

September 2010

## **"Our God Is Here!"**

Every summer our school selects a theme for the coming year. This theme becomes the basis for all liturgical celebrations throughout the year as well as a compass for our daily work and actions. Some of our past themes included "With One Voice", "In This Place", "Cry the Gospel", "Shine Like the Son!" and "Grateful"

This year's theme, "Our God is Here!" affords us the opportunity to step back, and recognize God's presence in people, places and situations. This may be as simple as seeing God's presence in a random act of kindness on the playground or in the classroom. It may be finding God's presence in family members or friends, our educators, our youth or even our self! We see God in the beauty that surrounds us, in our imagination and ideas, in the unexpected and in moments when we are still. We will look for God's presence in the more difficult times - times that we may find challenging, in our hardships, in loss of loved ones, and in those who are in need of our help. We will look for God's presence in our faith journey. If we challenge ourselves as students, parents and educators to look for God's presence in our daily lives, we will be most blessed, knowing that God is with us in *all* that we say and do.

We as teachers are thankful for the opportunity to share our faith with your children and to walk with them on their faith journey. At St. Bernardines, we recognize that these seeds of faith are *first* planted and developed at home, and that here, we are able to nourish these seeds and watch them develop. But seeds can also be planted in the classroom, on the playground, at the lunch tables. They are planted as we celebrate liturgy together, when a child proclaims a reading or sings or brings up the gifts. And they continue to be planted at home. Throughout the coming year, we will be sending home suggestions of ways that you as a family can continue to grow in faith together. These various projects and prayers would correspond with a particular season, such as Advent or Lent, or with a special theme that the school might be working on that month. I know as parent, I am always looking for new ways to explore our faith with my children. I would love any ideas/faith traditions from *your* family that you might want to share with our school families as well! We look forward to sharing with you in your child's faith growth. We are thankful for your trust in allowing us to work with your child. As you continue to plant those seeds of faith, we as a school, are grateful for your child's gifts and take great joy in affording them the opportunity to use them and share them with others.

We invite and encourage all of our parents to join us for our school liturgies and liturgical celebrations this coming year. The dates, times, and "host class" are marked in your school calendars. Each class will have the opportunity to minister at a liturgy this year. Come check out the liturgy board outside the school office throughout the year! It will have reminders of when our next liturgical celebration will be, seasonal information, and some highlights from recent celebrations. Moms and Dads, be sure to highlight two dates on your calendar: June 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 mass, our children will honor and express their gratitude to their fathers and grandfathers, and May 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 our children will honor and express their gratitude to our mother Mary, and their mothers and grandmothers. Are you interested in helping with the Parent Liturgy/Service Committee? This is a great way to get involved with our liturgy prep, taking photos at our liturgical celebrations, helping with Mardi Gras, Sandwich Ministry and with our Service Learning projects. Come see me, send me an email or drop me a message in the office - we'd love your help!

Inside your brown envelope you will find a prayer card and a small hand. The prayer card has our school prayer. We encourage you as a family to pray this prayer together, perhaps before a meal, or at the end of the day. We as a school family will be praying this prayer every morning before we start our school day together. On the small hand, we would like to ask you as a family to think about where you, as a family find God present in your life. Write this on the hand; decorate it if you'd like. These hands will become a part of our building one "Our God is Here!" bulletin board. Just return it in your brown envelope in the coming weeks, and I will add them to the bulletin board as they come in!

We as teachers and staff are truly blessed and grateful to be teaching here at St. Bernardines and to be working with your children. We are looking forward to a great year together! God bless us all as we continue His work and live our lives seeing His presence in the people, places and every events in this coming year.

*Marilyn Enos*