



St. Martin de Porres Catholic School

February Newsletter

*To everyone is given the manifestation of the Spirit
for the common good. – 1 Corinthians 12:7*

Principal's Message

When St. Paul tells the Corinthians that "everyone is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good" he is attempting to draw together the many talents that existed within that early Christian community. Over the past month, I have had the opportunity to visit with your child in their classroom, many teachers, and parents and I have discovered the many talents and the many ways that the spirit is manifested at St. Martin de Porres. I look forward over the next months and years to working with you in allowing all our strengths to come to the fore.

As part of a process to allow all to share in the building of our community, I invite parents and staff to attend our upcoming Catholic School Advisory Council meeting on Wednesday, February 24 at 7:00 p.m. here at the school. I've enclosed a further note in this newsletter outlining some of the important issues we will be discussing at this meeting.

I would like to thank all those parents who have dropped by the office in January to introduce themselves and offer me a warm welcome to St. Martin de Porres. I look forward to meeting all of you through the coming weeks and months.

CSAC Meeting for February

Parents and guardians are invited to participate in the February Catholic School Advisory Council (or CSAC) meeting. The CSAC offers parents a crucial voice in determining and setting policy at our school, working with the school staff and principal. For this coming meeting we will be having a meet and greet beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Beginning at 7:30, we will have the for-

AGENDA

1. Prayer
2. Principal Greeting and Introduction
3. Comments from the Chair
4. Discussion Issues
 - ✓ School Uniforms 2010 or 2011 Implementation
 - ✓ Lunchtime Routines for Students (Leaving School Property for Lunch)
 - ✓ Parent Volunteers in the School
 - ✓ Update and Discussion on all-day Kindergarten Sept. 2010
5. Questions from the Floor — for Chair and/or Principal

mal part of our meeting, including the agenda items listed above.

Please call the school at 393.5286 to confirm your attendance for this meeting. This allows us to ensure that there are sufficient snacks and coffee for all.

Patty Lunch for Students

Beginning this month, we are offering a Coco Patty and drink lunch for students from Grades 1 to Grade 8. All profits from the sale of patties go directly back to the school to support student programs at St. Martin de Porres school. The food and drinks are provided by "Coconut Cove Restaurant", a local business on Lawrence Avenue and Susan Tower.

Students may purchase a patty and drink for \$2.00 or a patty with coco break and drink for \$3.00. A form similar to our Pizza Lunch form has gone home with all students. Please ensure all orders are to the classroom teacher by Thursday, February 4th.

St. Martin de Porres Catholic School | Newsletter for February

All Day Kindergarten for 2010 School Year

As many parents in our community are now aware, beginning in September of 2010, this coming school year, St. Martin de Porres School will be offering all-day Kindergarten classes for both Junior and Senior Kindergarten. Many parents have already confirmed their participation in the program for JK but spots are still open for interested parents in our community. We are compiling a list of students from outside our school area for possible consideration and inclusion in the all-day Kindergarten should there be openings in the class. If you have a child for Junior or Senior Kindergarten for the 2010 school year (who is not already registered or attending St. Martin de Porres), please ensure that you register as soon as possible.

Part of the all-day Kindergarten program also includes the provision for before and after day school care should numbers warrant. We are surveying all our kindergarten parents this month to determine whether extended care is a need for them and how extended care could best be provided. Please return your surveys to the school office or to your child's Senior Kindergarten teacher.

If you require any further information on this program, do not hesitate to call the school office.

Cold Weather Reminder

You have most likely noted the fluctuations in the weather over the past few weeks. Just a reminder to check and see whether your child has adequate clothing and winter wear prior to them leaving for school. Frequently, our younger students leave boots, coats, and hats behind (in their classrooms and the school yard) during warmer winter weather and do not have sufficient warm clothing when the temperature drops. A warm hat, jacket, boots, and mitts are essential on cold days. Remind your child to place their winter clothes in their school bag during warmer temperatures so they are available for them when the inevitably colder weather occurs.

Academic and Athletic Mentoring Program

The "No Books, No Basketball" program designed specifically for students of Black or African heritage (from Grades 5 to 8) is registering students. The program is located at Joseph Brant Senior Public School, 270 Manse Avenue. The program offers homework assistance, one-on-one tutoring, basketball training, nutrition lessons, and fitness training. Sessions are on Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from January 16 to June 12, 2010. Contact Jam Johnson at 416.871.2636 for more information or email info@nbacanada.org.

Ash Wednesday and Lent

from www.catholic.org

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption. Why we receive the ashes?

Following the example of the Nine vites, who did penance in sackcloth and ashes, our foreheads are marked with ashes to humble our hearts and reminds us that life passes away on Earth. We remember this when we are told "Remember, Man is dust, and unto dust you shall return."

Ashes are a symbol of penance made sacramental by the blessing of the Church, and they help us develop a spirit of humility and sacrifice.

The distribution of ashes comes from a ceremony of ages past. Christians who had committed grave faults performed public penance. On Ash Wednesday, the Bishop blessed the hair shirts which they were to wear during the forty days of penance, and sprinkled over them ashes made from the palms from the previous year. Then, while the faithful recited the Seven Penitential Psalms, the penitents were turned out of the church because of their sins -- just as Adam, the first man, was turned out of Paradise because of his disobedience. The penitents did not enter the church

St. Martin de Porres Catholic School | Newsletter for February

Ash Wednesday and Lent (continued)

again until Maundy Thursday after having won reconciliation by the toil of forty days' penance and sacramental absolution. Later, all Christians, whether public or secret penitents, came to receive ashes out of devotion. In earlier times, the distribution of ashes was followed by a penitential procession.

The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. The ashes are christened with Holy Water and are scented by exposure to incense. While the ashes symbolize penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts. His Divine mercy is of utmost importance during the season of Lent, and the Church calls on us to seek that mercy during the entire Lenten season with reflection, prayer and penance.

Haitian Toonie Challenge

By Jennifer Dizon

On Tuesday, January 12, an earthquake hit Haiti and left many people homeless and without food. After this shocking event, many people around the world began to fundraise to help the people of Haiti. Communities, organizations, and individuals all wanted to partake in giving a hand to those who were struck by the earthquake. When this issue appeared on the news, it wasn't long until some of the teachers and students at St. Martin de Porres realized how tragic this event was. Many of our students started to think about ways to help. The Student Council, the Me to We team, and the French Club all agreed to fundraise money and to send it to Haiti from the school. The event was called the "Haitian Toonie Challenge". After deciding on the event, students went from class to class to explain the cause and how we students could help. For only a toonie or more, the students would have their name put on a tag and then have their name placed on a display board. Many students were excited about this and were eager to donate even the smallest bit. As a small reward, the class that raised the most money would win a free pizza

lunch. In just a short amount of time, many donations were made and we brought in over \$250.00. This event will continue until this coming Friday, February 5. The Student Council, the Me to We team, and the French Club would like to thank all those who have donated. Also, a special thanks to all the staff who assisted in organizing this event.

Sports Update

Both the boys and girls basketball teams have been travelling the length of Scarborough and beyond as they prepare for their School Board tournaments happening this week. Under the coaching of Mr. Llody, the players on the girls and boys teams have played many exhibition games in the local area and participated in tournaments at Bishop Morocco/Thomas Merton High School, St. Joseph School, St. Thomas Moore CS, and St. Barnabas CS. The teams have been doing well, several times placing in the medals.

Primary indoor soccer continues during the recess periods as our younger students look forward to their opportunity to represent St. Martin de Porres School. Go Panthers!

School Prayer

No Catholic school is complete without its own prayer. Over the past few weeks the students at St. Martin de Porres have been learning a new school prayer. You can see the text of the prayer below. Challenge your child to say it by heart:



**St. Martin de Porres
School Prayer**



*This is our School
Let peace dwell here,
Let the rooms be filled with happiness
Let love abide here:
Love of one another,
Love of humankind,
Love of God,
Love of life itself.
Let us remember,
Just as many hands build a house,
So many hearts make a school
Amen*