
Holy Ghost School to Home

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WELCOME BACK

Why Pay Tuition? A question that many Catholic School parents are asked is, "Why do you pay tuition to send your children to Catholic school, when there is a perfectly fine public school in the area?" The answer is because from the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith, and having its own unique characteristics. At Holy Ghost School faith is tangible and expressed in a myriad of ways. It is infused into all aspects of school life. It is made palpable within moments of celebration and times of challenge. All actions and choices reflect evidence of HGS being a place of faith.

As first teachers of your children, you introduce them to faith and pray with them at home and in church. By sending your children to a Catholic school you take the next step. You allow the teachers to become instrumental in shaping the environment and learning experiences for them. At HGS we do this not only through prayer, para liturgical services, and weekly Mass but we try to infuse into the children a spirit of Christian attitude, caring, and service. The teachers and staff model this behavior, expect it in the classrooms, and want to see it carried home and into the world. This year we will be adding a new K4J (Kids for Jesus) program aimed at teaching virtues and helping children incorporate them into their daily lives.

Never doubt your choice!

BEGINNINGS

21st Century Learning Skills

I read recently that Catholic schools have a choice: they can embrace the modern educational climate, engage students, and grow or, they can continue to do things the way they've always done them and risk becoming obsolete.

I pride Holy Ghost and myself on having made the first choice. So, as we begin school this fall I feel it is an ideal time to take a look at 21st century learning skills and consider how things can be done differently during the 2010-2011 school year. While we recognize the importance of teaching core academic skills I believe we need to reframe curriculum and instruction to make these core skills relevant for today's students. This is important to keep students engaged in their learning and to bridge the widening gap between their lives away from school and their classroom experiences. To this end, we will stress problem-solving, effective communication, and collaboration.

Additionally, we will continue to develop literacy in the areas of information, media, and technology. Our students must learn life and career skills that will help them succeed in a global society, including the ability to be flexible and adaptable; to take initiative and be self-directed; to show cultural awareness, take responsibility, and assume leadership.

To this end, Mrs. Lasica will continue with the morning news show giving the eighth graders

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the opportunity to write, edit, produce, and broadcast the news. Ms. Prena will be introducing kindergarten through fourth grades to an engineering program that will encompass many of the above listed skills. Students in grades five through eight will continue working with engineering on the computers. Miss Lederer will be sponsoring Science Fair for students in grades six, seven, and eight. In math an emphasis will be placed on skills we use in everyday life. We will continue teaching computer skills such as keyboarding, word processing, publishing, databases, Access, and Power Point. All teachers will be adding 21st century skills to their curriculum as best fits each subject area.

With the addition of two more Smart Boards all classrooms are now equipped with this technology which allows students to use multiple senses in the learning process. The fact that students can use "touch technology" which allows them the ability to touch the screen and manipulate the objects on the screen, lets students participate physically with the materials on the board. For kinesthetic learners this is a fantastic addition to the curriculum.

September Dates to Remember

Our first school **Mass** will be celebrated on Wednesday, September 1st. We will welcome our new teachers and students, celebrate September baptisms, and commission our Eighth Grade Eucharistic Ministers (Julia, Alex, Michelle, Emma, Claudia, Josh, Alexandra, and Jaelyn).

Curriculum Night will be held on Wednesday, September 1st at 7 P.M. Meet your child's teacher; learn about curriculum:

- 7:00-7:20 Introduction by Father Kevin
- 7:30-7:55 Formal Presentations in 1, 2, 6, 7, 8
Meet the teachers in EC, K, 3, 4, and 5
- 8:00-8:25 Formal presentations in K, 3, 4, and 5
Meet the teachers in EC, 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8

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Open House on Sunday, September 19th after 9 AM Mass. Join us for Mass followed by hospitality in the gym and then visit the classrooms.

Grandparent and Special Adult Day on Friday, September 24th. The day will start with a light breakfast at 9 AM followed by class presentations, a craft for the younger grades, and something special for the older grades. This day is an 11 AM dismissal (teachers have an in-service in the afternoon).

Family Fun Night will be that same evening from 6 - 9 PM. There will be a potluck dinner followed by games and activities for the kids. More specific information will follow.

Back to School: From Routine to Ritual

Routines are a necessary part of life. They keep busy families organized, allowing for such scheduled activities as exercise, homework, mealtime, and sleep. Once established, they also minimize family conflict by creating clear and consistent expectations. Routines focus on what needs to be done.

According to the American Psychological Association, Dr. Fiese's 50-year review found that "family routines and rituals are alive and well and are associated with marital satisfaction, adolescents' sense of personal identity, children's health, academic achievement, and stronger family relationships." In addition, the review found that "family routines and rituals...offer stability during times of stress and transition."

There are many daily and weekly opportunities for rituals. One of the most important values we can pass to our children through ritual is a love of learning. Established study times are a necessary part of a family routine. Reading together as a family, however, is a ritual that can excite and expand children's knowledge

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exponentially, as well as create memories that they will want to share with their own children!

As children grow, some families form their own book clubs, with each member taking turns choosing a book that everyone will read. Rituals don't require a great deal of time--just consistency that children can count on. Work out your schedule to protect your family time, both through routine and ritual. It can be a struggle to get started, but once a plan is in place, you will make "emotional imprints" on your children that provide strength through tough times as well as make happy, lifelong memories.

Make the World a Better Place

Whether your kids love animals, the environment, or helping the elderly, volunteering can involve the entire family. An attitude of caring starts with teaching tots to share, siblings to help each other, and students to come to the aid of another--without compensation. Kids will mimic what you do. If they see you being generous, they will naturally follow suit. Findings of a Gallup Survey indicated that adults who volunteered while kids were twice as likely to volunteer as adults as those who didn't experience volunteering in their youth. Over half of those adult volunteers began volunteering by the age of 14.

While volunteering often leads to a sense of satisfaction, another benefit is that youngsters identify themselves as members of a community where their contribution is not only helpful, but also necessary.

Where do we start?

There are many independent ways to help others: walking a neighbor's dog, taking a meal to someone who is ill, or visiting a lonely acquaintance. Before you begin, evaluate what you and your children are interested in and what skills or abilities you have. Next, consider the following:

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- Start slowly. Evaluate short-term activities before making a long-term commitment.
- Research possible volunteer opportunities, paying attention to location, frequency, and time commitment.
- Make sure that all family members are involved in choosing and planning what you will do.
- It might be fun to include other families from your school, neighborhood, workplace, or church to do a volunteer activity. A group of people can get more done than just a few.

To become successful adults, children must learn that their world is larger than their own interests. Volunteering enriches relationships, develops communication, and teaches children the values of service and community involvement.
