



# The HeartBeat

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

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## Catholic Schools Week Spotlights Added Value of Catholic Schools

### Masses & School Open House to Lead-Off Parish Activities

NCEA - *Catholic Schools Week 2011* celebrates the fact that Catholic schools are an added value ("a plus") for the nation. Because of their traditionally high academic standards and graduation rates, all supported by strong moral values, Catholic schools and their graduates make a positive contribution to American society.

Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally the last week in January. For 2011 the dates are Jan. 30 through Feb. 5. Schools



*Grandparent's Day is one of the special events during CSW at SJE School. Students get to give their proud grandparents a first-hand look at the rigors of a Catholic education.*

typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses and other activities.

"Historically, Catholic schools are known for their high level of academic achievement, moral values and high graduation rates," said Karen Ristau, president of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). "What may not be as widely recognized are the outstanding successes recorded by students of low-income families . . . That's certainly a plus for many portions of the American population."

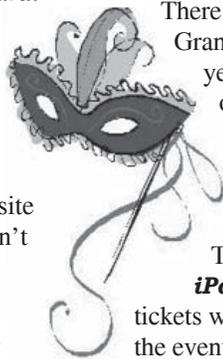
Marie Powell, executive director of the Secretariat of Catholic Education at the United States

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### "Let the Good Times Roll!" SJE PTSO to Sponsor Mardi Gras Spring Fundraiser

All our parishioners, parents, alumni and friends are invited to attend a great *Mardi Gras* party on Saturday, March 5, at 6:00 pm at the Warner Center Marriott Hotel in Woodland Hills. Sponsored by the SJE Parent-Teacher Support Organization to help raise funds for the school, this is the first time that *Mardi Gras* will be held off-site and is sure to be a celebration you won't want to miss!

*Mardi Gras* has become a favorite social event for our parish and school. For only \$50 per person, guests are guaranteed a good time. Everyone will enjoy a buffet dinner, music, entertainment



and casino games. In addition to the silent and live auctions, one of the highlights throughout the evening will be the auction of the class keepsakes that have been made by each class in the school.

There is also exciting news about this year's Grand Prize Drawing. The Grand Prize this year will be **One Year's Free Tuition** or an **8 Day / 7 Night Trip for Two to Maui** (trip generously provided by the Hannon Foundation). The Second Prize will be **One-Half Year's Free Tuition** or **\$1,000 Cash**.

The Third Prize is a **16GB Apple iPad with WiFi**. Drawing and event tickets will be sold during the weeks prior to the event after all Sunday Masses.

This year, the *Mardi Gras* committee is headed

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### Highlights:

- **Catholic Schools Score "A+" for Making Positive Contribution to American Society**
- **Mardi Gras to Offer Tuition, Maui, Cash, & iPad Prizes; Good Times to Roll in Woodland Hills**
- **10th Anniversary of Mother Paula's Canonization Brings Focus to Her Vision**
- **After-School Enrichment Provides Extended Opportunities for Students**
- **SJE Kindergartner Crowned Divisional King of Chess Tournament**
- **Swim Team Finishes Season with Splash; Bubbly Over Win of League Swim Meet**
- **Parish & School to Celebrate Gala Event Honoring Msgr. Nugent**
- **Alumna Strikes Chords on East Coast; Hopes to Become Teacher of Note**
- **Basketball Season Begins; Boy's Team Courts Success with Opening Win**

## From the Principal: The Vision of St. Paula Montal Celebrating Her Ideals and Her Feast Day – Feb. 26



St. John Eudes School is very unique in many ways – but particularly in one special way.

Did you know that we are the only Pious School in the United States? What is a Pious school? It is a school established by the Sisters of the Pious Schools based on the teaching paradigm of St. Paula Montal (1799-1889). We are to create a civilization of love and service through the education of our youth producing the future leaders of tomorrow. St. Paula Montal was a visionary and an activist of her time and her life was extraordinary. From 1829 to 1842 in Figueras, Spain, Paula Montal worked to establish a wide range of educational programs for girls, educational programs which were meant to counteract the existing legislative educational discrimination of girls. The programs she established succeeded in defeating the state laws.

**This year marks the 10th Anniversary of the canonization of St. Paula Montal** and February

26 marks her feast day. She is the patron saint and founder of the Sister of the Pious schools and the sisters who teach at St. John Eudes School are members of this order. St. Paula lived at a time in 19th century Spain where women were not educated. The paradigm of St. Paula was an emphasis on the family. She believed that to save families you needed to teach children the love of God. At the time of her life girls were not

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## Quick Beats . . .

**SJE School Recently Welcomed Author Bruce Hale** who writes and illustrates a popular children's book series called the *Chet Gecko Mysteries*. Mr. Hale's visit is part of a regular series of author visits at SJE School to advance interest in literature and writing.

**1st Place in the St. Cyril's Chess Championship Was Won by an SJE Kindergartner**, Noah Estiva, in the Kindergarten and First Grade Division. Chess is one of the special after school enrichment programs offered at SJE School.

**The SJE Swim Team Had Another Great Season** finishing off the year by winning first place at the San Fernando Valley Catholic Swim League Championship Meet last November – and finishing second in overall league competition.

**Congratulations to Desirae Jones, SJE 8th Grader, as a Member of the Team that Won the AAU National Cross Country Championship** in Orlando, Florida, at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Center. Desirae also placed 17th out of a field of 143 runners in the cross country race.

**All SJE Classrooms Will Soon Be Equipped with Smartboards** thanks to the generosity of several donors including alumni parents, Mr. & Mrs. Piekunka (who are also tutors in our after school tutoring program).

**The Chatsworth Holiday Parade Again Featured the Artwork of an SJE Student on Its Program Cover.** Congratulations to Carlo Castillo, SJE 4th Grader, whose drawing chosen by the parade committee for the honor.

**Thank you to everyone who submitted nominations for the St. John Eudes School 2011 Alumnus of the Year.** The selection committee, headed by Msgr. Nugent and Mrs. Danowitz, will be reviewing a number of outstanding nominations and announce its decision on the school website during Catholic Schools Week and in the parish bulletin. The Alumnus of the Year is chosen from among alumni who best represent the principals of to *Live*, to *Love*, to *Learn*, and to *Leave a Legacy* since attending from St. John Eudes School.

## Extracurriculars Galore! SJE School Provides Students Extended Enrichment Opportunities

The SJE faculty and administration are constantly implementing new and innovative programs, and our after school enrichment programs are no exception. For years, the school has been known for its professional and polished choir program, led by music teacher Richard Medrano, and its successful athletics programs for both boys and girls, organized and directed by athletic director Sergio Gonzalez. But over the past few years, the school has added some new and exciting programs.

Mr. Medrano has added the new *SJE Glee Group* for middle-school students, and this has become a very popular program in a short time. Another new opportunity for students is the *Robotics Club* for Grades 4 & 5, led by science teacher Angeline King. The students in this club learn how to design robotic programs and test them on the Lego NXT robot. Janelle Shaughnessy, an SJE parent, teaches a new after school art program for Grades K-3. In addition to these wonderful programs, the school has had outside companies come in to provide an after school dance program for Grades K-4, as



*The SJE Children's Choir, one of the school's enrichment programs, has achieved national recognition performing in Carnegie Hall, Disneyland, several productions with the LA Opera Company, a TV movie special, and various other activities and events.*

well as a program called *Chess Champions* for Grades K-8 that ends with a chess tournament for the students enrolled. The newest addition to the extracurriculars at SJE is *The Gift of Language* after school enrichment program which will begin next month. This will be an opportunity for elementary students to learn Spanish and Mandarin Chinese.

All of these wonderful, forward-thinking activities make SJE a fun and well-rounded place to be!



**David Dawson '99** graduated from Loyola High School in 2003 and then majored in philosophy at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. He graduated in 2007 and traveled to Europe for the summer following graduation visiting Ireland, France, Poland, and Italy. He is currently a graduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles, and is working on his Masters Degree in Urban Planning.

He expects to work in real estate development, particularly suburban redevelopment and adaptive reuse urban infill projects. David recently became engaged to his girlfriend of two years, Kelley Hickey, who is also a Gonzaga graduate. Their wedding is scheduled for this December.

**James Michail '99** attended Loyola High School, from which he graduated with honors in 2003. In high school he was active in tennis and cross-country sports. He then attended the University of Southern California, was a member of the Delta-Chi fraternity, and majored in Geriatrics. Upon graduating USC in 2007 he enrolled in medical school at St. George University in Grenada. He is currently doing his medical rotation at a hospital in New York City.

**Jacyln Beardsley '02** attended Santa Susana High School in Simi Valley, which is a magnet school for technology and performing arts. She participated in the choral program which included jazz, show, and chamber choir – and performed in other musical productions. She graduated high school with honors in 2006 and received the Principal's Award for her senior project. Jacyln began her singing career at St. John Eudes as a member of the Children's Choir and continued to be active in the parish as a member of the adult choir and as a cantor at Sunday Masses. She started her college career at California State University, Northridge, and then transferred to Westminster Choir College

## Tickets Now Available for Msgr. Nugent's Gala Dinner!

A special Gala Dinner in honor of Msgr. Peter Nugent, SJE pastor, will be held at the Odyssey Restaurant on April 30. The dinner is being held to three-fold celebrate the beginning of Msgr. Nugent's 50th year of ministry, celebrate his 75th birthday, and to thank him for his guidance and service to our parish and school – and for all the years of exceptional service to the faithful of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles – as he prepares to retire on July 1. All SJE alumni & friends are invited. Tickets to the gala are available after all Sunday Masses in the church plaza. Visit the parish website at [www.stjohnneudes.org](http://www.stjohnneudes.org) for more information.

in Princeton, New Jersey. Although hard at work with her studies, she remains active singing at local parishes, leads a children's choir, and has toured Europe with several choral groups. She also directs a jazz *a cappella* group and music theater productions. She will be graduating from WCC this year with a Bachelor's Degree in Musical Education, with an emphasis on Voice. Upon graduation, her goal is to be a high school music teacher (probably in a city on the east coast – because she loves living there very much) and then eventually pursue a Master's Degree in Conducting.

### In a Lighter Vein . . .

An eight year-old boy was excessively mischievous and always getting into trouble. The boy's mother asked her local priest to speak to the him. The priest agreed, so in the morning the mother took the boy to see the priest.

The priest was a large man with a booming voice. He sat the boy down and asked him sternly, "Where is God?" The boy's mouth dropped open, but he made no response and just sat there wide-eyed. So the priest repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "Where is God!?" Again the boy made no attempt to answer. So the priest raised his voice even more and asked, "WHERE IS GOD!!?"

The boy screamed and bolted from the room, ran directly home and dove into his closet, slamming the door behind him. When his older brother found him in the closet, he asked, "What happened?" The boy, gasping for breath, replied, "I'm in BIG trouble this time. God is missing - and they think I did it!"

*When you reflect on the question "Where is God?" don't go into hiding, but think about finding Him through supporting the important mission of our school. Please consider making 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](http://www.sjeschool.net). Thank you!*

### Mardi Gras

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by Nancy Hofmeister and Molly Unger.

They are both enthusiastic and excited about the positive response they have already received for the new plans for this year.

If you would like to make a donation, be an event sponsor, or even volunteer to help with Mardi Gras, please contact Nancy Hofmeister at (818) 515-0636 or via e-mail to [nancyhof2002@yahoo.com](mailto:nancyhof2002@yahoo.com), or Molly Unger at (818) 231-0790 or via e-mail to [mollyunger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mollyunger@sbcglobal.net).

Look for more details con-

cerning Mardi Gras in the parish bulletin or on the school website at [www.school.stjohnneudes.org](http://www.school.stjohnneudes.org).



*High rollers at Mardi Gras enjoy playing casino games while helping raise funds for the school. Along with the games will be a fantastic silent & live auction, exhilarating music & dancing, and, of course, great food & drinks. Laissez les bons temps rouler!!*

## St. John Eudes School

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



### The HeartBeat

A publication of the  
St. John Eudes School  
Development Office

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## Catholic Schools Week

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Conference of Catholic Bishops, noted: "This year nearly 30 percent of the nation's 2.1 million Catholic school students come from minority populations. Enrollment of students who are not Catholic has increased to 14.5 percent, an indication that many diverse families seek the benefits of a quality education with moral underpinnings."

The 7,094 Catholic elementary and secondary schools make up 44.4 percent of all private schools in the United States. A Catholic-school education is available in all regions of the nation. Urban schools represent 30.7 percent of the total, suburban 36.5 percent, rural 20.5 percent and inner-city schools 12.3 percent.

St. John Eudes Parish will be celebrating

## St. Paula Montal

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allowed to be educated. She saw a need for girls to be educated in the faith so that they would carry on the faith when they had their own families. She continues to be a strong role model for our youth today.

In 2001, at the canonization of St. Paula, Pope John Paul II spoke these words in his homily address:

*"To our society, wounded by so many pressures, where the subjects of education for all, the advancement of women, the family, and youth are currently unresolved issues, the new saint delivers the message of her life and her educational work, a*

*message of love and of service. Her charisma in the 19th century was a statement of love and hope, especially for women, who found in her a mother and teacher for the young women and girls. And today it continues to be as urgent and current an issue as it was back then."*

Today there are 800 Sisters of the Pious Schools spread out over 112 communities, who educate 30,000 students in 19 nations on four continents.

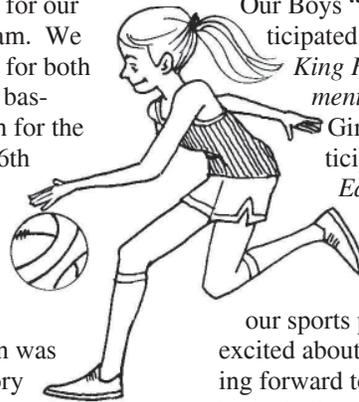
Each year our students look forward to celebrating the feastday of St. Paula with a student body Mass and other activities. We thank the religious sisters for the continued service they provide for our students here at SJE.

*Barbara Danowitz*

## Basketball Season Gets Underway at St. John Eudes Boys Team Scores Opening Victory Over Rival Chaminade

This is Basketball season for our after-school sports program. We currently have two teams for both Boys and Girls "B" level basketball and one team each for the "A" levels. The 5th and 6th Graders are in the "B" level, and 7th and 8th Graders are in the "A" level.

Our first St. John Eudes home game for the season was a thrilling one point victory over rival Chaminade.



Our Boys "A" team once again participated in the *Crespi Martin Luther King Holiday Basketball Tournament* and for the first time our Girls "A" team will be participating in the *Chaminade Eagle Invitational Basketball Tournament* on February 12 and 13.

All the student athletes in our sports program are enthusiastic and excited about participating. We are looking forward to an exciting and successful basketball season!

Catholic Schools Week at all Masses on the weekend of Jan. 29-30, and also with an Open House of the school on Sunday, Jan. 30, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Alumni and friends are invited to tour the school, including all the classrooms, science lab, computer lab, and school office. Teachers, staff, and student ambassadors will be available to greet visitors and answer questions. Classrooms will display student projects and visitors can view the latest additions to classroom technology - including classroom *smartboards* and the new *iMacs* in the computer lab.

The celebration will continue during the week with numerous events including a special reception for parishioners, a Student Sports Day (featuring a student vs. faculty volleyball game), guest speakers, Grandparents

Day, and numerous other events.

A full listing of Catholic Schools Week activities can be found on the school website at [www.school.stjohneudes.org](http://www.school.stjohneudes.org). All our alumni and friends are invited to celebrate Catholic Schools Week with us!



*Visitors can view student artwork on display during Open House. Other student projects, such as reports, experiments, essays, and presentations will be displayed to show the breadth of student achievement and accomplishment.*