



The HeartBeat

A Newsletter for Alumni & Friends of St. John Eudes School

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Faith, Academics & Service - SJE School Celebrates the Priorities of Catholic Education

National Catholic Schools Week Celebrated Jan. 29 - Feb. 5
SJE School Open House to be Held on Sunday, Jan. 29



The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2012 is *Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service.* The annual national observance starts on Jan. 29 and runs all week through Feb. 5. Schools typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses and activities for students, families, parishioners and the community at large.

The theme focuses on three priorities that Catholic schools establish that make them stand out from other educational institutions. Children are taught faith – not just the basics of Christianity, but how to have a relationship with God. Academics, which in Catholic schools are held to very high standards, help each child reach his or her potential. Service, the giving of one's time and effort to help others, is taught both as an expression of faith and good citizenship.

Catholic Schools Week is a joint project of the National Catholic Education Association and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. *(From an NCEA Press Release)*

St. John Eudes School will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week with a number of events including the Scholastic Book Fair and the announcement of the SJE 2012 *Alumnus of the Year*. The week will begin with our Open House on Sunday, Jan. 29, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. We invite all our alumni, friends, families, and particularly prospective students and their families, to visit the classrooms and meet the teachers and staff. *See all the great things going on in our school - make sure to visit us during our Open House!*

The Golden Age of Hollywood Is Coming to St. John Eudes!

All our parishioners, parents, alumni and friends are invited to attend this year's Spring Fundraiser, *The Golden Age of Hollywood!* It's being held on Saturday, Feb. 11th, at 6:00 pm at the Warner Center Marriott in Woodland Hills and we're excited to have this fantastic event take place at the Marriott Hotel again. This fundraising event is sponsored by the SJE Parent-Teacher Support Organization to help raise funds for the school. This wonderful celebration is one event that you won't want to miss!

Our yearly fundraiser has become a favorite social event for our parish and school. For only \$50 per person, guests are guaranteed a great night taking a stroll through the Golden Age of Hollywood! Guests will enjoy a buffet dinner, music, entertainment, silent and live auctions, and casino games, as well as the Grand Prize Drawing. The Classroom Keepsakes have been made by each class and will be the highlight of the Live Auction.

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Visitors to the SJE Open House are treated to displays of student work and learn about the wonderful achievements of our students.

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Highlights:

- *Open House to Celebrate Student Achievements, Priorities of Catholic Education*
- *Everyone Considered "A" Lister at "Golden Age of Hollywood"; Gala Fundraiser to be Held at Warner Center Marriot Feb. 11*
- *Class Keepsakes Prized for Memories, Beauty, & Value*
- *SJE School Honored by San Fernando Business Journal for Excellent Business Model*
- *SJE First Grader Wins 1st Place in Chess Tournament; Is King of Grade Group*
- *Recent Alumna Books Publishing Contract; Credits SJE with Inspiration and Experience*
- *Parish & School Bid Farewell to Gene Walinski; Founding Parent Will Be Missed*
- *Alumni & Friends Called to Support School Program*
- *New Gated Fence Locks-up Security for Campus*

The Golden Age of Hollywood: A Keepsake for FUNdraising

Unique, beautiful, clever, whimsical, inspirational, functional, useful, are perfect descriptions for the *Class Keepsakes* now being crafted by SJE Room Parents. They will be a highlight at the PTSO spring fundraising event, *The Golden Age of Hollywood*, to be held Saturday, Feb. 11, at the Warner Center Marriott in Woodland Hills.

Each year the Room Parents, with their class' teacher, attempt to capture and incorporate the spirit of the students into a project that will attract the interest (and bidding!) of event attendees. Keepsakes from past years span the imaginative spectrum: hand painted garden bench, photographic prayer poster, private reserve mission wines, thumbprint tile garden table, framed hand painted rosary, photo beach blanket quilt, painted ceramic platter.

The Room Parents' task is to keep the cost of producing their one-of-a-kind creation small, with wide appeal, as they hope to maximize the potential value of the work.

This is, after all, A FUNDRAISER! Room Parent Bettina Levesque notes that she has been involved in the process for many years, saying, "I don't think I have spent more than \$50 per keepsake and (they) have made hundreds of dollars. The exciting part is that the children are involved. It's great to go back to the classroom after . . . and tell them (what) their creation made for the school . . . it gives them a great sense of pride for participating in the fundraising."

A peek at this year's planned keepsake treasures points toward new excellence and intrigue: Gr. 1 – student created cross poster; Gr. 2 – class scrapbook; Gr. 3 – digital pictorial student diary; Gr. 4 – class photo as a painting; Gr. 5 – calendar and floral arrangement; Gr. 6 – framed origami fish artwork; Gr. 7 – student designed logo skateboard/shelf; Gr. 8 – peace themed student modern artwork.



These keepsakes, which will be featured in the Live Auction during *The Golden Age of Hollywood*, have proven to be a major fundraiser for the event. They are unique, special, and priceless mementos for SJE students and parents. Each one is, along with *The Golden Age of Hollywood*: definitely a "keeper"!

The Golden Age of Hollywood

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This year's Grand Prize Drawing has some great prizes. The Grand Prize will be *One-Half Year's Free SJE School Tuition or \$2,000 Cash*. The Second Prize will be a *Sharp Aquos 60" Flat Screen LCD/HD TV*. The Third Prize is a *16GB Apple iPad with WiFi*. Grand Prize Drawing and event entrance tickets will be sold in the parish plaza beginning Jan. 22 after all Sunday Masses. Or if you would like to purchase drawing tickets, please con-

tact Eugenia Guzman at (818) 671-7250.

This wonderful event is once again being chaired by Nancy Hofmeister, who guarantees this will absolutely be a fabulous night! If you would like to make a donation, please contact Katie Hall at (818) 519-3820. To purchase tickets, become an event sponsor, or volunteer to help, please contact Nancy Hofmeister at (818) 515-0636 or via e-mail to nancyhof2002@yahoo.com. Look for more details about *The Golden Age of Hollywood* in the parish bulletin or on the school website at www.school.stjohneudes.org.

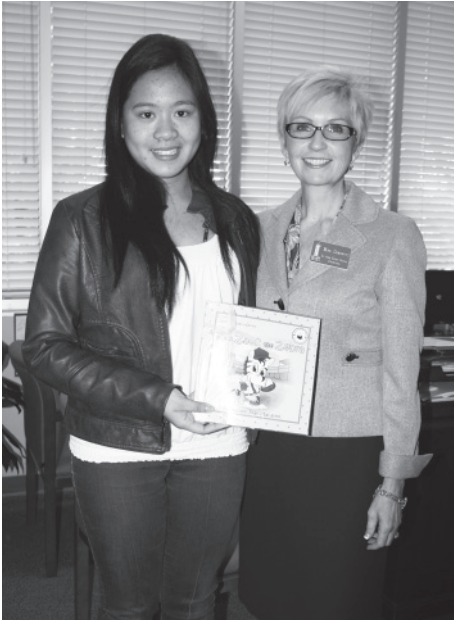
Quick Beats . . .

The San Fernando Valley Business Journal recently honored **St. John Eudes School** based on our excellent school business model. Visit our Facebook page at SJE365.com for a link to the full press release at YahooNews.com.

Congratulations to First Grader Noah Estiva for winning 1st Place in the Catholic Schools Chess Tournament (K & 1st Grade Group) held last November at St. Francis De Sales School in Sherman Oaks. Over one hundred students from 15 Catholic schools participated in the tournament.



Left - High rollers take a moment from casino games to pose for this picture at last year's Spring Fundraiser. In addition to the casino games, there will be prizes, silent and live auctions, dancing, the Grand Prize Drawing and much more! Right - Class keepsakes, like this outdoor table decorated with class memories and student names, will be the featured items during the live auction. They are treasured by parents and students as reminders of the wonderful spirit of community at SJE School.



Ashlee Joan Macalino '11 proudly poses with Mrs. Danowitz and displays her recently published children's book "Meet Zack the Zebra".

In a Lighter Vein . . .

A 7 year old boy asked his father to pray with him so he wouldn't have nightmares. The father did and prayed that God would send his angels to be near him and to give him good dreams. The father thought his prayer had done the trick until the following night when he overheard his son taking his praying into his own hands saying, "God, thanks for sending your angels, but I think they fell asleep and I still had a nightmare last night. I don't want to have another one tonight and I have to go to bed now, so please ask your *mommy* to stay up and make sure I don't have anymore nightmares. Thank you."

Please help our prayers come true and make a donation to St. John Eudes School. Donations are tax deductible and help the worthy cause of providing a quality Catholic education to deserving children. Your donation to the Annual Fund, Adopt-A-Student Program, Endowment, or other general or specific gifts is greatly appreciated. To donate please contact the School Office (818) 341-1451 or visit our website at www.sjeschool.net.

The family of **Deacon Rey Melgar**, father of **Rynxes Melgar '00**, asks for your continued prayers. Deacon Ray suffered a heart attack last year and has required long term care due to complications. Get well cards and letters to Deacon Ray and his family may be sent to the School Office.

Gregory Prager '03 attended Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks and graduated in 2007. After high school he attended the University of California, Los Angeles, and graduated *cum laude* in 2011 with a Bachelor's Degree in English and with a minor in Latin. While in high school, he developed an interest in martial arts and eventually earned a third degree black belt. He also likes to play tennis and is an avid fan (and player) of the game. He is currently working for Universal Studios.

Congratulations to **Ashlee Joan Macalino '11**, who just graduated SJE School last June and is a high school freshman at Chaminade College Preparatory (pictured above-left with Mrs. Danowitz). Ashlee has recently had her children's book *Meet Zack the Zebra* published. She is also currently working on other books that will be published as part of a series. Ashlee came back to visit SJE and thank her fellow former students and teachers saying, "Thank you for being such an inspiration for all my years at St. John Eudes." Her book is available at all major booksellers (including on-line at Amazon.com). Help get Ashlee's book into the LA Public Library by logging on to lapl.com and go to "Ask the Librarian" at the bottom. Click "Suggest to Purchase" and include the following information: Meet Zach the Zebra; Publisher: Xlibris; Published on 10/27/11; ISBN # 978-1-4653-8409-6.

Our best wishes to **Deacon Mike Perez** who retired late last year. Deacon Mike was the SJE Altar Server Coordinator and helped the school in many ways. We hope he will enjoy his retirement!

SJE Pastoral Administrator, **Deacon Bob Seidler**, has accepted a position as assistant to Bishop Wilkerson, which he assumed on Jan. 15. We thank Deacon Bob for all his support and work for the school during the last 5½ years and ask God's blessings on him as he begins this next phase of his ministry.

In Memoriam



Gene Walinski

Gene Walinski, a founding and long-time parishioner of St. John Eudes Parish, passed away on Dec. 23, at the age of 80. Mr. Walinski had been ill for a number of weeks and died with his family at his bedside.

As a founding member of the parish, he was directly involved with the building of the church and the school. He was a Boy Scout leader, an active member of the Men's Council and participated in a number of ministries, including being a lector and eucharistic minister. He also loved to sing, was a long-time choir member, and sang with the "Old Goats", a singing group which includes a number of fellow parishioners. His musical performances at the Men's Council Christmas dances are legendary.

The Walinski children attended St. John Eudes School and Mr. Walinski remained an active supporter of the school through his efforts as a tutor. He also supported the parish and school in a number of other ways, including performing maintenance work, helping at the carnival, serving as an usher, and in several other capacities. His jovial personality and friendly greeting will be greatly missed.

We wish to express our condolences to his wife, Mary Ann, and to his entire family. A rosary for Mr. Walinski was held in the church on Jan. 3. The funeral Mass, held on Jan. 4, was attended by his family, along with hundreds of his friends and fellow parishioners. The mass was concelebrated by Fr. Bill McLean, Msgr. Robert McNamara, and Msgr. Peter Nugent (who was the principle celebrant). A reception hosted by the family was held in Grill Hall after the Mass.

St. John Eudes School

9925 Mason Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311
Phone: (818) 341-1454
Fax: (818) 341-3093

www.school.stjohnesudes.org

Fr. Gérard Lecomte, CJM
Pastor

Mrs. Barbara Danowitz
Principal

**A Community of Faith
is a community of learners
who recognize and nourish
God-given gifts.**



**1966-2011
Celebrating 45 Years
of Excellence in
Catholic Education**

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Ernie Star, Director

Contributing Writers:
Ellen Abbene Eva Star

An Open Letter:

Support Needed to Keep Our Catholic Schools Viable

Dear Alumni & Friends,

Across the country, factors such as apathy, decreased enrollment, loss of parish subsidies, and rising costs which have led to the reduction of full-time programs in the arts, languages and technology at some parish elementary schools, have contributed to school closures. Just this month, it was announced that 49 schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia will be closing or consolidating by the end of this school year.

We are blessed. Although St. John Eudes School is a relatively small school, the curriculum and developmental programs offered by SJE provide students with skills and knowledge to eventually compete in the global economy. The knowledge gained by the students in the classrooms is not just mere hand-me-down instruction from the teachers. The students are encouraged to discover, develop, research, invent and be creative. The school's curriculum is directly connected to the real world of work done by scientists, engineers inventors, artists and entrepreneurs. And the religious education our children receive is a competitive advantage of Catholic schools and must remain a top priority. It is significant to note that SJE parents

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recognize the importance of their roles as partners of the school administration, the faculty and the students, and engage in relationship-based learning. This has become encouragingly evident in the parents' response to calls for greater involvement, such as with the Jog-A-thon and the upcoming Spring Fundraiser. SJE School, however, cannot count on tuition fees alone, nor on parents' sole efforts to raise additional funds, to achieve its goals and continue the momentum towards excellence.

St. John Eudes School needs your support - from everyone, from everywhere: foundations, business donors, our alumni. We have a big task ahead. We must ensure that St. John Eudes school remains in position to maintain academic excellence while adapting to the education demands of the 21st century. The choices we make now will bring the promise of the best Catholic education to our students today and in generations to come.

Ricca Francis, SJE PTSO President

Please make the right choice to help our school. Learn about how you can support our fundraising efforts or donate by contacting the School Office or visiting our website and clicking on the "Fundraising" and "Donate" links in the left menu field.

In order to provide additional security for our school children, the SJE School Board has announced that a gated fence has been approved that will secure the campus from the open area of the Mason parking lot and Nugent Plaza. The fence will have automated access control and openings to allow for full access on weekends and during the summer months. The Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, School Board, and PTSO have all given their approval to the project. The cost of the fence, which will architecturally and aesthetically complement current parish buildings, is estimated at \$80,000. Fundraising will begin with a special Catholic Schools Week collection at all parish Masses on the weekend of Jan. 28-29. The plans were developed with the help of Jenny Zoller, an alumni parent, who is an architect and a member of the SJE Parish School Board.

