

CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

December 2009/January 2010

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

As you read this I hope you are enjoying your Thanksgiving weekend with family and friends and are looking forward to the celebration of Christmas in the month ahead. These holidays give us time to give thanks to God, to be with family, and to share our gifts with those around us. The gift of education at Catholic Central that we share together gives our staff and your children an opportunity to do all of these things together.

We celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass together as a Catholic Central family on November 24th. In this celebration of the Eucharist we were able to thank God for what He has given to us. We were also able to give warmth, comfort and nourishment to many people less fortunate than us through the Thanksgiving food and clothing drives. As we enter into the season of Advent and our preparation for Christmas begins, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation together on December 10th, and throughout the month of December will be working together on our traditional Christmas Families project. These events that help us grow in our faith are detailed in Kathie Walsh's Campus Ministry article in this newsletter.

As you know from Fr. Stasker's recent letter regarding the financial situation of our schools, the Catholic Secondary Schools will face some challenging economic times in the next few years. Despite these challenges I am confident that we will come through this as a stronger school community and that together we can look forward to a vibrant future of Catholic high school education in Grand Rapids.

As we look to the future it is our goal to continuously look for opportunities to enhance the educational experience at Catholic Central while maintaining our strong Catholic identity. I can assure you that we are constantly looking to improve in every aspect of education at Catholic Central. We will not get complacent. The combination of strengthening current programs and looking for innovative ways to prepare students for the future will give us an edge on the competition. The Catholic Central experience must represent a value that is greater than the investment a family makes in their adolescent's education. It is important that as a CC community we also promote the educational value that Catholic Central provides.

In addition to promoting CC within our community, we will be working to develop stronger relationships with the thousands of Catholic Central alumni and community supporters across the globe. We are proud of the accomplishments that Catholic Central alumni have made throughout the world and want to make sure that CC graduates continue to feel a connection to their alma mater. Growing these relationships can help us provide more learning opportunities and resources for our students.

As we look to the future I ask that you keep us in your prayers and also that you communicate with us your ideas on how we can work together to provide the best for our students.

May God bless you and your family during the holiday season,

Steve Passinault

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office: 233-5899
Attendance: 233-5812
Guidance Office: 233-5810
Athletic Office: 233-5898
Business Office: 233-5976



Steve Passinault, **Principal**
Greg Deja, **Assistant Principal**
Heidi Clark-Smitley, **Director of Guidance**
Todd Kolster, **Athletic Director**
Kathryn Walsh, **Campus Minister**
Mary Ottenwess, **Technology Director**

CHRISTMAS FAMILIES



We will have 30 Christmas families. 28 fifth hour classes will be serving the families. All of the families are going to be from this area of Grand Rapids (or close by). We're encouraging 100% participation from all classes! Students can start stocking up on household supplies, toiletries, and any other general items now. If parents would like to become involved or help out, please feel free to contact Mrs. Gasper. Paper work with more information on Christmas families will be distributed prior to Thanksgiving Break (that is the goal!) The delivery will take place on Tuesday December 22nd from 10:30 - 11:30am.

Exams are January 19 through January 22. All obligations are to be discharged by that date: library fines, uniforms, detentions, tuition balances, text book, etc. Students may be held out of exams if they have any debts.

Fundraiser

The Buffalo Wild Wings Fundraiser will be January 31st.

The restaurant hours are from 11 AM to 1 AM that Sunday.



Is just thinking about the holidays making you feel tired? Catholic Central has planned a day of relaxing with your friends and family while enjoying great food and service to help you recuperate after the holiday rush. You don't need to cook or clean your house, just grab your family and come hungry! **JANUARY 31, 2010 BUFFALO WILD WINGS IS HOSTING A FUNDRAISER FOR CATHOLIC CENTRAL. CATHOLIC CENTRAL WILL EARN 20% OF EACH DINING BILL THAT HAS OUR FLYER ATTACHED.** (Flyers will be distributed soon). BW3 is located at 2035 28th street. Questions? Call Christine O'Driscoll 233-5816. See you there!



Attention: Parents of the Class of 2010!

Very Important MANDATORY Meeting Regarding the Senior All Night Party held on: Monday, January 25, 2010 at 7 PM in the CC Cafeteria

A few reminders about the Meeting for the All Night Party (Party will be held immediately following graduation)

There will be important forms to be completed and signed.

We will be collecting money to cover some of the costs of the party.

We want your photos!! Start collecting your favorite photos of your son's or daughter's years at Catholic Central for a DVD we're creating. The DVD will be shown during the Senior All Night Party.

A very special Thank You to **Joe Nawrocki** for organizing a GREAT Fundraiser and to all the parents and students who participated with their purchase of holiday pies, wreaths and poinsettias. We are well on the way for raising the significant funds to host this event. However, if you or your company could possibly send a cash donation to help us meet our budget and also help out students who will need financial assistance to attend the All Night Party, we would greatly appreciate it. More details and information on all of this at the meeting.

SEE YOU THERE!

Tom and Terri Harmon, John and Nancy Kennedy, Co-chairs

Guidance Office News

Guidance Office Updates

Your role as parent is vital for student effort and success. During this semester, please continue to encourage your student to complete all assigned work in a timely manner (see Student Handbook for school policy on late work), to assist your student in seeking help from teachers as needed, and to support a conscientious effort to prepare for final exams in January. Meanwhile, feel free to contact your student's teachers through email. *If you are having difficulty accessing grades from the Portal, please contact the Guidance Office at 233-5810.*

Our top recommendations for academic improvement include:

- Seek extra help from teacher(s) before or after school
- Maintain consistent attendance and avoid missing classes
- Use planner to track daily homework and differentiate study time
- Create a routine for doing school work at home including location, time frame and accountability from a parent or tutor
- Identify a tutor or study partner for regular contact during the week or on the weekend (see CC website for NHS volunteer tutors)
- Practice different study techniques outside school such as verbal, tactile and visual props (ask teacher or counselor for suggestions)
- Write grade goals for specific courses and track through the Portal weekly
- Meet with school counselor to manage the responsibilities of academics, extracurricular activities and relationships
- Study for final semester exams during the Christmas Break

12th grade & Parents:

The Financial Aid Information Night will be held on Wednesday, December 9, at 7:00 p.m., in our cafeteria. Our speaker for the evening will be Mr. David Steffee, who is the Director of Financial Aid at Aquinas College. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – the form required by virtually all colleges and universities for determining eligibility for financial aid – will be explained at this meeting.

Seniors should be finishing the majority of their applications for college admission. Many schools have deadlines of December 31. Thus, seniors MUST submit recommendation forms/transcript requests no later than Monday, December 8. When making a request of counselors and teachers, students need to take into consideration both the volume of applications we receive at this time of year, as well as the Guidance Office being closed during Christmas break.

You are encouraged to send to the Guidance Office a copy of any award letters and scholarship offers your student receives so that we can include this recognition in our graduation program this spring. The total amount of scholarship dollars received by the Class of 2010 is reported in publications about our school, so we appreciate your help in collecting this important information.

11th grade & Parents:

All juniors will take the ACT as a part of the Michigan Merit Exam (MME). These exams will be given during the school hours on March 9, 10, 11. There is no charge to take the ACT on this occasion and juniors are automatically registered through CCHS. Further information will be mailed home at the end of January. Test prep workshops are optional and will be advertised by the beginning of February.

Juniors are encouraged to take the ACT and/or SAT more than once. Students must register and pay for additional tests online at www.actstudent.org for the ACT or www.collegeboard.com for the SAT. Note: Student athletes who are involved in a spring sport often find that they have a conflict with a contest that is scheduled for the same day as the ACT such as the June 12, 2010 test date. Other test dates to consider are February 6 and April 10. Registration deadlines are approximately one month in advance of the test date. Please be sure to include the CCHS code 231-685 so that your student's scores are included in their academic file at school.

9th, 10th, 11th grade & Parents: Results from national standardized testing in October (Explore, PLAN, PSAT with each career inventory) will be mailed home before Christmas break.

In December, Freshmen will be introduced to www.careercruising.com which assists young adults with career exploration through interest and skill assessments. Students will be encouraged to share their assessment results with their parents and discuss their future goals.

ALL CCHS STUDENTS should activate their account on PrepHQ. Instructions and a website link are posted at www.grcatholiccentral.com/Academics. The PrepHQ program is used by the Guidance Dept to help students organize and receive information about colleges, scholarships, personal academic profile and Christian service hours.

From the Campus Minister:

Dear Catholic Central Family,

Our Thanksgiving Drive this year was very successful. We asked students to commit to bring in at least one item of clothing and one food item, aiming for 100% participation in each 1st hour class. The Liturgy Planning class collected all the items and we divided them and kept them in the cafeteria for all to see the amount of donations we had to give to the Cathedral Outreach Center (clothing) and the Downtown Churches' Food Pantry (Food). Our Thanksgiving Drive has traditionally been to benefit our neighbors in the Heartside Neighborhood. The collection bins were overflowing! We celebrated our Thanksgiving Mass on the Tuesday before the holiday. Our celebrant for this Mass was Fr. Steve Cron from St Joseph the Worker Parish.

At Thanksgiving we introduced the theme that will carry us through the Advent and Christmas season. It comes from the Gospel of Luke, specifically Luke 3:10-18, and is from the reading for the third Sunday of Advent. The question is asked, **"What Should We Do?"** and we will answer the question together – first, at Thanksgiving, **"Give Thanks"**; next on December 10 when we offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation, **"Reconcile"**; next, throughout Advent and with Christmas Families, **"Prepare"**; and then, when we return and complete the Christmas season, **"Welcome and Rejoice."**

We will be asking ourselves this question at three liturgies – Thanksgiving, the Reconciliation Service and our Advent Christmas Liturgy to emphasize this theme and Fr. Steve Cron to be our with us for each of them

We will begin Christmas families during the first week of December. Mrs. Jeanine Gasper and Student Congress are coordinating Christmas Families this year. Every 5th Hour class will receive information about a family that has been screened by the Cathedral of St. Andrew. Most are members from the parish, many are Hispanic, some have not lived in the area for very long. The need is great and we need your help. Most of you probably met your student's 5th hour teacher, so you will be familiar with the person coordinating your student's Christmas Family. We will be delivering on the morning of December 22, after Mass, and we must have adult drivers for every family. On December 22 we will gather for our traditional Advent/Christmas Mass which precedes the delivery of Christmas Families. Fr. Steve will again help us remember the question we began with..."What must we do?". This activity is one of the Catholic Central traditions that I love the most!

On December 8 we will commemorate Mary's Immaculate Conception. With this feast we are reminded that Mary was conceived without sin.

We will be offering Eucharistic Minister Training in early January. Fr Tom Tavella, CSP from the Cathedral, along with Dennis Rybicki and I will be training confirmed juniors and seniors who are interested in becoming Eucharistic Ministers. This training is designed for high school students and emphasizes Eucharistic theology and the History of the Eucharist as well as the rubrics of distribution of the Sacred Body and Blood. Students can still Eucharistic Minister at our school liturgies if they have been trained in their Parish for this ministry. We do ask for a phone call or note from someone at the Parish notifying of the training. The training will be from 3:15 to 5:30 and we will serve pizza at 5:30 for those students who wish to stay for the "supper" after. We will be signing students for the training after Thanksgiving.

Many of our students are signing up for all the service opportunities this season. They still seem to find time to meet the needs of others although we all know they too are living very busy lives. God bless them!

The Liturgy Planning Team and Dennis Rybicki are looking forward to planning a fun week for Catholic Schools Week at the beginning of February. It is always fun to celebrate who we are after we have gone through the stress of exams. Fr. Tom Tavella, CSP will be the celebrant at our Catholic Schools Mass. We will commission the new Eucharistic Ministers at this Mass.

God bless you and your families during this Advent season. Liturgically, it is a season of waiting and preparing. I hope you can make the time to prepare spiritually and take advantage of all the wonderful readings and activities throughout this season. Many parishes have evening services during the week, some families try to have a prayer time every evening around an Advent wreath. Find some time together. Please keep those who are lonely, sick, and mourning in your prayers. I will remember all of you in my Advent and Christmas prayers. Thank you again for your children and all you give and do for our school.

Music Department News

There are many exciting things happening in the Music Department during December and January. Here are some of the highlights:

The Fourteenth Annual Madrigal Dinner will be held December 11th and 12th at 6:00pm and December 13 at 2:00pm in the Wege Ballroom of Aquinas College. The Madrigal Dinner is a amazing dinner theater experience set in the Medieval period. The students of the Choral Department will entertain you with their beautiful singing, great acting and many other fantastic talents! Tickets are available through the Main Office for \$20.00. The deadline for tickets is December 4. Look for more information in this newsletter or contact the Main Office.



The Music Department presents their annual **Christmas Concert** on December 15 at 7:00pm in the Cathedral of Saint Andrew. This beautiful concert will feature our Concert Band as well as our many choral ensembles. This is one of our most popular concerts of the entire year. Please join us! This is a free concert, open to all!

This year, the Music Department proudly presents **West Side Story** for our Spring All-School Musical. This moving piece of musical theater will amaze audiences with intricate choreography and, of course, great singing! Auditions will be held the week of December 14-18. Please have any interested students see Mr. Rybicki for information.



ACADEMIC RECOGNITION – UPDATES

HONOR ROLL - Students will be recognized quarterly for earning grades of B- or higher in every course at the end of each marking period. A change was made to eliminate the requirement of a minimum grade point average. With the change, more students will be able to achieve Honor Roll during their high school career.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY - Beginning with the class of 2011, a candidate must be a junior or senior and have achieved a 3.8 cumulative grade point average. The change in the GPA requirement (from 3.6) was made to correlate with the potential weighted grade point average that a student can earn by completing Honors/AP courses (Bonus Points added). The application process will still include an evaluation of a candidate's Leadership, Service, and Character qualities. Academically qualified juniors and seniors are personally invited to apply to NHS in late August.

CUM LAUDE - Beginning with the class of 2011, all juniors (5 semesters completed) and seniors (7 semesters completed) who have maintained a 4.0 cumulative grade point average will receive Cum Laude certificates. This change in the GPA requirement (from 3.8) was made to correlate with the potential weighted GPA that a student can earn by completing Honors/AP courses (Bonus Points added). From the class of 2010, seniors who have maintained a 3.8 or higher will receive the certificate. These eligible students are recognized at the annual banquet in March.

ACADEMIC LETTER - In order to earn an Academic Letter recognition, students must have attended CCHS for at least three semesters and achieve the following:

Sophomores at the end of 3 semesters have a 4.0 cumulative GPA.

Juniors at the end of 5 semesters have a 4.1 cumulative GPA.

Seniors at the end of 7 semesters have a 4.2 cumulative GPA.

This change in the GPA requirement (from 3.8) was made to correlate with the potential weighted GPA that a student can earn by completing Honors/AP courses (Bonus Points added).

Madrigal Dinner

The Catholic Central Choral Department Invites You to Experience The Fourteenth Annual Madrigal Dinner

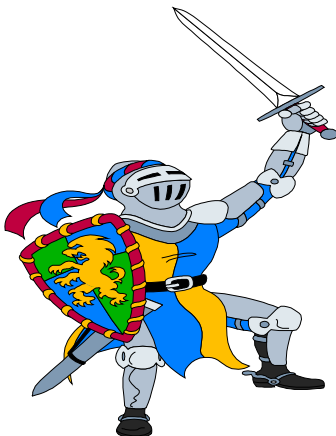
The Catholic Central Choral Department requests your attendance
within the ballroom of the Wege Center of Aquinas College
on December 11th and 12th at 6:00 PM and Sunday, December 13th at 2:00 PM.

Tickets are \$20.00 for Dinner at the time of reservation.

Gallery seating is available for \$10.00. Ticket will go on sale on Monday, November 16. Please contact the fair Maidens in the Main Office for ticket information.

Our most humble apologies for limited seating. There is no refund for unused tickets.

Come see why this production is the longest running Madrigal
performance in West Michigan.



Madrigal Dinner is a festive way to welcome in the Holiday Season.

The Procession of Singers through the Hall

The Hoisting of a Sparkling Toast from the Wassail Coppes

The Serving of the hearty meal:

Greene Leafe Salade, Bread Loafe, Breast of Chickene, Ribs of Porke, Red Potato, Cob o' Corn

Serenading of Minstrels and Recorder Consort at your table.

Procession of Servants with Dessert of scrumptious Pie.

Pleasing of the Crowd by Magicians, Carolers, Knights, Dancers and Sword play.

This year's production is "A Little Knight Shtick

(or "Right the Wrong and Wrong the Right").

Come join us in the banquet hall for the Heraldry of Musicians, entertainment of Actors and Madrigal Singers celebrating the Yule Tide Season with Song.

You may also enjoy the Madrigal Marketplace!

Holiday baskets are up for auction during the evening festivities.



Winter Sports Feature:

This winter we are hosting the Boys Basketball Holiday Tournament at Catholic Central. The Girls Holiday Tournament will be hosted by West Catholic. It will be a great chance to come out and see four great Catholic Schools battle on the court over the holiday season. The teams in both tournaments are: GR. Catholic Central, West Catholic, (Flint) Luke M. Powers Catholic and Saginaw Nouvel Catholic Central. Tickets will be on sale at the gate the day of the event.

Athletic Boosters:

Please come out and be part of our exciting Athletic Booster Club. This hard working group of people are helping make our student-athlete's experience better each day. They have clear goals of building the best experience for our kids and helping form a better social network as well. Our next Athletic Booster meeting is December 7th, 7:30pm at Notos Restaurant. Everyone is welcome!

Team Schedules:

Please visit the website, www.highschoolsports.net, for up-to-date information for all our teams. At the website, the "Schedules" have cancellations and other information. The "Schedule" item allows you to select a view showing all athletic events for a week, a month, or a season schedule for any team. These features are to improve communication with you.

Vacation time:

Parents, if you have a family activity that conflicts with practices or games, please discuss directly with the coach as soon as possible. Our policy is covered in the school handbook. Athletic season dates are known well in advance and can be provided by calling the Athletic Office at 233-5898.

TICKETS: NEW POLICY for CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY!!

In effort to raise school spirit amongst our student body and athletic programs we are going to try something new. Any Catholic Central High School student that comes to any HOME event with their student ID will get in free of charge. Adults and other family/community members will still be required to pay the OK-Conference wide ticket price of \$5 unless a Catholic Central HOME Pass has been purchased through the Athletic Department. We look forward to seeing an active student body at all events.

There is NO charge for 1st grade students and under.

Review the CC Handbook you received last August. The Athletic section provides guidance regarding academic, student conduct, and health requirements to maintain eligibility for school sports.



Holiday Gift Ideas:

Happy Holidays from the CougarGear! Can't figure out what to get your student or CC fan for Christmas? How about CC Cougargear. We carry many items for your discerning Cougar. We have Fleece Jackets & Vests, Hooded Sweatshirts, T-Shirts, Baseball Hats, Youth Sweatshirts & T-Shirts. Cougargear can be purchased on line at www.cougargear.com

**Catholic Secondary Schools
and
The Drama Departments of West Catholic and Catholic Central High School
present**

**William Shakespeare's
Much Ado**



**About
Nothing**

**January 15 and 22 at 7:30pm
January 16 and 23 at 3:00 and 7:30pm**

at the PAC at Aquinas College

WE ARE C.C.!

MARCH 13, 2010



A night to benefit
Catholic Central High School

This year's Spring Auction (formally known as The Big Blue) promises to be entertaining, fun, and a bit different than what you would expect. So, save the date!

March 13, 2010.

Our goal is to raise \$100,000 to help cover the cost of educating our kids. We not only look forward to seeing you there, we are hoping you can partner with us in making "We ARE C.C." a successful event. Volunteers, donations and committee members are needed!

Contact Christine O'Driscoll @ (616)233-5816 to volunteer.

DONATE A GIFT:

Yes, I will be happy to provide the following auction item or cash donation to the "We ARE C.C." event.

Gift Name: _____

Gift description: _____

Approximate Value of gift: _____

Donor Name(s): _____

Contact Phone #: _____

Please return this completed form to the Catholic Central School Office.