



# The HeartBeat

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

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## SJE Class of 2013: "Dare to be Different" Students Encouraged to Continue to Learn and Grow



Ms. Stula, Mrs. Danowitz and Fr. Gérard flank the St. John Eudes School Class of 2013. The class was encouraged to "dare to be different and to not be afraid of making mistakes" in their efforts to achieve their goals.

**Graduation is a joyous time full of accolades and recognition,** serious reflection, and great anticipation. Just as junior high graduation means the end of one stage in a student's educational career, it is also a springboard into another. Moving from the security of elementary and junior high life

to the insecurity of high school is both daunting and exciting. As family, friends and faculty looked on, thirty-one 8th Graders processed into St. John Eudes Church in their red and white graduation caps and gowns looking both nervous and excited.

Class valedictorians John Francis, Daniela Parada, and Nicholas Whitney thanked the staff and their teachers who helped them attain their goals and "offered encouragement in times of defeat, compassion in times of trial, knowledge in times of doubt, and love at all times." In keeping with their Catholic education at SJE, they made it a point to mention that they "have been taught the lessons of love and hope at St. John Eudes knowing that with faith [they] can do all things."

Echoing their sentiment, principal Mrs. Barbara Danowitz advised the graduat-

(Continued on page 4)



Graduates, teachers and parents let down their hair a little at the traditional Graduation Dinner-Dance. It was a great way to celebrate the achievements, and the future, of the Class of 2013.

### Inside This Issue:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Focus on the Faculty: Faith Encouraged as Learning Perspective</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>School Community Joins in Celebration of Parish 50th Anniversary</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The Pulse: News About SJE Alumni &amp; Friends</b>                   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>In a Lighter Vein</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Quick Beats</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Students &amp; Families Start Summer with Carnival</b>               | <b>4</b> |

### Highlights:

- **Class of 2013 Challenged to Follow Path of Christ; Not to Be Timid in Setting and Achieving Goals**
- **Teacher Implements Mars Project in Science Class; Supports STEM and 21st Century Learning Skills**
- **School Families & Alumni Celebrate Parish Jubilee; Dinner & Dance Fills Field**
- **Alumna Travels World; Has No Sour Grapes to Wine About**
- **School Alumni Families Among Pilgrims to France; Visit Places of St. John Eudes**
- **SJE NJHS Students Run & Walk to Help Cure Cancer; Raise \$1,000 in Effort**
- **SJE Student Tries on Bishop's Mitre; Seems Good Fit**

## Focus on the Faculty: Faith Encouraged as Learning Perspective

There are many qualities that define a good teacher. A good teacher is a perpetual student who makes learning a pleasant experience. A good teacher knows that he or she can change their students' lives by helping them grow, and helping them to find their talents, skills and abilities by using creative and inspirational methods of teaching. Ms. Sneha Tharayil possesses those qualities.

Ms. Tharayil teaches science in the middle school as well as 7th and 8th Grade English. She has two years of teaching experience and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Studies, with a concentration in Science, and a Master's Degree in Education.

Ms. Tharayil has implemented the *Mars Student Imaging Project* (MSIP) in the 6th Grade. The MSIP is a nationally recognized and award-winning inquiry-based learning and student-centered project. Students in her class engage in the scientific process while using data from a NASA spacecraft currently orbiting Mars. In doing so, her students understand how science works by



being scientists themselves. The MSIP enhances the teaching of traditional courses, such as physical science, earth science, chemistry, and biology. MSIP also incorporates 21st century skills to help students be ready for the STEM workforce.

Ms. Tharayil said she "loves teaching in an environment where our faith is not only acceptable, but encouraged and to be able to learn from that perspective, we are able to get an education of our whole self."

**School students, families and alumni joined in commemorating the parish's 50th Anniversary at the Jubilee Celebration** that was held on May 11. School families were an integral part of the celebration and helped in many ways including the planning, preparation, at mass, and dinner. It was a wonderful celebration everyone will remember for a long time to come!



Senior deacon Mike Perez reads the gospel during the 50th Anniversary Mass. Bishop Gerald Wilkerson was the primary celebrant and was joined by Fr. Gérard, Fr. Bill McLean, Fr. Carlos Valencia, CJM, and former SJE pastors Msgr. Peter Nugent and Msgr. Robert McNamara, along with priests from neighboring parishes.



Bishop Wilkerson blesses the banners which represent milestones in the 50 year life of the parish. Many school families participated in carrying the banners to the celebration tent where they were displayed to create a depiction of parish history. Thanks to 50th Anniversary Chairperson Mel Spratley for organizing the event!



Nearly 600 guests joined in the celebration under the tent that was set-up on the field. There was a narrative presentation of parish's history which was written by school alumni parent Ellen Abbene and read by several current and alumni parents,



Music filled the celebration and Fr. Gérard got up to dance the "YMCA". He was joined by Luisa Gabaya, former SJE 1st Grade teacher and alumni parent (front row, second from left).



Make sure to visit the school's Facebook page at **SJE365.com** and *like* us!

**Roxanna Flores '99** attended Chatsworth High School and graduated in 2003. She then attended California State University, Northridge. After graduating from CSUN she became the general manager for a wine company in San Francisco. As part of her duties she enjoys traveling through the wine growing regions of the world. What a great job to have!

**George Espinoza '00** attended Chatsworth High School and graduated in 2004. He then attended Los Angeles Valley College and received an Associate in Arts Degree in 2009. While at LAVC he worked at Washington Mutual Bank but now works as an Emergency Medical Technician with a private ambulance

service that provides interfacility transfers. He is currently attending LAVC again with the goal of transferring to California State University, Los Angeles, to obtain a degree in Fire Administration. His hobbies currently include strength training and cooking (especially Italian food) - skills that are certainly useful if he wants to become a fireman!

**Lucas Mongiello-Lopez '02** enjoyed being a swimmer at Bishop Alemany High School

and graduated in 2006. He then attended California State University, Northridge. After two years at CSUN he became a new account specialist at a major health insurance company. He returned to CSUN last January to continue his studies and obtain a degree in Civil Engineering. While at CSUN he is working part-time at a local Starbucks, and enjoys swimming and working on cars for friends and family in his spare time.

As part of our parish's 50th Anniversary celebration, SJE pastor **Fr. Gérard Lecomte, CJM**, led a special pilgrimage to the places of St. John Eudes in France. Along on the pilgrimage were a number SJE school alumni families and friends. The tour took place from July 8-18 and visited sites and shrines that were important in the life of St. John Eudes, as well as the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, Lisieux (home of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus), Mont St. Michel, and a number of sites in Paris. The pilgrimage capped off the year long Golden Anniversary celebration being held at the parish and school.

*SJE students go on to do wonderful things and we'd like to hear what you've been doing since graduating from SJE School (or if you're a parent, now's your chance to brag a little!). Send us a note via e-mail to [theheartbeat@sjeschool.net](mailto:theheartbeat@sjeschool.net) or mail it to:*

Attn: The Heartbeat  
St. John Eudes School  
9925 Mason Avenue  
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Bonnie Mertus Gore '80 (center-right), SJE School 2013 Alumna of the Year, and Sr. Georgina Gutierrez (center-left), who recently celebrated her 50th Jubilee with the Sisters of the Pious Schools, were honored at the recent SJE School Endowment Trustees Dinner.

## Quick Beats . . .

**Crespi Carmelite High School recently recognized several SJE alumni for their academic achievements:** Anthony Perez '10 – Academic Achievement Award, Thomas Wall '10 – Academic Achievement Award, Sean Milkovich '11 – Academic Achievement Award, Outstanding Scholar, Foreign Language Dept. Award - Hn Spanish 2, NHS, and Tony Mena '12 – Steffi Dutka Memorial Scholarship / Special Interest in Animals.

**Congratulations to Ian Trinidad '09** for receiving the Alemany Parent Board Scholarship!

**Our student athletes did exceptionally well at the recent Valley Catholic Sports Program Track and Field Championship Tournament** held at Chaminade Middle School on May 11. Many SJE students placed in the top 6 in each event and set tournament records. Among other first place finishes in individual running and field events, the SJE 4 x 1000 meter relay team took 1st Place in the tournament.

**Over \$1,000 to help in the fight against women's cancers was raised by St. John Eudes School National Junior Honor Society students** who recently participated in the 20th Annual Entertainment Industry Foundation Revlon Run/Walk.

## In a Lighter Vein . . .

*Overheard in the classroom . . .*

*Teacher:* In this box, I have a 10-foot snake.

*Billy:* You can't fool me, teacher – snakes don't have feet!

*Teacher:* How can you prevent diseases caused by biting insects?

*Susan:* Don't bite any.

*Teacher:* Joey, give me a sentence starting with "I."

*Joey:* I is . . .

*Teacher:* No, Joey. Always say, "I am."

*Joey:* All right . . . "I am the ninth letter of the alphabet."

*You may have also overheard that we need you to 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](http://www.sjeschool.net). Thank you!*

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*Guiding Children with Knowledge  
and the Love of God to Empower  
Them with Christian Morality,  
Character, Compassion & Integrity*



### The HeartBeat

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### Class of 2013

(Continued from page 1)

ing class that “in high school, situations will test your faith and character. Trust in God. He will give you strength and wisdom to choose wisely. Always choose Christ’s path, not the one that is popular. Dare to be different.”

In keeping with the class theme, guest speaker Mr. Rob Kodama, Director of Admissions at Crespi Carmelite High School, quoted Theodore Roosevelt: “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but

**The 2013 SJE Summer Carnival, held last Memorial Day weekend, was a great way for our students and families to start the summer!** Top left: The SJE Children’s Choir, which includes many SJE students, delighted hundreds of visitors under the huge Entertainment



Tent. Their performance was a highlight of the day. The group is led by SJE School alumna Jaclyn Beardsley ‘02, who also conducts the SJE Adult Choir. Bottom left: SJE students and parents had a lot of fun helping out at the carnival by manning food and game booths - and making new friends! There was record attendance at the carnival this year and many school families and friends attended. There was great food, fun rides, fantastic entertainment and alot to do. Bottom right: The Multi-Cultural Mass and Festival took place on the Sunday of the carnival. Bishop Alexander Salazar, who heads the Archdiocesan Office for Ethnic Ministry, was once again the main celebrant at the Mass. After the Mass, he greeted carnival guests and allowed a lucky SJE student to try on his mitre!



who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.” He encouraged the students to dare to be different and to not be afraid of making mistakes because it is in those mistakes that they learn and grow.

After the speeches, amid the raucous cheers from family and friends in attendance, students were presented with special awards and, finally, their long-awaited diplomas which are a reflection of their drive, their perseverance, their determination, and their faith.

#### **Congratulations to the Class of 2013:**

Bryan Abeleda, Leilani Andazola\*, Hannah Banks-Thompson\*, Reno Benedetti, Juliette Bergman\*, Joshua Breard\*, Angelica Grace Castro, Michael Del Real\*, Catherine Enguerro, Nicolas Escalante, John Francis\*, Emily Gaines\*, Brian Gobeli\*, William Lazar, Celine Levesque\*, Monikka Macaranas\*, Ashley Martinez\*, Jake Milkovich\*, Ryan Milkovich\*, Zachary Multer\*, Michael Nagy, Brett Norkus, Daniela Parada\*, Shana Rasho, Nicolay Salazar, Gabriella Solamo\*, Michelle Uyanga\*, William Wetzel\*, Nicholas Whitney\*, William Wood\*, Katelyn Zavatto\*.

\*Members of the National Junior Honor Society

#### **Additional Awards and Scholarships:**

Leilani Andazola: Honors at Graduation-Salutatorian, President’s Award for Educational Excellence  
Hannah Banks-Thompson: Honors at Graduation  
Joshua Breard: Principal’s Recognition Award, Knights of Columbus Scholarship  
John Francis: Honors at Graduation-Valedictorian, PTSO/Room Parent Scholarship, Pala Band of Mission Indians Scholarship, Rodriguez Family Trust Scholarship, Notre Dame High School Academic Leadership Grant, President’s Award for Educational Excellence  
Emily Gaines: Honors at Graduation, Diego Baza Memorial Scholarship  
Brian Gobeli: Honors at Graduation, Knights of Columbus Scholarship  
Celine Levesque: Honors at Graduation, President’s Award for Educational Excellence, Future Leader of Chaminade Scholarship  
Monikka Macaranas: Honors at Graduation, Chaminade High School-Honors Biology  
Ashley Martinez: Honors at Graduation  
Jake Milkovich: Luke Gaines Memorial Scholarship  
Daniela Parada: Honors at Graduation-Valedictorian, PTSO/Room Parent Scholarship, President’s Award for Educational Excellence  
Gabriella Solamo: Honors at Graduation, Sr. Rosemary Scholarship, President’s Award for Educational Excellence  
Michelle Uyanga: Honors at Graduation, Chaminade High School-Honors Biology and Geometry  
Nicholas Whitney: Honors at Graduation-Valedictorian, Chaminade High School-Honors Biology, President’s Award for Educational Excellence  
William Wetzel: St. John Eudes Scholarship  
William Wood: Honors at Graduation, Chaminade High School-Honors Biology  
Katelyn Zavatto: Honors at Graduation, President’s Award for Educational Excellence