
ST. ELIZABETH NEWS

December 2008

Mission Statement

Our mission at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic School is to serve God through our ministry of educational excellence and to develop the spiritual lives of our youth within the framework of the Gospel and the tradition of the Catholic Church.

Philosophy

Our fundamental task is the education of the whole child, combining learning with faith, Catholic doctrines and moral teachings. We strive to instill in our students a lifelong commitment to learning, to Christian values and citizenship, and like our patroness, to community service. We are dedicated to achieving these goals within a supportive and diverse Christian community and to living our faith daily with the understanding that education is a process that never ends.

FROM SISTER DAWN ACHS, SSND Associate Superintendent of the Diocese of Dallas

Dear Mrs. Clem, Faculty, Staff, & Students of St. Elizabeth of Hungary School,

Thank you all for a most enjoyable and informative morning. I am very grateful for the time that Mrs. Clem took to visit with me and to let me learn so much about your wonderful school. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to walk around the school to see you all so hard at work and to observe how much you seem to enjoy being at school with your friends. The commitment and enthusiasm of your teachers was also very evident. It is clear that St. Elizabeth of Hungary School is a place where teachers and students work together to form a sound learning environment.

Keep up the good work. I look forward to more visits in the future.

Gratefully,
Sister Dawn, SSND

IMPORTANT DATES

- December 1-5 – Fall Book Fair
- December 2 – PK, Kinder, & 1st Grade Parent Potluck Night @ 7-9 pm
- December 3 – 1st Grade Field Trip to the Dallas Arboretum
- December 4 – 8th Grade Snack Sale
- December 4 – Faculty Meeting @ 3:30 pm, NO TUTORIALS
- December 8 – Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8 am Mass
- December 9 – Advisory Council Mtg. @ 6 pm
- December 10-12 – 8th Grade Trip to The Pines
- December 11 – 2nd Quarter Progress Reports
- December 12 – 2nd Grade Field Trip
- December 15 – Kinder & 3rd Grade Field Trip to Nursing Home @ 9:30 am
- December 16 – Christmas Music Program @ 7 pm in the Church
- December 18 – 6th Grade Sponsored Monthly Breakfast Fundraiser @ 7:30-8:30 am
- December 19 – 8 am Mass & Jesse Tree Celebration
- December 19 – NOON DISMISSAL
- December 22-January 2 – Christmas Vacation
- January 5 – Classes Resume
- January 25 – Catholic Schools Week Open House/ Spaghetti Lunch/ General Assembly TBA

FROM CHRISTINA CLEM, PRINCIPAL

During December, we experience the season of Advent, which is a time of preparation. Not only are we preparing for our family celebrations of Christmas, but as individuals, we make our hearts ready for the coming of our Lord. Simple customs such as lighting an Advent Wreath in our homes can help our children understand the true meaning of the season.

Already, December has started out to be an exciting month and is quickly flying by! Among other things, we have the following events to look forward to: The Safari School Book Fair, the PK, Kinder, & 1st Grade Parents Potluck Night, 2nd Quarter Progress Reports, the 8th grade trip to The Pines, PK, 2nd, & 3rd Grade Visits to Nursing Homes, the Christmas Program, the 6th Grade Sponsored Monthly Breakfast Fundraiser, Jesse Tree Celebration and the Christmas Parties. This year's Christmas vacation will be from December 22-January 2 with a NOON DISMISSAL on Thursday, December 19th. Classes will resume on Monday, January 5th.

CONGRATULATIONS to:

Mrs. Kathy Price for receiving the "Work of Heart Award" this past month. This is the second time Mrs. Price has been given this honor. She received a recognition certificate along with a \$500 stipend. Criteria for this award is as follows:

- Traditional merit including tenure and leadership
- Enthusiastic instruction
- Individual or unexpected acts of kindness or charity
- Christian example
- Mentoring
- Or, simply "going the extra mile"

If you would like to nominate a teacher or staff member, a one page nomination may be sent to the Catholic Foundation via:

Mail to
The Catholic Foundation Work of Heart Award
5310 Harvest Hill Rd.
Suite 248
Dallas, Texas 75230
Fax to 972-661-0140
Email to: info@catholicfoundation.com

Please be sure to attend our school Christmas program on Tuesday, December 16th, at 7:00 pm. Your children along with Mrs. Kuterbach have been preparing diligently to provide you with an experience sure to get you into the holiday spirit! In case of inclement weather, postings will be listed on the following: the school website (www.stelizabethofh.org and www.saintspride.com), Channel 8 TV, Channel 5 TV, and 94.9 FM KLTU radio station. Hopefully, inclement weather will not be an issue this year, God willing.

Many thanks to all of our parent volunteers for your tireless dedication & commitment this year in helping the teachers in their efforts to educate your children! All of your work in assisting with the fundraising efforts of the school has truly been TERRIFIC!!! We continue to look forward to those monthly breakfasts, book fairs, and big events that not only help the school but do so much to build God's kingdom here at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic School!

In closing, I want to wish all of you a blessed Advent and a very holy holiday season! May the Christ Child of love and peace enter your hearts! God bless!

FROM BETH BELCHER, RELIGION COORDINATOR

O Come, O Come Emmanuel... As we prepare during this holy season of Advent, we realize that Emmanuel is 'God-with-us.' God is here, now, reaching out to us as we prepare for the coming of His Son. We look to see the face of Christ in each student, parent and teacher. The term 'holiday' comes from the tradition of

going to Mass for every holy day, which we now call Holy Days of Obligation. People used to go to Mass and celebrate every day that they considered to be holy, including their birthdays and those of their family members. The term was combined and changed a bit to the word we recognize now as 'holiday.' We wish you a joyous preparation for Jesus, and a blessed holy-day season.

SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

We've received several bids for our roof replacement and they range from \$278,000.00 to \$360,800.00. It appears we have our work cut out for us!! We've just heard from the Catholic Foundation that we will be eligible to submit a grant request this year and are furiously researching other foundations that may be able to help fund this project. We need your participation to show the various foundations that St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic School has the support of its community. If you have been a donor in the past, we offer you many thanks for your generosity and we are counting on your continued support. If you are new to the school or have not contributed in past drives, please consider becoming a part of this very worthwhile project. As of December 2nd, we have \$2,620 in pledges from 12 families out of 232 (5%).

Be sure to review the 2008 List of Companies with Matching Gift Programs that was included with your brochure and pledge card. Please look to see if your employer is on the list. What a great way to DOUBLE your gift to St. Elizabeth! If your employer is listed, simply contact your human resources department to obtain a matching gift form, fill it out completely and send it to the school according to your employer's guidelines.

Those of you looking for a little help on your 2008 taxes, keep in mind that every dollar you donate to the drive is **100% TAX DEDUCTIBLE**. We need to receive your donation before the end of the year for you to receive a Charitable Gift Acknowledgement letter for your 2008 taxes. Also, those of you needing additional tax deductions may want to consider a charitable donation of stock to St. Elizabeth School. If you transfer stock before December 31, you can claim the tax deduction on your tax return – of course, you should always check with your own tax advisor before making a gift of stock or securities. Please contact Elizabeth Belew at (214) 331-5139 Ext 24 or ebelew@stelizabethofh.org if you are interested in making a gift of stock to the school.

Thank you to the following families who have already made their donations or pledges, your generosity is greatly appreciated: Bianco Family, Byrd Family, Cervenka Family, Dooley Family, Goegel Family,

Lauer/Phillips Family, Salters Family, Swayzer Family, Ventura Family, Vrana Family, and Walkley Family.

MAGAZINE/GIFT DRIVE NEWS

Thank you so much for your enthusiastic support of this year's Magazine Gift Drive. This year's drive brought in a total of \$14,338.00! Thank you to everyone who participated in this drive – your support means a great deal to St. Elizabeth School.

Congratulations to our Top Selling Students: 1st Place - Hannah Johnson 7A, 2nd Place -Faustina Ostrowski 2B and 3rd Place Isaiah Mendoza PK. Ms. Hickey's Homeroom, 5A was the Top Selling Class and all shared a Five Pound Bar of World's Finest Chocolate! Both 5th Grade Classes had the Best Class Participation and enjoyed a Pizza & Soda Party the Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving!

Many thanks to the wonderful parent volunteers who helped make this drive possible: Vanessa Walker, Kristie Crone and Laura Stratton.

Prizes, gifts and magazine certificates should be delivered the week that we let out for Christmas break. Please remember that you may always purchase magazines on the QSP.com website. St. Elizabeth's account number at QSP is **710333281**.

Again, thank you again for your hard work! St. Elizabeth School could not accomplish all that it does without your immeasurable support.

ST. ELIZABETH ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB

At our last meeting, we discussed designs/slogans for an environmental club T-shirt. Get ready the environmental club will soon be selling T-shirts! We also talked about water conservation. We made bird feeders for our animal friends!

Our meeting for the month of December will be on **Tuesday, December 9th from 3:30 – 4:00** in Mrs. Strunk's Pre-K room.

Environmental Tip #2

Even if you don't do it, you probably know someone who leaves the water running while brushing his/her teeth, shaving or doing the dishes. You can easily use more than 5 gallons of water if you leave the tap running while brushing your teeth, so wet and rinse your toothbrush! If your washing dishes by hand, fill the basin, do not let the water run! A household can save up to 20, 000 gallons of water each year by getting a grip on its faucets. As water conservation goes, that's not just a drop in the bucket!

MONTHLY BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

Our next breakfast will be Thursday, December 18th sponsored by the 6th grade class. Please join us and have breakfast with your student and the school community. Winners of the November 20th breakfast raffle were:

John Paul Coronado	\$50.00
Julie Miranda	Parking Pass

ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB

Our December meeting will take place this Thursday evening at 6:30 PM in the school cafeteria. The Booster Club will be selling the remainder of the cokes left over from the carnival. These are 20oz. Coke and Sprite and will be sold only as full cases. The case price will be \$16.00 which brings the unit cost to \$.67 each, a great deal. Anyone interested can email me or Mrs. Walkley with the number of cases desired, they will be sold on a first come first serve basis.

GROCERY STORE FUNDRAISER

Notice: Kroger recently changed their community giving program from Kroger Cares to Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program. Once approved, we will provide St. Elizabeth families with a barcode to present with your KrogerPlus Card upon checkout at Kroger that will link your KrogerPlus Card with St. Elizabeth School. From that point forward you will only have to present your KrogerPlus Card for your purchases and St. Elizabeth School will receive a percentage of that total!

Did you know that two of the major grocery stores in our area donate a portion of your purchases to St. Elizabeth School? Kroger and Tom Thumb all have community programs to donate 1% of every dollar you spend at their stores back to St. Elizabeth School. But, they do not donate to St. Elizabeth unless you sign up for their programs and designate St. Elizabeth as your beneficiary.

To participate in:

Tom Thumb – St. Elizabeth's number is #648. Turn in a completed application at your Tom Thumb store; they will give you a Reward Card, present that card to the cashier during your transaction. To change or verify the designated beneficiary of your current Reward Card, ask the cashier during your transaction. The more people that designate St. Elizabeth as their beneficiary school the more dollars St. Elizabeth earns to help defray the costs of tuition.

Thank you for participating in this fundraiser.

CAMPBELL LABELS & GENERAL MILLS

Don't forget to send in your labels. A box is in the front of the school for your children to drop off any labels.

Also a flyer will be sent out with all the labels that we can collect.

Student Birthdays

The following students will be celebrating a birthday in the month of December. Happy Birthday to

Michelle Ramirez	Antonio Barrientos
Antonia Soto	Alice Vrana
Breanne Prado	Sophia Duarte
Michael Gonzalez	Eric Miranda
Henry Blackburn	Victoria Mack
Khie Johnson	Fabian Ibarra
Mizani McKellar	Amanda Martinez
Elvin Rosa	Jake Robb
Travis Robb	Eric Cooper-Meadors
Michael Borth	Julia Jochim
Jennifer Jochim	Jonathan Morin
Benjamin Chavez	Sayla Luna
Jonathan Arellano	Michael Brown
Guadalupe Perales	Manon Williams
Marcela Guerrero	Lewis Zaragoza
Demetrius Hinojosa-Rowland	Elizabeth Stratton
Maximus Hinojosa-Rowland	Kathy Garner
Juliette Breeding	Tomas Salazar

TEACHERS' NOTES

Mrs. Strunk & Mrs. Mendez – Pre-Kindergarten

The children had fun making Thanksgiving crafts and learning about the Pilgrims and Indians.

Advent Season is here and we will be preparing for the birth of our Lord Jesus. We will now focus on the season of Advent and preparing for Christmas. We will also be practicing Christmas songs for the Field Trip and The Christmas Program at Religion time.

We will begin a new unit in Language Arts called "Helping Hands". We will be learning about community helpers. Again, we will be reading stories and learning songs and finger plays about community helpers.

We will focus on patterns at Math time.

We will be learning about community helpers and what they do during Social Studies.

What floats and what sinks will be the Science lesson this month.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Field Trip to St. Joseph, Friday, December 12, 2008
Christmas Program, Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the church
PRE-K Christmas Party, Friday, December 19, 2008
December 19, 2008 is a half day, noon dismissal

More information to come on these events.

Mrs. Guerrero & Mrs. Miranda – KA and Ms. Vercillo & Ms. Martinez - KB

December is always a fun and busy month.

Important Dates to Remember:

November 30 Advent begins

December 1–5 Book Fair

December 2 Pre-K, Kinder, and 1st grade dinner at 7:00 p.m. in the cafeteria, babysitting is provided (please notify the office if you need babysitting)

December 5 Feast of St. Nicholas

December 12 Please send 1 white T-shirt or turtleneck, we will be making a cute Christmas shirt for the party

December 15 Field Trip to Williamsburg Village Nursing Center 9:30 a.m.

December 16 Christmas Program at 7:00 p.m. in Church. Please have your child in their classroom at 6:30 p.m.

*****Kindergarten students will participate. They will present the nativity story and sing "Away in a Manger". Unlike upper grades, Kindergarten students must be picked up immediately after their performance from their classroom. If they have an older sibling you may bring them back in the Church to sit with you for the remainder of the performance.**

December 18 Taco Breakfast and Buck-a-Jean Day

December 19 Jesse Tree Program (5th grade), all parents are welcome; Christmas party (parents are welcome); NOON Dismissal

In Religion, we discuss and coordinate activities related to Advent and the birth of Jesus. We also study Christmas around the world which gives students an opportunity to learn how other nationalities celebrate during this special time of year.

In Language Arts, we continue with emergent reading skills such as: segmenting, blending, and decoding. Please watch for decodable readers in your child's daily folder. Please note we will use these readers every day in the classroom, so be sure to send their book back to school every day. Be sure your child reads the book at home every night, as repetition is extremely important in building excellent reading skills. We will also continue to write in our journals, and work in our handwriting book to develop letter writing skills.

Since many families will be traveling this holiday season, we would like to use this information for Social Studies. If you will be traveling, or someone will be coming to visit you, please get a picture or a postcard

from the destination and we will track this on our U.S. map. We will discuss other states, climates and items included in the picture or postcard. We will be sure to return these to you as soon as we are finished.

In Math, we will continue with the formation of numerals and build on this concept through addition exploration. You can reinforce this concept at home by using any manipulatives that are readily available.

Please know that Christmas gifts are not expected but always appreciated. Christmas gifts for the classroom are a wonderful way for us to share our joy with the children. Any craft items (pipe cleaners, cotton balls, paper plates, new bins for the table! Both classes hint, hint, sets of multi colored dry erase markers, great stocking stuffer ideas for your children – glue sticks and new red daily folders).

Merry Christmas! God bless you all!

Mrs. Fabian – 1A and Mrs. Patton – 1B
Happy Holidays from First Grade

We would like to wish all families a Happy and Safe Holiday Season!!!

During the month of December the class will have many special projects and events coming up. Please check the Web page for any changes daily (flyer will be sent home). We will also make sure that it is also posted in the daily planner.

Religion – We will be practicing the mass for Christmas Eve. If you have not turned in the green form for participation, please send in as soon as possible so parts can be picked. In our books we will talk and learn about what the Christmas season is all about.

Science - We will continue the Life science lesson about seasons of the year and how the apple tree changes, the changes of deciduous trees, seeds of a broad leaved tree, cones/seeds of conifers, life stages of a tree, and the age of trees. After Christmas break we will finish the lesson and have a unit test.

Social Studies – Work! Work! Work! will be the unit for the month. Topics will be: Jobs at home and at school, how you perform on a job, families basic human needs, the past, present, future, spending and saving, goods of services at home/school/community, transportation, and the farmer. We will have a unit test before Christmas.

English - Adjectives will be the new part of our sentence structure. Ask your student to sing the jingles that they have learned about a sentence, noun, verb, and the new jingle adjective. At the end of the

month we will review all the parts we have learned so far.

Math – We will finish Lesson 3 – Addition/Subtraction/ Fact Families and have a test the second week of December. After the test we will start Unit 4 which includes Venn Diagrams, tall charts, real graphs, picture graphs, range, mode, and median.

Language Arts/Reading – Please keep reading at home with your student all decodable books and any book they are interested in reading. The reading scores are below Bench mark at this time of the school year. Sounds that will be introduced: /ch/ spelled ch and _tch, /ar/ spelled ar, /w/ spelled w, /er/ spelled er, ir, ur, review short vowel sounds, /k/ spelled /k/, /ng/ spelled _ng, /kw/ spelled q, /y/ spelled y, and finishing with long vowel sounds.

Mrs. McClure – 2A and Mrs. Clack – 2B
Religion

During the month of December, our little angels will continue to discuss the Advent which means “coming”. We will continue to work on our Advent project adding a candle and a good deed that they will do their best to act out; lighting each of these candles at the end of each week here at school before break. We will also continue to discuss the Corporal Works of Mercy. We will complete the Works of Mercy next week as we make our annual trip to St. Joseph’s Nursing Home to carol and bring them warm fuzzies for the holidays. Please remember to check the resident’s wish list that was sent home a few weeks ago. This was emailed to everyone on Monday afternoon. Check your emails. WOOOOHOOOO!!! Tis the Season.

Math

Our mathematicians will continue to work on their adding and subtracting. We are moving into adding and possibly subtracting 2-digit numbers without and with regrouping. ALL second graders are expected to know their addition and subtraction facts by heart and should be working on this every day. Please make sure that we are flashing those addition and subtraction facts at home nightly.

English and Reading

Our little ones will continue to work on Shurley Method. We will continue to work on jingles up to prepositions. Remember to read every night. All students should be reading at least 20 minutes a night. This is important to help keep up with the daily reading during Christmas Break. This will help reading levels stay up when the kiddos return after the holiday season.

Social Studies

Our little helpers will be working on community service. Here we will use this time in class to help prepare for our visit to the nursing home.

Science

Our little Geologist will begin to move into their new booklet. We will discuss different rocks and categorizing as well as begin to describe the physical properties of the rocks they are observing.

Mrs. Clack and I want to thank you for all the support that you have given us during the first half of the year. We hope that you, your little ones as well as the rest of your family add to the memories held tight in your heart. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Ms. Bright – 3A and Mrs. Price – 3B

Whew! November flew past us and we accomplished so much. We were introduced to many new saints this year and now have many more ideas of ways to achieve sainthood ourselves. We moved on to addition in math and reviewed simple addition, including the concept of carrying over. In English we have moved on to the topic of verbs (past, present and future, both regular and irregular), but will continue to revisit nouns, adjectives and adverbs. In Reading we reviewed the /le/, /ar/ and /er/ sounds; please remember that we are teaching these as concepts so the students may carry them on to decode and spell new words with the same concepts; we also discussed fantasy and reality genres in literature. We had fun working on our mini-research projects about Indians from different geographical regions and learned how to work in small groups to accomplish a common purpose. We also completed our reports on the U.S. presidents and had fun learning interesting facts about them in the process. We learned more about our solar system, too. Did you know that Jupiter has 63 moons, but Mercury and Venus don't have any? Or that Venus orbits in the opposite direction from all the other planets?

Coming up this month we will discuss Advent, Christmas and the Holy Family in Religion. We will be reviewing subtraction in math, including subtraction with borrowing; we will also be reviewing all the math concepts learned so far. In English we will continue with our study of verbs and do a lot of creative writing. In Reading we will focus on the /ow/ and /oy/ sounds (both tricky) and read some realistic fiction stories. We will learn about family traditions for Christmas and discuss our family trees in social studies and complete our study of the solar system.

Just as a heads up... we will be working on our next book reports in January, focusing on biographies. We would like the students to choose from books on famous black Americans (including MLK, Jr.), or another biography of interest. Please help your child choose their book by Dec. 15 and bring it in for

approval. This will give everyone the opportunity to read over the holiday and we can jump right in when we return from the break.

Mrs. Schmitz – 4A

Religion

We have been working on Saint Projects and learning about the saints. We will now be focusing our attention on learning the 10 commandments. We will reflect on them and try to get a better understanding of what they mean and how they apply to our lives. We will also take time to reflect on the blessings in our lives and what we are thankful for in our daily lives.

Math

We are working on our multiplication facts and working multiplication problems each day. The students have been working on knowing their multiplication facts by memory. We are now working on double digit multiplication and will soon be moving on to division problems.

Science

Beginning in January students will be required to turn in science articles once a month. The articles will be due on the last Friday of each month. A good place to find articles will be in the newspaper, magazines or on-line. One good website is Science News for Kids. Science fair projects will begin in January. Fourth grade is so excited to be participating in the science fair this year. We will be selecting our partners and selecting our project before we leave for the Christmas holiday.

ELA and Reading

We have been focusing our attention on stories that tell us about Changes in America. We will now be reading stories that discuss mystery and medicine. The novel we will be reading is Gone-Away Lake. Each student has a copy of the book that we will use in class. We will also be reading The Story of Susan La Flesche Picotte the first Native-American doctor in the United States.

Students have been working on writing poems, letters to Santa, and learning the difference between similes, metaphors, and personification.

Social Studies

We are still focusing our attention on Texas long ago. Students had the opportunity to make artifacts in class to explain some aspect of how people long ago lived. We will now be focusing more in detail on the different Native American tribes and why they settled in particular parts of Texas and how they survived. Once we finish up the unit on Native Americans, we will move on to learning about the colonies and the settlers that came to Texas.

Ms. Hickey – 5A

As 5th grade prepares for Christmas, this will be a busy month for us! We are practicing for the Christmas program as well as practicing for the Jesse Tree Celebration. The Jesse Tree will be on Friday, December 19th after Mass. It should start at 9:30 – and parents are welcome to attend!

English: This month we continue to strengthen our skills in the many parts of speech. I hope that by Christmas break, our 5th graders have memorized all of the prepositions (with a little help from the Shurley Method, of course!). We'll also be practicing writing paragraphs and complete sentences. In Spelling, we continue with our lessons. In December, we will cover Lessons 9-11.

Reading: We will continue with "Island of the Blue Dolphins". We will practice our vocabulary, comprehension and understanding of the conflicts our main character has suffered. We won't start a new chapter book before the break, but we will work with either short stories or guided reading up until the break.

Science: We have learned about plates in the mantle, plate tectonics, plate boundaries, earthquakes and faults – now we move on to volcanoes! We will also begin learning about weathering and soil formation. Also – by the time we break for Christmas, our scientists will have selected their science fair project, their partners, and should have a plan for what needs to be done over the holidays. All work on the projects will be done in class when we return in January, so supplies should be on hand at that time.

I hope all our 5th grade families have a joyous and safe holiday season!

Mr. Barta – 5B

Math: During the week of 12/8-12/12 the students will have a Math test over division of whole numbers on Wednesday. Beginning on Thursday, Dec. 11 they move on to Chapter 4 (page 134 in the textbook) where they will learn about prime and composite numbers, factors, and then begin the comprehensive study of fractions.

Social Studies: Starting December 8 the students will begin studying the *colonization* of the New World by the different European countries. They will explore the impact of the contact between the European and Native American cultures, the formation of colonial governments, and the development of trade between the New World and Europe. They will study from p.146-175 in the Social Studies textbook.

Religion: The students will study the Mass as a liturgical celebration and the different emphasis of worship during the liturgical year in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8 they will study God's Word in the liturgy. In Chapter 9 they will learn how we offer ourselves to the Father with Jesus at Mass. We will also practice singing Christmas songs for the Christmas program.

Have a Merry Christmas!

Mrs. Belcher – MS Religion

All Middle School students will continue to touch on Advent, the season of waiting and preparation. The first of two major Vocabulary tests for the year will be on Thursday, December 18. Students must turn in their Review on the day of the test. The Current Event article for December is not mandatory, however, will be used as an extra credit grade.

6th Grade

Students will come back in January ready to focus on Epiphany, sin stories, Jacob and Esau and the plagues of Moses.

7th Grade

Students will begin their study of The Parables of Jesus.

8th Grade

Faith Sharing #4, the final assignment, will be due on January 8th. Students will learn about the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the Precepts of the Church.

Mrs. Powell - MS Social Studies

6th Grade

6th Grade is still mummifying the Pharaoh Hens. They should be completely mummified by the 1st of the New Year. We are currently in chapter 6. In this chapter, students will learn and apply the reading skill of identifying and using sequencing. This chapter will examine the rise of Ancient Greece and the development of democracy, philosophy, and the arts during the Golden Age of Athens. Later on in the month we will be in Chapter 7 which will introduce the students to daily life in Athens, and Sparta, and the spread of Greek culture. They will learn about the everyday lives of the Greeks.

7th Grade

The students are currently in chapter 6, and they are learning about how cultural differences caused friction between Texas settlers and the Mexican government in the 1820's. In Chapter 7 we will discuss the building tensions between the Texas settlers and the Mexican government caused fighting to break out and eventually lead to Texas fighting for its independence from Mexico.

8th Grade

We are currently on chapter 6; this chapter discusses the American Revolution. We will discuss how the Americans fought for liberty on many fronts and in many ways. Towards the end of the chapter we will discuss the British surrendered at Yorktown, Britain recognized the United States as an independent country.

Mrs. Robb – MS Science

All science fair forms have gone home. Students should submit their permission slip form and their Topic forms by the end of the week. Progress reports go home Thursday, December 11.

6th Grade

We began Chapter 4, Chemical Bonds this week. Students will learn the difference between Ionic and Covalent bonds. Next, students will learn about chemical reactions such as color change, precipitation, gas production, changes in temperature and changes in properties. If time permits we will move on to Chapter 6, Acids, Bases and Solutions.

7th Grade

Students just completed a model of DNA which we have hanging in the classroom. We started a unit on genetics this week which will take us through the month of December. Students will have a project to complete but most of which will be done in class.

8th Grade

Students are studying Infectious and noninfectious diseases. Topic forms for the science fair are due Friday. Time permitting we will begin studying the nervous system.

Mr. Dettmer – MS Math

Sixth grade will be working on number theory and fractions. Seventh grade will be doing operations with fractions. Algebra will be solving and applying proportions and graphs and functions. The other algebra class will continue with polynomials, and exponents.

Ms. Johnson – MS English/Literature

6th Grade English—We continue the unit on adjectives which includes proper, possessive, demonstrative, numeral, and interrogative. The test is scheduled for December 9. We will then begin a long study of verbs. Before the break we will cover action, linking, helping, participles, and irregular. A helping verb quiz will be December 16. Spelling for December includes lessons 13, 14, and 15.

6th Grade Literature—We are well into Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Assignments for

December will include vocabulary, comprehension, story maps, quotations, a puzzle, and an essay. The test is scheduled for December 16. We will then watch the movie to see how the novel and movie differ.

8th Grade English—Nouns will be the main topic in class which will include person, gender, nominative case (subject, complement, direct address, appositive), possessive case, objective case (direct object, object of the preposition, appositive, indirect object, adverbials, cognate), collective, and joint ownership. The test is scheduled for December 16. Spelling includes lessons 13 and 14.

Mrs. Borth – MS Literature/English

<http://teacherweb.com/TX/StElizabethofHungaryCatholicSchool/JenniferBorth>

7th Grade

We are still working on our research papers. We have been taking notes for weeks now and are ready to start organizing our notes into an outline. The research paper cannot go home, so if your student falls behind or is absent, please encourage them to come to tutoring after school or during their recess. We have also begun reading Twelve Angry Men. This play is about the triumph and the fragility of justice and how to deal with prejudices.

8th Grade

We have just completed our unit over The Giver and continuing with the theme of Sameness, we will now begin reading The Crucible. This play is about how people were persecuted for being different. It is about the Salem Witch Trials and about the Red Scare. The students will be assigned parts and will act this out during class.

As always, please continue to check my website for important dates.

Mrs. Barrientos – Pre-K-8th Grade Spanish

Felices Pascuas!

Pre-K – We are working with colors on identifying, phonics and many songs. For Christmas we will be talking about the Virgin Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and Christmas in Hispanic Countries. We will be reading the book “TOO MANY TAMALES”.

Kinder – Continues to work hard on phonics. For Christmas we will be talking about the Virgin Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and Christmas in Hispanic Countries. We will be reading the book “TOO MANY TAMALES”. We will also have some Mexican bread with Chocolate.

1st Grade – They are working very hard on the days of the week and HOY, AYER, MANANA (today, yesterday and tomorrow). For Christmas we will be talking about the Virgin Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and in Hispanic Countries. We will be reading the book “TOO MANY TAMALES”. We will also have some Mexican bread with chocolate.

2nd Grade – We are talking about LA POSADA the meaning, the song and how Hispanic Countries celebrate Christmas.

3rd Grade - We are very busy with our pets, creating sentences using AR verbs and describing our pet. We are creating a paragraph “describing our pets”. We will also be exposed to the experience of LA POSADA the meaning, the song and how Hispanic Countries celebrate Christmas.

4th and 5th Grade – We are working on our play for a live POSADA. Posada is the re-enacting journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. So we are talking about La Posada and what happened. Practicing the song and we will also be practicing praying the rosary for La Posada. La Posada will be the last week of classes. I will send more information home next week.

6th Grade – We are concentrating on weather, making sentences and expressing weather. We will be learning about LA POSADA, the song, the rosary. We will be having some Mexican bread and chocolate.

7th Grade – I am re-teaching the AR verbs and it's conjugations. We will be learning about LA POSADA, the song, the rosary. We will be having a little taste of how Mexico celebrates Christmas.

8th Grade - We have been learning about the Direct and Indirect object pronouns and have done well. We have also been writing a lot about weather and describing the weather on a certain vacation sport that we so much enjoyed. They will be writing a paper on what is LA POSADA. We will also have a little taste of chocolate caliente y pan Mexicano.

Thank you so much for your help and support. Spanish cannot be fun without fun activities and parent's participation.

Mrs. Connelly – Library/PK-3 Computer Library News

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. This month, library activities and studies will revolve around Advent and Christmas.

Thanks to all the faithful and dedicated volunteers, parents, grandparents and students, who have given of

their time and talents to the Safari Book Fair. The Fair is underway as this newsletter goes out today in Thursday folders. A full report will be given in the library's January Newsletter.

PK-3 Computer

PK, Kinder, and 1st grade students have been successful logging on and off three different computer programs as well as surfing approved Internet educational sites. 2nd and 3rd grade students have created a folder on the desktop to save and retrieve any work done in class. Keyboarding will be the focus after the holidays. Students are encouraged to practice their computer skills over the break.

As the year comes to an end, I am thankful for many things, but most of all, for the opportunity to teach your children. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

NJHS

NJHS members sponsored the annual Turkey Feather contest. For one week members sold feathers for 25 cents to students during lunch and recess. The teacher with the most bought feathers would win the honor of “Turkey for a Day”. This year's winner, with 419 feathers, was Mrs. Price 3B. Congratulations Mrs. Price – you were an awesome “Turkey for a Day”.

Mrs. Kuterbach – Music

DECEMBER 16, 2008 is fast approaching! The St. Elizabeth Christmas program is here at last! The students have been working very hard to present you with an evening of Christmas songs. All Pre-K, Kinder, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students need to be in their homerooms by 6:30 PM on the night of the program. Eighth grade, Jr. High Choir members and guitar students need to report to the Chapel. Students should wear their “Sunday best”. No blue jeans, T-shirts, or flip-flops please. Our performance will begin at 7:00 PM. The preparation and presentation of the Christmas program is a major part of each student's grade for the second quarter. Please invite your families to join us for an enjoyable evening. Information can be found on my webpage that can be accessed through www.saintspride.com. Go to Academics and Spiritual Formation; find my name (Ms. Kuterbach) on the list of teacher web sites and this will take you to my web site. Students can find a link to a file containing the words to their songs plus you can view a short video about the upcoming program.

Sixth grade students will be doing a cross-curriculum lesson on Victorian Christmas to go along with their study of *The Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. A link can be found on this subject on my web site also. Seventh grade will begin the study of opera in preparation for our field trip in January to see the Dallas Opera.

As always, please join us at our weekly masses. Thank you for all your support of the fine arts program at St. Elizabeth.

Ms. Cekosky – Art

For December, classes will be working on some 3-D forms for the holidays. Classes will also be working on weaving for texture and creating patterns. Some of the older classes will be looking at proportion and time periods (such as the Middle Ages). All of the classes will be creating something for Christmas.

Happy Holidays
Ms. Cekosky

Mrs. Stepniewski – 4th – 8th Grade Computer

Christmas PowerPoint pages will be our focus this month for Fourth Grade. We are also creating paper ornaments, as we did last year. Fifth Grade is continuing LOGO programming procedures and color commands. Sixth Grade will be finishing their unit on spreadsheets with a test on December 18th. Seventh Grade will be working on a family/friend address database and Christmas gift database. Eighth Grade should be finishing their “Designing a Computer” project before the end of the year. All classes are practicing touch typing through various assignments during class.

I wish all of you a wonderful Christmas vacation.

Mr. Clack – P.E.

The 6th-8th grades will start keeping their journals on Monday, 12/8. These need to be written in each and every day listing what is eaten for each meal. They may use any old folder to keep this in order. I will collect them from time to time to make sure this is being kept up with. After Christmas we will begin looking at nutritional values and diet. This will help the students stay conscious of his/her own health and well being. We will also continue playing basketball and other games with all age groups.

Encouraging Brain Growth Over a Lifetime

In the last decade, scientists have discovered that people generate new brain cells and new connections between these cells throughout life. Building these mental reserves can serve you well both now and much later in life.

P. Murali Doraiswamy, chief of biological psychiatry at Duke University Medical Center, says it's like having more cell phone towers to send messages along. The more towers you have, the fewer calls you'll miss.

The late neurologist Lawrence Katz came up with the term "neurobics" for activities that challenge the brain. These activities can be as simple as brushing your teeth or dialing the phone with your nondominant hand to strengthen pathways in the opposite side of the brain.

Learning to play a musical instrument or speak a foreign language stimulates the brain, as do common games like chess and bridge and board games like Stratego or Napoleon's Triumph that require thinking and socializing at the same time. The brain likes novelty.

Exercise is known to be beneficial in boosting brain health. It improves blood flow to the brain, which encourages neural growth and connectivity for people of all ages.

Getting enough sleep is also vital. It is during REM sleep that we consolidate memory in the brain, says Marianne J. Legato of Columbia University. Quoted in *The Wall Street Journal*, she says untreated sleep apnea can be harmful.

These strategies are good for your overall health, are good for your brain, and may increase your defenses against cognitive decline in later life.

Writing Is Important Too

All parents are thrilled to hear their children read for the first time. But oftentimes, parents don't pay as much attention to the writing skills of the very young.

Jane Kostelc, early childhood specialist at Parents as Teachers National Center in St. Louis,

says that no matter what your child's age, he or she is learning to write. "When your baby uses her index finger and thumb to grasp objects, it is called the pincer grasp. This skill forms the basis for holding a pencil in a mature writing position."

Kostelc suggests that there are many ways to develop the writing skills of children. Babies should have lots of tummy time to build strong backs, shoulders, and arms for crawling and writing. Being able to control a pencil depends on the stability of the shoulder and arm, and the strength and dexterity of the fingers.

She recommends that parents let their toddlers play with materials of different textures and consistencies--such as shaving cream or playdough. This provides great stimulation for fine motor skill development. Unscrewing lids or turning doorknobs helps the toddler's wrists become strong, yet flexible.

Sitting beside your child and drawing helps him or her associate writing with comfort and joy during the preschool years.

Preschoolers also show a big interest in writing during pretend time. They scribble grocery lists or restaurant checks while playing store. They begin to display an understanding of the spoken word and realize words can be written down and read the same way every time. Kostelc suggests giving your preschooler old calendars, notebooks, or address books to write in. Point out letters as you see billboards or street signs while out and about.

"Sit with your child and let him or her enjoy the process of learning to write without pressure to make the letters right. That will come with time," she said.

The Breakfast Dilemma

Giving encouragement and choices could be the best way to get kids to eat breakfast.

Recent studies show that kids who eat breakfast behave better than kids who don't. But what can a parent do when a child refuses to eat this most important meal of the day? If the child says he or she isn't hungry, be patient and allow him or her to begin slowly. Eventually, most children will get accustomed to eating early in the morning before

school. They begin to understand that it helps improve their all-around performance and ward off hunger before lunch.

Many simple, but healthy, food choices are available. Just find a few that your child agrees upon and you will eliminate morning squabbles. Here are some suggestions on the types of foods to stock up on and other ways to get through the breakfast controversy:

- Cheese sticks or cubes, yogurt, or fruit can be a great, fast start. It may not be a full breakfast in your mind, but at least your son or daughter is eating something nutritious.
- Get out the blender and make smoothies together. A varied combination of such things as bananas, strawberries, yogurt, frozen yogurt, and fruit juices can give a child a great start to any day. There also are pre-packaged instant breakfast drinks that offer a lot of nutrients.
- Whole grain toast with peanut butter can be a healthy choice, too, or make some instant oatmeal. The flavors of oatmeal available these days can satisfy even the fussiest of eaters.
- Granola bars and healthy breakfast bars can also be a quick alternative. Make sure to read the labels to identify if the bars really do have any nutrients instead of just sugar and sodium.
- Frozen waffles, pancakes, and French toast are fast and can be made even healthier with a helping of strawberries or blueberries on top.
- Don't turn on the television, computer, or radio while you sit down with your child to eat breakfast.
- Have your child set his or her alarm 15 minutes early to allow for breakfast time.