic Education Foundation scholarships!



Boxes of Joy

Our PreK4 Plusers are a wonderful example of charity. They recently collected and donated school supplies to the Cross Catholic Outreach Box of Joy program to help children in need.



Student Council Food Pantry Drive

Thank you to all of our students and families for helping to stock the St. Joseph Food Pantry shelves in time for the holidays during the Student Council Thanksgiving Food and Supply Drive.

ALUMNI Athletics

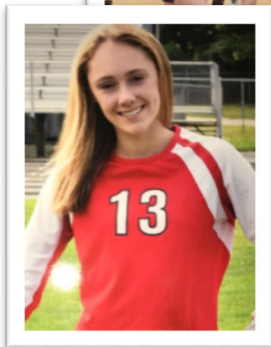


Brenna Cohoon (2016) was voted Suburban Life's Most Valuable Athlete and featured in the paper for leading her DGS cross country team to victory at the Class 3A Hinsdale Regional.

Myles Marciniak (2016) advanced to Lemont Golf Sectionals with his Montini golf team.



Rese Bastuga (2018) and her Freshman A volleyball team at Benet went 31-0 and finished as conference champs! Several other Crusaders turned Redwings had outstanding seasons on their volleyball teams as well: Morgan Demos (2018), Kendall O'Meara (2017) and Jaci Budreck (2017).



National Merit Scholar Commendations

Congratulations to SJS Class of 2015 Alumni Dominic Balsamo, Jeffrey Gaydos and Grace Tyson on their National Merit Scholar Commendations in recognition of their outstanding academic promise. We are so proud of you!



ILMEA Festival Choir

Alumni Megan Sluzas (2015), Anne Harbauer (2016) and Rachel Whittington (2015) successfully auditioned and participated in the ILMEA District 9 Festival at Elgin H.S. on November 3rd. All three girls attend Benet Academy and had to audition with over 900 other District 9 singers to be chosen to be part of the festival choir. A special shout out to Rachel, who advanced to the next round of competition to sing the National Anthem at the IHSA state basketball final. She also scored FIRST in her voice section (Alto 2).

Congratulations to our students and teachers on all of their 1st trimester accomplishments!
Thank you to all teachers, staff, students, and parents for your hard work in making this a great first trimester.
We're looking forward to many more highlights to come. God Bless!

