

January 14, 2010

Brothers & Sisters in Catholic Education,

I find myself with a 'bunch' of odds and ends to share with you.

First, a heart felt 'thank you' for all of the treats you had your children share with me prior to our Christmas break. I'm sure I have regained *some* of the 25# I had lost since coming on board here at Our Lady's School last July.

Our new student leader group, "Laker Leaders", is up and running and making plans. We have already had a 'Leader' read about "The Saint of the Day" and the "Significant Person or Event of the Day" immediately after our all school morning prayer. The 'Leaders' are taking turns, speaking over the PA system, introducing these, hopefully, thought provoking bits of information. The intent of this little exercise, beyond giving the 'Leaders' a chance at public speaking is to encourage the student body learn more about these special people with the hope the students can find a role model in addition to their parents/grandparents/guardians. These role models are preferable, instead of the to frequently chosen role models who are merely individuals who have a God given talent to make a free throw, catch a pass, or act out some written story.

The 'Laker Leaders' will soon be announcing a new project tentatively called "Making Our Lady of the Lakes Green". Watch for upcoming details.

This week also marks the beginning of the Forensic season for the 6th graders and the Speech season for the 5th & 6th graders. Mrs. Chipman will be coaching these teams. If any parents have interest in helping with this very short season, please free to contact her here at Our Lady's school.

The in-school 'Math Fun' contest continues. Most weeks we have about half of the school participating. I think all but about 7 students have tried at least one of the weekly challenges.

Shortly after the beginning of the second semester (some time in February) will begin an all school 'Chess Tournament'. The students will be allowed to work their way 'up the ladder' by challenging others to a game of Chess. Once again, we invite any parent with an interest in this area, and some time to offer, to join us as we continue to try to find things, academically based but outside the normal classroom setting, to soothe their competitive fires.

Next week ends our first semester. Grades will be available sometime during the next following week. Please encourage your student to work as hard as they can. The foundation they gain here carries over into the next level of their education as evidenced by the number of our graduates who are on the honor roles of the RL middle and high schools.

Mentioning 'next level' reminds me. I have decided to *not* offer a grade 7 next year here in Our Lady's School. Frankly, there just wasn't enough committed interest to take the financial gamble of expanding our offerings. I still believe very strongly in the concept and the need. I read with great interest the reasons given by the parents who chose to write to me the rationale of their decisions. Even though I believe the national research would disagree with most of those opinions I am respectful of the parents choice. Perhaps some day in the future we will revisit this idea.

A reminder for your calendars. Catholic Schools Week begins January 31st with an all school (day school & CCD) Mass followed by a week long celebration of the triumphant existence of Catholic Schools.

May Our Lady, who is Patroness of our school, intercede with her Son on your behalf for a peace filled, joyous 2010.

Your servant in Catholic Education,
Rick Erickson, PhD
Principal/Administrator