



# THE ST. JOAN OF ARC



# Gazette

MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS  
SJA SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

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ALL ABOUT OUR SCHOOL...

## Super SCIENCE at St. Joan of Arc Catholic School

By MRS. CAROLINE ROBERTS - PRINCIPAL  
AND MRS. TAMMY SELIC - SCIENCE TEACHER

St. Joan of Arc Catholic School held its first "Family Science Lab Night" on September 12th geared toward Pre-K3 through 8th grade students and their families. The theme of the lab was "What floats your boat?". The interest was exceptional as there were 400 participants. All enjoyed gathering to have pizza followed by a lab requiring them to design their own boats using one square sheet of aluminum foil. The families were challenged to see how many pennies their boat could carry before sinking in a tub of water. This exercise reinforced the concepts of buoyancy and surface area. The top winner was Zachary Spencer, in 3rd grade, designed a boat that was able to float 117 pennies! He was recognized on closed circuit TV with a certificate and a gift card to treat his family to frozen yogurt.



Mrs. Selic wore her science lab coat and performed various demonstrations, from the school stage, including creating a density column. She layered red white and blue liquids in the density column in honor of the victims of 9.11 as well as all those currently serving our country. "Proud to be an

American" played in the background as she did this activity. Additionally, Mrs. Selic displayed density by floating a diet soda can and sinking a regular soda can in a tub of water. Students were in awe by how the regular soda can sunk versus how the diet soda floated.



Some of the parent feedback included: "it was great to see so many fathers at the event". Mrs. Selic's favorite comment from a parent was "my kids won't stop talking about the Lab Night" and "There is the Science Lady" from a Pre-K student. Families are looking forward to three more Family Science Nights this school year. Mrs. Roberts, St. Joan of Arc principal stated: "I am tremendously proud that Mrs. Selic was adventurous and brave enough to lead a lab with so many varied participants ranging from Pre-K3 through 8th grade students and their parents. She is enthusiastic and competent. Mrs. Selic is an exemplary teacher and we are so blessed to have her as part of the St. Joan of Arc Catholic School Family. We are already discussing the next Family Science Lab Night with a CSI (blood and fingerprints) theme. Of course, there will be a surprise crime in which families will have to use their newly acquired skills in order to solve the crime!



Mrs. Selic, although new to St. Joan of Arc Catholic School is no stranger to the Diocese of Palm Beach. She was a high school science teacher at Pope John Paul II High School for nine years and taught five additional years at other schools. Her degree is in biology education. Mrs. Selic is not only our middle school science teacher, she also is the Hydroponics and Aeroponics Club advisor for grades 3 through 5, STEAM middle school club advisor, and Hydroponics and Aeroponics middle school enrichment teacher. Although Mrs. Selic is the middle science teacher, she will subsequently be bringing Pre-K3 through 5th grade classes to the science lab, on a monthly basis, to perform a science lab. This effort will further enhance all the science work Pre-K3 through 5th grade homeroom teachers are currently doing as St. Joan of Arc Catholic School offers a top-notch comprehensive science program.

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## Parents and students **RETREAT** together...

By VICTORIA FARRINGTON

In the hectic pace of our lives in today's world, many of us long for an opportunity to get away from it all, to travel to a place of sanctuary where we can be quiet, relax, and enjoy a bit of solitude and peace.

Well, would it surprise you to know that St. Joan of Arc Catholic School actually affords that opportunity to its students and parents through the school's retreat program? Every year, our teachers plan a retreat experience for their students, and our parents are invited and encouraged to participate in these.

The retreats are scheduled all throughout the school year, from the PreK-4 classes having theirs right before Thanksgiving so that they can include a visit to the parish Food Pantry with their donations, to the Grade 2 retreat, set a few weeks prior to their celebration of their First Holy Eucharist in May.

As is the practice in the school's religion program, each retreat is designed to address some aspect of

spiritual development for the particular age level of the students in the class. Topics can range from learning about 'Jesus as our Friend' to praying with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The teachers select a scripture passage that relates to a particular benchmark of faith formation from our religion curriculum; then they prepare activities for the students in order to teach and reinforce the benchmark. Because each retreat is scripture-based, this allows a wonderful way for students to come to know Jesus Christ more fully through their reading and reflection upon the Gospel.

For the parent component of each retreat, they also break open the scriptures in small group discussions of the selected passage through the use of the Catholic Serendipity Bible which has helpful and 'user-friendly' questions that are crafted to effect a deeper adult understanding of the sacred Word of God. Parents also receive a mini Power Point presentation on the teaching of the Catholic

Church connected to the retreat theme and, as a final moment of quiet before joining their children for the remainder of the retreat time, they are lead through a meditation of the retreat's scripture passage. These guided reflections where parents silently ponder their own faith life and experiences become a peaceful way for them to more fully understand their relationship with God.

The rationale for our retreat program is well stated in the Catholic Encyclopedia which describes the necessity of such retreats: *"In the fever and agitation of modern life, the need of meditation and spiritual repose impresses itself on Christian souls who desire to reflect on their eternal destiny, and direct their life in this world towards God."*

It is the purpose of our retreat program that our families not only enjoy this religious experience with one another and in community, but that each child and adult will grow in their knowledge and appreciation of their Catholic faith and in their love of God and one another.

## Sister de **LOURDES** in our hearts forever...

As you may all know, our beloved Sister de Lourdes O'Mahoney, passed peacefully on Wednesday, November 5, 2014. She arrived to St. Joan of Arc from Cork, Ireland in 1962. Sister de Lourdes was a third grade, math and penmanship teacher at our School. Although retired from teaching, she faithfully volunteered until her last day as a lunch monitor for students. She truly enjoyed the interaction with the children, staff, and parents. Sister De Lourdes now rests in the arms of our Lord, whom she served so faithfully during her many years of consecrated life at St. Joan of Arc.



# In pursuit of a **WELL-ROUNDED** student



BY MEAGHAN BRESNAHAN

St. Joan of Arc is dedicated to educating students in a supportive, spiritual environment. And that education doesn't end in the classroom. As part of an increased effort to enrich the learning experience, St. Joan has continued to grow its successful athletic program and expanded its suite of after-school clubs and programs available to students in all grades.

There are a variety of competitive sports teams that are open to St. Joan students as early as 4th grade. Participation is a priority in the athletic program, and we strive to offer opportunities for students to join at all levels. As students grow more competitive and skilled in their sport, they have the possibility of traveling with the varsity teams. The Girls Softball team had a particularly impressive season, having made it through the league championship undefeated this past year. Many of the students who participate in athletics go on to compete at the high school level, and some even continue on to college varsity sports and professional leagues.

Students don't need to try out for a particular team to access the benefits of a team-oriented environment. Mrs. Jill Black, the veteran Physical Education Teacher, includes a focus on teamwork during activities in physical education classes, especially for elementary school students. As the students advance, Mrs. Black and Miss Martorana instruct them on the mechanics and skills of all the different sports offered by the school in the hopes of sparking interest for further participation. These skill-building sessions during the schooldays contribute to athletic ability, physical fitness, and ultimately increased levels of confidence.

Outside of the sports arena, students can engage in after-school clubs and activities from graders Pre-K3 all the way through 8th grade. From fashion design, to French classes, to robotics — the wide range of programs ensures that there is something everyone. Our goal for on-campus clubs is to spark new interests and hobbies in the within the supportive environment of St. Joan's walls. For instance, students are discovering previously known passions for making videos through Video Club and public speaking via Youth Toastmasters. These clubs give students a chance to see what opportunities lie ahead by giving them a strong foundation for the basics. For example, the Fashion Design Club teaches students how to sew a button and use a sewing machine. These clubs are either free or offered at a low cost to enable participation for all interested students.



One of the new clubs added to the lineup this year is Creative Culinary, a cooking class that offers more than just basic kitchen skills. The class is offered at two levels: Culinary I for grades Pre-K — 2nd and Culinary II for grades 3 — 5. Mrs. Debora Bradley designs the Culinary II workshop and takes a close look at the eating experience from start to finish.

Each class focuses on a particular recipe or dish, and the students are actively involved in preparing ideas to the next week's recipe. On the day of the class, they begin with a sanitary preparation: hand washing, cleaning the cooking area, and apron tying as all our chefs proudly wear their culinary attire. Throughout the class they learn safe techniques for cooking over heat and using kitchen instruments. By the end of the session, they've created their own masterpieces, like Mrs. Bradley's grandmother's marina sauce — a recipe that survived her family's immigration from Italy. Occasionally, Monsignor McGraw will stop in to taste the fruits of their efforts and offer encouragement to the students.

For Mrs. Bradley, Creative Culinary is less about preparing young students to cook full meals, and more about inspiring awareness for the many different aspects of the cooking and eating experience. She encourages her students to pay close attention to what they hear — not just what they taste and smell, like the “whoosh” of tomatoes in a hot pan. She also strives to impart proper etiquette by instilling respectful manners, praying before their meal, having young men pull out chairs for the young ladies in the class, and table setting in formal and informal settings. It's her hope that students will call upon these nuggets of cooking knowledge in the future — whether they're helping parents prepare Thanksgiving dinner or whipping up biscuits in their college dorm rooms. Mrs. Bradley enjoys hearing feedback that confirms her students are learning something new each week. “I told my mom we have to buy the imported San Marzano tomatoes from Italy to get Mrs. Bradley's marinara sauce just right,” claimed one student. An impressed parent even reported that her son “said he would like to try the biscuit, eggs and cheese for his scouts' camping trip.”

This year's fall and winter clubs proved to be more popular than ever anticipated! Be sure to look for the Spring Clubs flyer, which will include Math Club for 3rd and 4th grade students, and sign up before the final deadline to ensure a spot. Take a note out of Mrs. Bradley's book and encourage your child to try something a little different: *“You can do this boys and girls, trust me you can.”*

#### GIRLS TEAMS

VOLLEYBALL Gr. 5-8  
BASKETBALL Gr. 5-8  
CHEERLEADING Gr. 5-8  
FLAG FOOTBALL Gr. 5-8  
SOCCER Gr. 5-8  
CROSS COUNTRY Gr. 4-8  
SOFTBALL Gr. 5-8  
TENNIS Gr. 5-8

#### BOYS TEAMS

TRAVEL FLAG FOOTBALL Gr. 7-8  
INTRAMURAL FOOTBALL Gr. 5-8  
SOCCER Gr. 5-8  
BASKETBALL Gr. 5-8  
CROSS COUNTRY Gr. 4-8  
BASEBALL Gr. 6-8  
TENNIS Gr. 5-8



## Parents and parishioners... it's **AUCTION** time!

By LISA OLEARCZYK

Dust off your dancing shoes and gather your pearls, St. Joan of Arc will be roaring into the 1920's on Friday December 5th, 2014 at our **Fabulous, Feathers & Fedoras Annual Auction Gala**. Once a year we come together as a parish to celebrate our faith, family and friends in an evening filled with great food and loads of laughter. United by our cause and steeped in tradition, each year we generously sponsor, underwrite, and shop, raising a significant amount of money that allows us to grow our spiritual community and advance our Catholic Blue Ribbon School. Besides the flapper dresses & fedoras, this year's gala will take on a great new look and feel. The Silent, Super-Silent and Live Auctions will take place in Mercy Center, all driven and monitored by a new set of auctioneers who will keep the bidding

lively. Parents will not have to wait until late evening to bid on Class Projects. Each grade has combined to create eleven "Grade Projects" that will be highlighted and available for bid in our new Super-Silent Auction area from 6:00-8:15 pm. This will allow our Live Auction to conclude by 9:30pm and be followed by dancing in the Arena. Don't forget, that this year the Jazz Band will perform during dining hours in the Arena which will be reserved for VIP tables only. So gather your friends together, share a "Pearl Table" sponsorship and enjoy the evening in style. We want to extend a great big thank you to our auction committees who work so hard to create such a wonderful evening. St. Joan of Arc is truly blessed by all those involved! We hope you plan on attending and watch for the catalog to be placed online for preview. *See you there!*

## Journeying **FORWARD...**

By Msgr.  
MICHAEL D. MCGRAW  
SJA PASTOR



Dear Families of St. Joan of Arc School, Thank you for all that you do in support of your school and its programs. Everything at St. Joan of Arc School is focused on the educational success and maturing in faith of your children. For this reason, your parish and school is conducting a capital campaign called *Journeying Forward to the Heart of Our Future*. This effort will provide new facilities, athletic field, enrichment centers and new program possibilities. Over two and a half years of collaborative planning has taken shape in a vision and goals that provide for our school's continuity and prudent evolution. I am happy to report to you that at this time, we have received pledges amounting to 82% of our goal of \$5.5 million dollars. I would like to thank everyone who has pledged to our campaign up to this point. If you haven't made a pledge yet, please consider how you can be a part of our future success. I have confidence and hope that I can count on your support and generosity to push our effort "over the top". Because of your gift, St. Joan of Arc School will continue its tradition of excellence and be strongly positioned for the exciting future that lies ahead.

Please visit [www.stjoan.org](http://www.stjoan.org) for continued updates.



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