



# The HeartBeat

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

Visit us at [www.sjeschool.net](http://www.sjeschool.net)

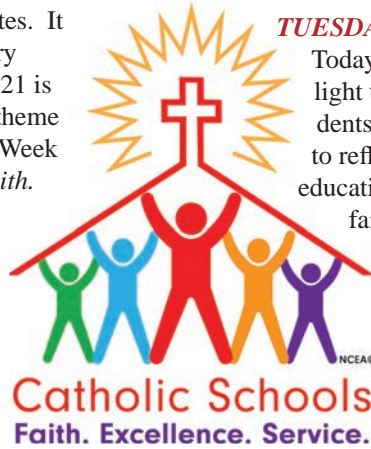
## Catholic Schools Week to Be Celebrated Jan. 31 - Feb. 6 Faith, Excellence, Education to be Focus of Celebration

Since 1974, *National Catholic Schools Week* has been the annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. It starts the last Sunday in January and runs all week, which in 2021 is January 31 – February 6. The theme for National Catholic Schools Week 2021 is “*Catholic Schools: Faith, Excellence, Service*”. Schools typically observe the annual celebration week with Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members. But although the celebration of Catholic Schools Week has been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, CSW will still include the celebration of a special theme each day:

**SUNDAY: Celebrating Our Parish** - Catholic schools benefit all year long from the religious guidance, prayers and support parishes provide. Students today will celebrate CSW by assisting at Mass as lectors, cantors, and in other functions.

**MONDAY: Celebrating Our Community** - At the center of Catholic education is learning the importance of service to others. When students take part in service activities – both local and beyond – they demonstrate the values and faith

they gain through their Catholic education and learn how to make the world a better place.



**TUESDAY: Celebrating Our Students** -

Today we will recognize and highlight the accomplishments of our students. Students will be encouraged to reflect on the benefits of Catholic education and how the grounding in faith, knowledge and service it provides will help them throughout their lives.

**WEDNESDAY: Celebrating the Nation** -

Students, families, educators and other Catholic school supporters communicate the value of Catholic education to government leaders. They share information with leaders on the significant contributions Catholic schools make to the nation and their role in preparing students to be good citizens. They pray for the nation and recognize all those who serve.

**THURSDAY: Celebrating Vocations** - By focusing on faith, knowledge and service, Catholic schools prepare children to use their God-given talents to the fullest later in life. National Catholic Schools Week offers an opportunity for students to explore the many life paths that enable them to use their talents well

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Highlights:

- **Catholic Schools Week Focuses on Reasons to Celebrate Education**
- **Students Learn Value of Generosity; Help Feed Hungry, Provide Aid to Adopted Families**
- **Bookfair to Go Virtual; No Masks Required**
- **Students Aim to Make Splash with Recyclables; Well Done NJHS!**
- **Msgr. McNamara Zooms Back to SJE; Invites Families to Zoom too with Help from SJE Alumna**
- **Spirit Shirts Help Keep SJE Spirit Alive & Healthy**
- **3rd Graders Host Guadalupe Day Mass; Honor Blessed Mother**
- **Mrs. Strom Rolls Drum to Raise Funds**
- **Alumna Graduates University with Honors; Takes on Teaching 8th Grade and the Arizona Heat**



While the school's Open House usually takes place at the beginning of Catholic Schools Week, due to pandemic restrictions in effect this year, there will be no Open House in 2021. However, the school's new website is a great way to learn all about St. John Eudes School! You can even take a virtual tour of the school when you visit the Admissions page of the site that will show the school grounds, classrooms, play areas, athletic field, and special facilities such as the Science Room, TK Classroom, Computer Room, and more. You can also virtually meet administrators, staff and teachers, and learn about their backgrounds and education. Visit the school's website at [www.sjeschool.net](http://www.sjeschool.net) for this and more!





## Quick Beats . . .

**Last Thanksgiving was a wonderful time to help our students learn about giving** and how to help those in need. Our students collected food donations for the Guadalupe Center in Canoga Park to feed poor families. Each class was assigned to collect a variety of boxed and canned food items to be donated to the program. The items were used to prepare Thanksgiving baskets for hundreds of needy families.

**Students continued their lessons in giving by participating in the Adopt-A-Family and Christmas Toy Drive** that provided



SJE students get together for a "Literary Hour on the Green" to discuss literary works, keeping a safe social distance while exchanging ideas and perspectives.



**Above - Fr. Ethan** celebrates Christmas Midnight Mass that was live streamed to parish families. **Upper Right - Christmas Mass** celebrations also included a Children's Mass attended by school students and families. **Right - The school's annual Christmas program** was titled "Lessons and Carols" and held in Msgr. Nugent Plaza with limited seating to meet coronavirus guidelines.



additional toy donations to the Guadalupe Center. Grade 6-8 students "adopted" families identified through the Department of Children and Family Services. Those families provided a list of needed items, which the classes were asked to fill.

**The SJE National Junior Honors Society is collecting recyclables to help support the Ryan's Well Foundation**, a non-profit that works to provide access to safe water, sanitation services and hygiene education in the poorest regions of the developing world. It's a great creative fundraiser to hold under current pandemic restrictions.

**The SJE Community Service Hour system is going green by using the x2VOL application** that tracks middle-schooler volunteer hours without the need of paper sheets and forms.

**A special "Thank You" to all alumni and school families that donated to The Mary Bertain Education Fund** and raised \$1,095 to

help school students and the educational efforts of the Sisters of the Pious Schools.

**This year's Scholastic Book Fair will be held online** from Jan. 26 thru Feb. 8 at <https://bookfairs.scholastic.com> where you can find the link to our school's bookfair and get some great deals on books while helping support the school. You'll be able to go to a virtual book fair and browse through over 6,000 products.

**Congratulations to Cassady Batres, Gr. 4, who is the winning designer of the SJE Spirit Shirt**

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## Catholic Schools Week

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in the service of God and others.

**FRIDAY: Celebrating Faculty, Staff and Volunteers** - Teachers are the backbone of Catholic schools. On this day, schools honor teachers, as well as administrators and staff who support teachers in their important work, and thank the parents, grandparents, alumni, parishioners and school board members who provide volunteer service.

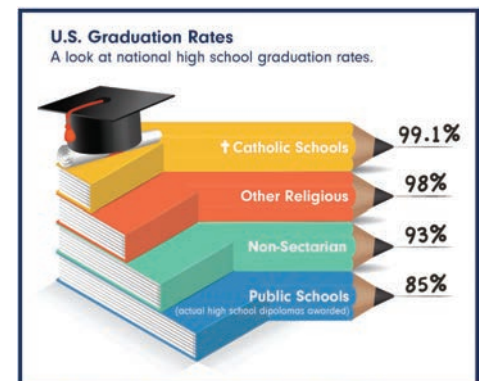
**SATURDAY: Celebrating Families** - Parents, guardians and other family members play a vital role in Catholic education. Not

only do they volunteer at the school, they instill values and expectations for academic excellence in their children at home.

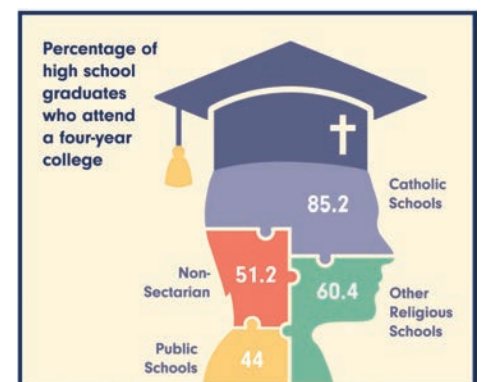
We acknowledge the role of families in Catholic education and celebrate their contributions to the success of our schools on the last day of National Catholic Schools Week, and all year long.

*(Article and graphics courtesy of the NCEA website)*

**Watch for the announcement of the "2021 St. John Eudes School Alumnus of the Year" that will be made at the end of Catholic Schools Week on our school website - [www.sjeschool.net/](http://www.sjeschool.net/)!**



Source: Broughman, S.P., Swain, N.L. (2013); Stillwell, R., and Sobie, J. (2017).



Source: Broughman, S.P. and Swain, N.L. (2013); Snyder, T.D., and Dillow, S.A. (2017).



## In a Lighter Vein . . .

As winter begins to wane and we head toward the warmer days of spring, we celebrate St. Valentine's Day. There are several popular origins of how this single day became to be celebrated, but the poem below, written by a wife to her husband (but appropriate to share with anyone you love), encompasses an entire year . . .

### Not Just Today, But Always

I love you all through February,  
Not just on Valentine's Day!  
I cherish you when flowers of spring,  
Appear in the midst of May.

I adore you in the summer,  
When the air is filled with heat!  
Without you in my life each day,  
I wouldn't be complete.

I treasure you in fall,  
When leaves are turning gold!  
I loved you when you were younger,  
I'll love you when you're old.

I prize you in the winter,  
When colder days are here!  
I love you, love you all the time,  
Every minute of the year.

So I'll give to you this Valentine,  
But I want to let you know!  
It's not just today, but always,  
That I will love you so.

*Joanna Fuchs*

We hope you love our students and the important cause of Catholic education. But the pandemic has caused a severe strain on the resources of our families and school. Many need tuition assistance in order to maintain their children in the Catholic school environment. There has never been a more critical time for you to give a donation to St. John Eudes School and support our important efforts.

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!

**Angela Neglio '12** attended Notre Dame High School where she was a member of the water polo team for several years and enjoyed being a member of the school's chorus. She was also a member of the yearbook student staff. She graduated NDHS in 2016 and attended Northern Arizona University where she majored in Secondary Education – History and Social Studies. She was enrolled in the university's honor program and, although she found it challenging, she met the challenge and was eligible to wear the honors cords at her graduation last year – which the current pandemic prevented from physically happening, but which never the less was a proud accomplishment for her family and her. Upon graduation with her Bachelor of Science Degree in Education, she immediately received a job offer to teach 8th Grade social studies in the Paradise Valley School District (located in northeastern Phoenix). Unfortunately, her first year has been mostly virtual reaching with a few weeks thrown in of face-to-face interactions, but then right back to online instruction (not quite the way she wanted to start her teaching career). She is now living in Phoenix and has a wonderful boyfriend who she met while in college. She enjoys the Phoenix area and her teaching career, although she can do without the scorpions and the 110° evenings!

We welcome back former St. John Eudes Parish pastor **Msgr. Robert McNamara** every Sunday morning as he celebrates Mass in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at 11:00 am. The Mass is celebrated via Zoom and has the feel of a real home Mass

as Fr. Mac interacts with what he refers to as his "little congregation". The congregation however is not that little with typically about 250 Zoom feeds and nearly 350+ in attendance. Many St. John Eudes and St. Bernadine parishioners can be recognized and are tuned in, as well as a number of viewers from around the



Make sure to visit the school's Facebook page at [SJE365.com](http://SJE365.com) and like us!



Read the latest tweets about the school on Twitter @[sje365\\_news!](https://twitter.com/sje365_news)



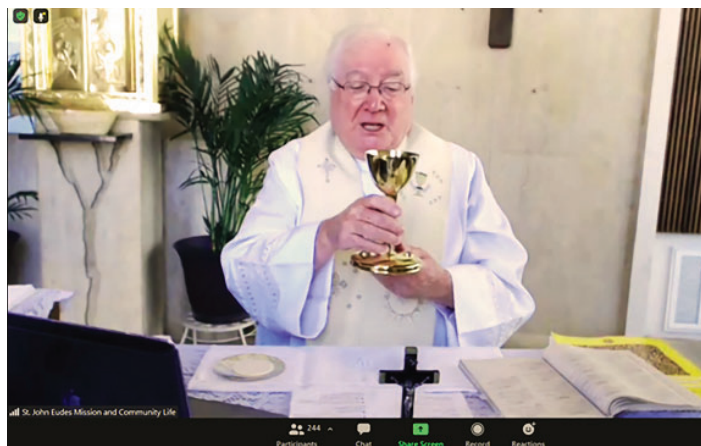
Check out the newest pictures of school events on Instagram [SJE365!](https://www.instagram.com/SJE365/)

*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  
9225 Mason Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA 91311*

U.S. and even internationally (Fr. Mac's brother Dominic and his wife in Ireland are often seen at the Mass). Fr. Ethan welcome's Fr. Mac's support of our parish's online spiritual efforts. Fr. Mac in turn appreciates the resources and connection our parish provides in helping him continue his weekly Zoom Masses which began from his home at the onset of the pandemic. And with the relocation of the Zoom Mass to our parish, Fr. Mac has the full technical support we can provide and it's great to see him at our parish again. It's also great to see SJE School alumna (and the 2012 SJE School Alumnus of the Year) **Kym Piekunka (Raines) '82** mod-

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Former St. John Eudes Parish pastor **Msgr. Robert McNamara** returns to celebrate Mass each Sunday at 11:00 am in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel via Zoom.



## St. John Eudes School

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### The HeartBeat

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### Quick Beats . . . .

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#### Design Contest!



Cassady's design may be worn by students on school spirit days which helps lift the spirit of the school during these Covid-19 pandemic days!

Keeping up our school spirit is very important during these days and we thank Cassady for stepping up and creating such a great t-shirt design!



### The Pulse

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erating the Mass each week as she takes on the important function of making sure the Zoom feed is working for everyone. A link to the Zoom Mass can be found on the homepage of the parish website at [www.sjeparish.net](http://www.sjeparish.net). The Zoom app is free and available for desktop computers thru [Zoom.us](http://Zoom.us) or for smartphones/iPads at your app store.

**Fr. Paul Kottackal**, former St. John Eudes Parish associate pastor, has been serving in India for the last couple years (see the article in the January, 2019, HeartBeat). About a year ago he needed to have open heart surgery and has been slowly recovering. But irrespective of his health issue, he recently wrote us that ". . . I took charge of a small parish called Little Flower Church, Kaprassery, that is not far away from my home parish, and my family people. This is a farm community and, though poor people are very simple, their faith is very deep. They are



Fr. Paul Kottackal

lovable and willing to take care of me. This parish has 220 families. Since Corona there are not many activities in the parish, but I go around walking every evening as my doctor has advised me after the surgery.

Now it is the rainy season in our state. This place is a flood prone area, and in 2018 while I was in the States, there was a huge flood. Many of their houses along with their furniture and livestock were washed away. When I meet people they share with me lots of adventurous stories, and how they were miraculously rescued. Now the rain has started and they are afraid of floods. Church building and rectory are located on an elevated place. The parishioners and other people in the neighborhood were sheltered in the church and the rectory during the flood. Almost one week they lived together forgetting all kinds of differences as if they were in Noah's Ark. . . ." and now the coronavirus is an additional threat.

Fr. Paul knows that our school and parish community is very generous and supports the efforts of the Church to spread the message of the gospel in India. He also knows that times are difficult for many. If, however, you are able to help his flood relief efforts, you can donate through a GoFundMe page that has been set-up to accept donations, which can be made by visiting [GoFundMe.com](http://GoFundMe.com) and searching for Little Flower Church, Kaprassery.



Above - With the pandemic putting restraints on traditional fundraising events, the PTSO is sponsoring a series of raffles to allow families to meet their fundraising commitment. Mrs. Strom is always glad to pick the lucky winner! Below - Fr. Ethan celebrates the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with the help of our 3rd Grade class. Students assisted by lectoring, singing and presenting flowers to honor our Blessed Mother.



Parishioners of Little Flower Church, Kaprassery, India, lay the cornerstone for a house to replace one that was destroyed during floods in 2018. The cornerstone was blessed by Fr. Kottackal, former SJE Parish associate pastor, who is now serving in India and is vicar of their church.