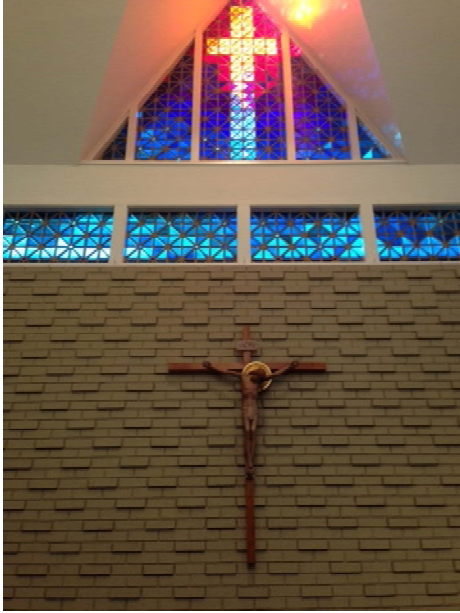




April 10 – 23, 2017

*Holy Week & Easter Holidays (not Spring Break)*

Remember that we are dust and to dust we will return



This week, we Christians focus on The Passion of Jesus – who loved us enough to die for us in order that we might gain eternal life. The etymology of passion is from the Latin *passio* meaning *to suffer* – and Christ certainly suffered. But His suffering led to our salvation – good triumphed over evil, life triumphed over death, love triumphed over hate.

We are called, as Lasallians, to have passion for our work. Saint La Salle used the word “zeal” (from the Greek *zelos* meaning ardor) but the two are similar. What exactly does that mean? We must love what we do even if it involves suffering, as that will lead to success, love, and happiness. Let’s face it: our jobs – yours as parent and ours as educators -- are not often easy and not for the faint of heart. You parent because you love – and I hope we do what we do because we love.

As we remember The Passion this week, let us ask for grace to be *passionate* about our work – whether as educators or as parents. And as I wrote to the faculty, if we are not, we need to go pursue something else. May the grace of Holy Week fill our lives and the lives of our students and children --always!

**Mon, Apr 10 (Regular; G A B C)**

- The great Jewish feast of Passover begins this evening and ends Tuesday evening, April 18. Passover is a festival of freedom. It commemorates the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt, and their transition from slavery to freedom. The main ritual of Passover is the seder, which occurs on the first two nights (in Israel just the first night) of the holiday — a festive meal that involves the re-telling of the Exodus through stories and song and the consumption of ritual foods, including matzah and maror (bitter herbs). We wish our Jewish brothers and sisters a most blessed celebration of Passover!
- **This Day in History:** 1866, the ASPCA is founded in New York.
- **TDIH:** In 1925, F. Scott Fitzgerald publishes *The Great Gatsby*. Read some of this classic today.
- **National Sibling Day:** Be nice to your brothers and sisters today.
- **Safety Pin Day:** From the SPD website: *Legend has it that, in 1849, Walter Hunt, inventor of the safety pin, owed a friend \$15 and decided to invent something to earn the money to repay him. His invention was the safety pin. Strong and sharp, yet safe enough to be used on clothing, safety pins are a simple yet ingenious invention. Take inspiration from Walter Hunt this and come up with a clever invention. It’s a great challenge for children who love to come up with new ideas.*
- **New Student Scheduling:** The Class of 2022 (can you believe it?) comes to campus this afternoon to complete their scheduling for next year. Both quantity and quality are good, and we look forward to welcoming our newest wolves.
- **Art Show:** Our annual art show begins this afternoon in the BAC. Come admire the wonderful work by our artistic wolves as they display the results of the past months. The show runs through Wednesday.
- **Louisiana Legislative Session** begins today. We offer our prayer for our legislators as they grapple with the many issues facing our state.

## Tue, Apr 11 (Wolf Pack Schedule; D E F G)

- **Leadership Breakfast**
- **TDIH:** In 1861, the bloodiest four years in US history begin when Confederate batteries under General P.G.T. Beauregard open fire on Union Ft Sumter in Charleston Bay, SC, beginning Civil War.
- **Education & Sharing Day:** *On E & S Day, we reflect on the teachings of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who embodied that humanitarian spirit. As a tireless advocate for youth around the world, he inspired millions to lift the cause of education, to practice kindness and generosity, and to aspire toward their highest ideals. His enduring legacy lives on in those he touched, and today, we resolve to carry forward his dedication to service and scholarship.*
- **International “Louie Louie” Day:** From the LLD website: *Today provides an annual opportunity to celebrate the song that has been called best party song of all time, has been recorded more times than any other rock song in history, and was very nearly declared the official state song of Washington State. Why April 11? It's the birthday of Richard Berry, the man who composed Louie Louie. Now, if we could just understand the lyrics!*
- **National Pet Day:** I have no pets (other than peeves); be extra kind to yours today!
- **World Parkinson’s Disease Day:** In Parkinson's, nerve cells that deliver the neurotransmitter dopamine to other cells are reduced in numbers. As cell death spreads to ever larger parts of the brain, more centers are affected. This results in an aggravation of motor and non-motor disorders. We pray for a medical cure for this dreaded scourge.
- **Wolf Packs:** The penultimate Wolf Pack for our seniors!
- **Tennis:** Wolves v. Mandeville
- **Track:** JV District Meet at F’Bleau
- **Baseball:** 8<sup>th</sup> in double header v. John Curtis; JV & Varsity at Ponchatoula

## Wed, Apr 12 (Passion Play Schedule; A B C D)

- **Mass – 7 am. Come join us during Holy Week!**
- **DEAR Day:** “Drop Everything and Read,” designed to remind all to make reading a priority activity in their lives. Let’s all observe this day! Students: do SSR today!
- **National Be Kind to Lawyers Day.** We wish our SPS community lawyers a very pleasant day. No lawyer jokes from me!
- **National Licorice Day:** Enjoy if you wish; I’m not a fan!
- **Eucharistic Ministry Training:** SPS will host the Archdiocesan training of next year’s senior Eucharistic Ministers from the four Catholic high schools of St. Tammany: Archbishop Hannan, Pope John Paul II, SPS and SSA. The students from the other schools will be invited to attend the Passion Play at the conclusion of the training.
- **Track:** Varsity in F’Bleau Invitational
- **Marching Wolves Booster Club General Membership Mtng (7 pm in band room – last meeting of year)**
- **Football Parents Meeting:** 7 pm in the new gym. All parents of football players are to attend.



Mr. Bacon helps Cameron tie his new bowtie before mass.

## Thu, Apr 13 (Holy Thursday; Assembly; E F G A)

- **TDIH:** In 1742, George Friedrich Handel’s *Messiah* (NOT “The Messiah”) debuts in Dublin. What a masterpiece!
- **TDIH:** In 1743, Thomas Jefferson, our third president, the main author of the Declaration of Independence, and the accomplisher The Louisiana Purchase, was born in Shadwell, VA.
- **National Scrabble Day:** Get out the old Scrabble Game and enjoy while listening to Handel! A double treat!
- **Mandatum Ceremony (Washing of the Feet) during assembly**
- **Blood Drive on campus today**
- **Baseball:** JV & Varsity v. Slidell

**Fri, Apr 14 – (Good Friday) – Note: there should be NO SPS activities – either on or off campus – on this most holy day of our Christian faith.**

- **Global Day to End Child Sexual Abuse:** Over 40 countries (including 35 US states) have agreed to promote this day. *It is estimated that more than 300,000 children around the world are sexually abused a year, many by close relatives or people they know and trust. Experts state that one in four girls and one in six boys will experience sexual abuse by their eighteenth birthday. A majority of victims are under the age of ten. We pray for an end to this tragedy!*
- **International Moment of Laughter Day:** To celebrate this day, tell jokes or do funny things that cause people to laugh. Just a smile is not a good enough. Successful participation in this day results in whole-hearted laughter.
- **National Dolphin Day:** Celebrate the dolphin today! Watch clips of “Flipper” on You Tube! Am I the only one who remembers the TV show “Flipper?”
- **TDIH:** In 1865, John Wilkes Booth, an actor and Confederate sympathizer, fatally shoots President Abraham Lincoln at a play at Ford's Theater in Washington.
- **TDIH:** In 2011, the entire SPS school community participated in the **Centennial March to the Courthouse** from school to St. Tammany Justice Center. This was an outstanding event. The Committee, chaired by then SPS mom Shawn Reed, had assembled a stellar cast of dignitaries to honor our students and school. We remain very grateful.



*Jr Hi Track Wolves present 1<sup>st</sup> place trophy to Craig.*

**Sat, Apr 15 (Holy Saturday)**

- **TDIH:** The “unsinkable” RMS Titanic sinks after hitting an iceberg on its maiden voyage, killing 1,517 people.
- **TDIH:** In 1865 Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the US, dies. Shot by John Wilkes Booth at Ford’s Theater in Washington the night before, he lived for 9 hours before succumbing to the severe head wound he sustained.
- **Rubber Eraser Day:** We all make mistakes! Where would we be with erasers? If only we could erase all the mistakes in our lives, not just the ones written in pencil on paper.
- **World Art Day:** Celebrate art on the anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci’s birthday in 1452! Check out da Vinci’s art (including The Last Supper & The Mona Lisa) on a search engine of your choice.

**Sun, Apr 16 – Easter Sunday! Alleluia! He is Risen!**

- **National Librarian Day:** Be nice to a librarian today – if you can find one on Easter Sunday!
- **National Healthcare Decisions Day:** Today promotes the importance of advance care planning, educating all to express health care wishes through the use of advance directives and health care power of attorney documents, and to encourage health care providers and facilities to honor those wishes. The Archdiocese of New Orleans has worked very closely with LAPost (the Louisiana Physicians Order for Scope of Treatment) on developing information for Catholics on end of life care issues. These are not always easy discussions, but important ones. I’ve done my “end of life” planning – although I hope my wishes won’t be heeded anytime soon!

**Mon, Apr 17 – Sun, Apr 23 – Easter Holidays (not spring break)**

- **You are on your own for holidays, TDIHs, H of the W, and school events.**

**Mon, Apr 24 – Classes resume with an assembly schedule: Senator John Kennedy will address the school.**

**Annual Fund:** Please consider helping if you have not already done so and are in a position to do so. No gift is too small. No gift is too large. I need to show a better level of participation than we currently have. Thanks – I want to keep my job!

**RIP:** Wallace "Wally" L. Layne of Pingree Grove, IL, a 1959 alum of SPS, died last week. The family requested that memorial donations be made to Saint Paul's. I'm always touched when alums and others remember us in this way. I never met Wally, but, obviously, SPS impacted his life. Let us hope that the work we are doing with our current students will one day – many, many years from now – cause similar memorial donations to be requested.

**Easter Holidays, not Spring Break:** Please refrain from using the term Spring Break. We do not give holidays in honor of spring. The holidays are to celebrate Easter and anything we can do to reinforce that, we should. Names matter.

Also, please know the school office will be closed over Easter Holidays (not spring break). Please anticipate any needs prior to Thursday afternoon, especially those pesky attendance forms for driver's licenses. I will be in the office most mornings during the break, so feel free to contact me. I'll help if I can.

### Musing on Last Week:

- **Life Skills Day:** All went well and our seniors got some real world information – and a nice lunch. Thanks to SPS Renaissance Board for sponsoring this day and SPS Development Team for organizing it.
- **Challenge Night:** Congrats to Student Councils of SSA and SPS for a very well organized Challenge Night. And SPS winning was icing on the cake.
- **Sophomore Service Day:** Again, Kevin Moore's organizational skills were evident and our sophomores made a difference in the community through their day of work. From Campus Ministere Jeff Ramon: [The group at] *New Orleans East with the food pantries/Camp Restore was great. Our service for Youth Rebuilding New Orleans was stellar (they want us working there as often as we want.) New Directions and PACE I'm told went well. I also heard our boys were quite the BINGO stars at Greenwalt. Lastly, Joe Dickens and his City Park battalion restored a large stretch of mulch impacted by the recent weather. Pizza was consumed, and all was well at da'ys end.*
- **Student Council Elections:** Good candidates made for tough choices at voting time. I consider all of the candidates winners by putting themselves up for election.
- **Student Council Year in Review:** A wonderful tribute to our year. President Will Murphy gave his valedictory and it was excellent – as has been his presidency. He did not disappoint.
- **Founder's Feast Day:** Thanks to all who helped make the Founder's Feast Day mass so wonderful. And special thanks to SSA for the delicious cakes they sent us. I was also touched by several emails and phone calls from current and former parents who wished us well on our feast day.
- **ACT:** A problem-free administration on Sat.
- **Tennis:** I think we had a match but didn't get results.
- **Golf:** I know the Wolves played and did well, but I don't have specifics. Geaux Golf Wolves!
- **Baseball:** District wins over Northshore, Hammond, & Covington – ten in a row!
- **Track:** Jr Hi won FIRST place in Strawberry Relays!
- **Lacrosse:** Big win for the Wolves. On to the playoffs!



*Oliver, Will, & Alex pose with the Challenge Night trophy. Congrats!*

- **PLTW Conference:** Rachel Peak, Kristin Lagraize, and Julie Beck not only attended this event, but they were presenters. That's how highly PLTW thinks of our engineering program. Congrats, Julie and Rachel! And we are also proud of the students who were invited to showcase their work. Congratulate Darren Lea, Blake Inzinna, Greyson Mangrum, Scott Manifold, Andrew Norlin, and Andy Smith
- **Organization of American Historians:** Jan Gardner and Stephen Dale attended this professional development opportunity in NO last week.
- **Father-Son Supper:** Again, a special evening for SPS dads and sons. Thanks to the Dads' Club for organizing. Congratulate Ruston Keller, Yehia Elkersh, and Alex Duet for giving talks about their dads. Well done!
- **Brother Bill Parsons Memorial Quiz Bowl Tournament:** In case you didn't know, Brother Bill, who died in Oct of 2004, loved being the moderator of our Quiz Bowl Team. I am grateful to Emilie Allen and the QB Wolves for continuing to remember Bill in this meaningful way.
- **ROTC Color Guard:** Our Color Guard helped present the color at the opening of the season game of the New Orleans Baby Cakes at the Shrine on Airline. Well done, Sgt. East and Alvey Anderson, Anthony Pennison, Anthony Da Bella and Ruston Keller.

**The Ugly Dept:** I know some of our students will travel to Florida over Easter Holidays (not spring break.) An article appeared in the Walton Country FL newspapers announcing a curfew. The curfew was implemented in South Walton in response to "underage drinking, large fights, unruly teens, belligerent teens with police. This week has been a nightmare." How sad. If your son is going to Florida, please stress safe choices with him.

#### **From the Student Council:**

- Students in 8th through 11th grade who wish to run for class office may pick up Candidate Forms in room 107. These forms are due on Thursday, April 13. Speeches and voting will take place after Easter holiday.
- Student Council is pleased to announce that the Junior Senior Prom will be held on campus this year, on Saturday, April 29. Students will enter Prom through the LaSalle Hall courtyard and will enjoy DJ music and desserts in the Briggs Assembly Center. Registration forms may be found on Edline and in room 107. The deadline to register is Wednesday, April 26.

**St. Tammany Parish Hospital is pleased to announce their Junior Volunteer Program for the summer of 2017 is looking for future healthcare providers.** If your son is interested in a future healthcare, please feel free to complete the attached application for the summer program. **The deadline for submission of the completed application packet is April 21, 2017.** All required documentation must be received by that date. The last day for SPS to complete school reference form or transcript needed is April 12, 2017. Please do not wait until the last minute to turn in your application.

Applicants must be 15 years old by September 30, 2016. If accepted, Orientation will be on June 7<sup>th</sup> with volunteering beginning the week of June 12<sup>th</sup> and continuing through July 21<sup>th</sup>. The schedule should include at least 8 hours of service a week. This could be done in a half-day shift twice a week or in one full day. Applicants must have at least a 2.5 average. Additionally, applicants must submit a copy of their latest report card or transcript as well as a school reference form. This and much more pertinent information can be found in the 2017 Guidelines for Junior Volunteers in attached application packets in PDF.

If you have any questions, please contact Shirley Primes, Volunteer Coordinator at St. Tammany Parish Hospital, at [985-898-4008](tel:985-898-4008) (email: [sprimes@stph.org](mailto:sprimes@stph.org)).

**April 04 Assembly:** I hope the students enjoyed our April 04 assembly. Here's some of what we did:

- Students entered the gym to the strains of "I Surrender" as performed by Class of 2010 alums Thomas Lorando and Jackson Parsons. This has become a Lenten tradition since the days when Jackson and Thomas would perform the song live in the gym during the last assembly before Holy Week. I reminded the students that the song encourages us to surrender to God and give up our sinful ways. Time continues to pass. But it's not too late to change. Are we cooperating with God's plan? Are we making the most of the time we are allotted? While the music played, junior

**Duncan Fallen** lit the prayer candle – still purple for Lent – and again prayed for those who left this earth to enter eternal life: Mrs. Bernadine Heigle, great-g' mother of Zach '18 & Dawson '21 Cobb; Sr. Josephine Cusimano, DC, aunt of Nicholas Cusimano '21; Mr. James "Sweet" Cutrer, grandfather of Jacques Cutrer '19; a Cousin of Hunter Corass '21; Mrs. Lillie Collier Ward, great grandmother of Colin '17 & Patrick'20 Reilly; Mr. Raymond Barry Maestri, SPS Class of 1947. Mr. Maestri was a member of the 1947 State Champion Track and Field Team, a member of St. Paul's Athletic Hall of Fame, father of 3 SPS alumni and grandfather of 5 SPS alums. He was also a neighbor.

- Recognized and congratulated SPS teacher John Carambat, who had become a grandfather for the first time the night before the assembly.
- Welcomed a group of students from Colegio Cristobal Colon, a Lasallian Catholic school in Mexico City. The six boys are spending two weeks with us, just like six SPS students spend two weeks at their school. We hope this is the beginning of a regular series of such exchanges.
- Reminded the student body of our mission statement, which calls us to offer strong academic, athletic, and extracurricular programs in a safe and disciplined environment. As proof that we are being faithful to our mission statement, I offered the following recognitions
- Recognized and congratulated The Marian Players on their two week, sold- out performances of *Fiddler on the Roof*. It was an outstanding production and we are grateful to Ms. Charbonnet and her drama department.
- Recognized and congratulated senior Yehia Elkersh for being named the Non-Public Student of the Year for the State of Louisiana. He now competes about six public school finalists.
- Informed the students about G.K. Chesterton -- a 20<sup>th</sup> Century English journalist, art critic, poet, dramatist, thinker and apologist for the Christian faith. In the The New Orleans Chesterton Society 2017 High School Essay Contest, Saint Paul's almost swept the competition with 1st Place/ \$250 prize going to junior Isaac Hebert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place/ \$50 prize going to junior Matthew Borgatti, and an Honorable Mention being awarded to junior Wayne Juneau.
- Recognized and congratulated students in our HOSA Chapter for winning the HOSA Cup at the State Conference – which means we are the best HOSA Chapter in the state. Individually, I recognized:
  - **State Recognition for Chapter Reflection Book**
  - **State Recognition for National Service Project for National Alliance on Mental Illness**
  - **Healthcare Issues Exam - 1st Josh Devier**
  - **Biomedical Debate - 1st Chris Wilson, Paul Stolin, Jakob Massey**
  - **Biomedical Debate -- 2nd Jacques du Passage, Josh Devier, Blake Ramsey**
  - **Biomedical Laboratory Science - 1st Andrew Norlin (\$1000 Scholarship to Johnson & Wales University); 2nd Josh Devier (\$750 Scholarship to J & W)**
  - **Extemporaneous Writing - 1st Sean Hightower**
  - **Medical Law and Ethics - 2nd Blake Ramsey**
  - **Pharmacology - 1st Josh Devier**
  - **Medical Reading - 1st Ross Hightower**
  - **Researched Persuasive Writing and Speaking - 2nd Josh Devier**
  - **As a result: HOSA Cup**
  - **Well done, HOSA Wolves!**
- Recognized and congratulated the Powerlifting Wolves for finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in state. Individually:
  - **114- Connor Oviedo- 6th**
  - **132- Phil Nicaud- 4th**
  - **132- Mason Impastato- 5th**

- **148- David Ricalde- 2nd**
  - **165- Jack Anzalone- 6th**
  - **181- Thomas Dugan- 3rd**
  - **198- Jack Caminita- 4th (State record bench press @ 450 pounds)**
  - **220- Jason Toups- 6th**
  - **242- Jon Rushing- 1st**
  - **275- Nick Picone- 2nd**
- Recognized and congratulated the Junior High Track Team for finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> Place out of 11 teams in the SSA/Trafton Meet. The team presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Place Trophy to Athletic Director Craig Ketelsen.
    - **Long Jump: Justin Baham, 2nd; Caleb Nicotri, 4th**
    - **Triple Jump: Caleb Nicotri, 5th**
    - **Discus: Rhett Barker, 1st**
    - **Shot Put: Rhett Barker, 1st**
    - **55m hurdles: Zach Davis, 2nd**
    - **200m hurdles: Zach Davis, 1st**
    - **100m dash: Rhett Barker, 5th**
    - **200m dash, Rhett Barker, 5th**
    - **400m dash: Justin Baham, 1st**
    - **800m run: Harrison Weisinger, 5th**
    - **1600m run: Adam Cazayoux, 2nd; Jacob Harris, 4th**
    - **4x400m relay: Zach Davis/Jacob Harris/Adam Cazayoux/Justin Baham, 2nd**
- Recognized and congratulated the **Varsity Track Team for FOUR FIRST Place finishes as they presented trophies to AD Ketelsen:**
    - 1.) **Judy Baehr Relays at SLU on 3/10/17**
    - 2.) **Andy Thiel Invitational at FHS on 3/17/17**
    - 3.) **Ponchatoula Relays on 3/24/17**
    - 4.) **St. Tammany Parish Championship Meet on 3/31/17** for fifth consecutive year
      - TJ Bedford Meet Field MVP --Long Jump and Triple Jump Champion with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in High Jump
      - Noah Seiden- Shot Put- Champ
      - Colin Sullivan- 800m Champ
      - Stephen Schlottman- 1600 M Champ
      - Jonathan Bertucci- 3200 m Champ
- **Senior Patrick Napier** then addressed the students on the topic of time – saying how quickly his time at SPS has passed and encouraging the students to make the most of each moment here. He was great.
- Finally, I reminded the students of the Blood Drive that SPS would have on Holy Thursday, April 13 and gave them the following facts about the need for blood:
    - Each pint donated saves or helps to save three lives.
    - Patients on chemo, especially children, are in need of blood components to boost their taxed immune system.
    - Holidays always require extra blood donations.
    - It is not painful but you must eat a good breakfast.
    - 16 and 17 year old students need a permission slip signed by their parents, 18 can donate without a slip.
    - You can not donate if you in training or will participate in a game 24 hours after your donation.
    - One hour of service will be granted to all donors

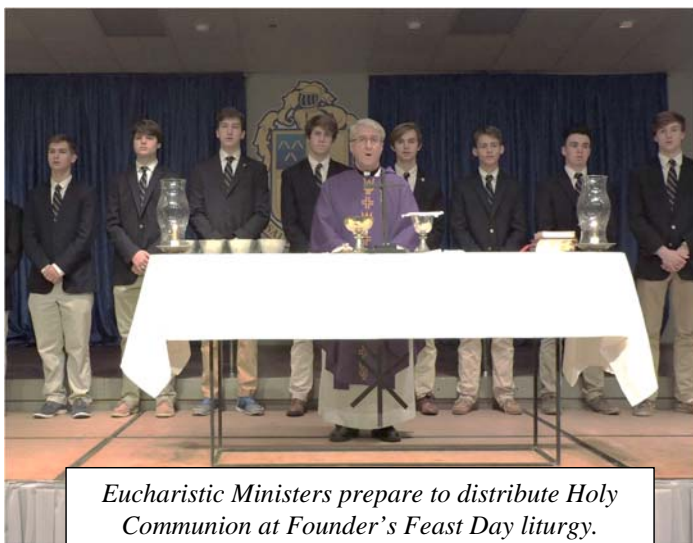
- Ran out of time before I could do more recognitions, which will roll over to the next assembly. I then encouraged the boys to attend the Wednesday morning 7 am mass as an excellent way to get the most out of Holy Week. We ended with the whole student body standing and singing a very moving rendition of that Lenten favorite, “O That Shame.” Before **Junior Jack Bonaldi** extinguished the prayer candle, the students sang along with Thomas and Jackson “I Surrender.” That, too, was powerful and moving. I again begged the student body to concentrate only on “the good” during this Lenten season and to make safe choices. I closed by reminding the students what the candle represents – the love of God, the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. I exhorted them to spread God’s love to all whom they meet.
- It was a great assembly; at least, I thought so.

**Flu and Other Illnesses:** We have had a number of students out due to illness. Please remember that students with fever should be 24 hours fever free before returning to school. All students absent from school should return with a note from their parent upon their return. If their child sees a physician due to an illness, a medical note should be brought in to the office so we can apply it to their son’s attendance.

**Mother-Son Dinner is** Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> with check in at 5:30 and the prayer service beginning at 6:30. This is a wonderful event. Make your reservation if you have not yet done so. A reservation form in on our website.

**H of the W:** In honor of the Art Show this week, here are some “art jokes”:

- *What did the artist draw before he went to bed? – The curtains!*
- *Why did the paintbrush see a doctor? – It had a stroke!*
- *What does a momma color wheel say to a baby color wheel? – Don’t use that tone with me.*
- *What’s green and smells like blue paint? – Green paint!*
- *Why was the artist afraid he might go to jail? – Because he’d been framed!*
- *How do you inspire an artist? – Easel-y*
- *What does Salvador Dali have for breakfast? – A bowl of surreal!*
- *What’s orange and sounds like a parrot? – A carrot!*
- *Did you hear about the artist that always took things too far? – She didn’t know where to draw the line.*
- *Which animals are famous painters? – Pablo Pig-caso and Vincent van Goat!*
- *Why did Van Gogh become a painter? A: Because he didn't have an ear for music.*
- *Did you hear about the artist who died? A: Too many strokes.*
- *Where does a cow hang his paintings? A: In a mooooseum.*
- *Did you hear about the attempted robbery at the museum? A: They ran out of gas a few blocks away. When the police caught them, they said, "We didn't have the Monet to buy Degas to make the Van Gogh"*
- *What did the painter say to the wall? A: One more crack like that and I'll plaster ya.*
- *Did you hear about the artist who paints in jail? A: He had a brush with the law.*
- *What did Michelangelo say to the ceiling? A: I got you covered.*
- *Why did the painter butter his toast with his fingers? A: To feel its texture.*



*Eucharistic Ministers prepare to distribute Holy Communion at Founder’s Feast Day liturgy.*



- *OK, I'll stop!*



**Congratulations, Yehia!** Last week, the LA Dept of Education named senior Yehia Elkersh as the 12<sup>th</sup> grade Louisiana Student of the Year. Ya-Ya was up against 6 public school students who had survived rigorous rounds of competition to earn finalist status. Wow. His accomplishments are impressive: a 4.5 GPA, a perfect 36 on the ACT, perfect scores on four AP exams, numerous leadership positions, founder and president of Key Club; president of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, Spanish Honor Society, Spanish Club and YMCA Youth Government; , Computer Science Club, Robotics Club, Film Club and Shell Eco-Marathon Club; senior mentor with the Brotherhood of the Paw mentorship program; service coordinator for the Lasallian Youth Leaders; and senior web designer and e-commerce marketing director for Ain't Life Good, among other roles. But his personal story is also impressive. Part of the application process is an autobiographical introduction. Yehia's is worth reading. I have printed it below. Remember that he came to us in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, barely speaking English. And four years later, he makes a perfect score of 36 on the ACT! We are beyond proud!

*I have no inborn talents. I cannot paint well; I cannot play the piano; I cannot sing melodiously; I cannot run fast. But, one thing I do possess is an uncompromising grit and an unassailable will for success. Let me tell you my story, and see if you agree.*

*I was born and raised in a poverty-stricken neighborhood on the outskirts of Alexandria, Egypt. My parents married in 1985; I came along in 1999. As first cousins, their marriage was arranged by their parents. They fought a lot, often ending in intense episodes where my mother would leave the house for a few days; but, despite it all, their relationship was firm. Poverty and a multitude of challenges they encountered and overcame together created an invincible bond between them. My brother and I learned to handle the fighting. I would go to my father, calm him down, and make jokes about my mother. My brother would do the same with my mom.*

*The quarrels were actually constructive to my relationship with my parents. As my father and I indulged in banter about how crazy my mother was, we became remarkably close. My mother appreciated my efforts to console her. She saw in me the compassionate and thoughtful young man she had hoped to raise.*

*My father was a military engineer and Brigadier General. By the time I was born, he had retired from the military due to a severe illness he had contracted a few months before my birth. My mother was a government employee, a chemist by trade, who cared for my older brother and me with tender affection. Her selflessness was inconceivable. She would often sacrifice undergoing dental procedures that would mitigate her pain in order to buy my brother and me new clothing.*

*If we had lived in the United States, my parents' occupations would have provided a comfortable lifestyle for my family and me; not so in Egypt where military officials and government employees are poorly compensated. Adequate pay there is not determined by qualifications or merit; rather, it is based upon privilege of birth, social standing, and governmental connections. Therefore, despite my father's high-ranking military position and my mother's Ph.D., my family of four squeaked by on my father's humble pension and my mother's minuscule salary.*

*My family's situation was exacerbated by the tyrannical regime I grew up under. The Egyptian government committed unlawful seizures of private property, unwarranted surveillance, and blatant robberies. Freedom of speech was practically nonexistent. The state had unlimited rights, essentially licensing it to rape, torture, murder, and make wrongful arrests. Children who came from lower middle-class families like mine had no chance of breaking away from poverty in a system where jobs were based on patronage and not merit. Initially, I felt hopeless, but that changed on January 25, 2011.*



Sophs gather to service on Service Day

my

*That day bore the genesis of the Egyptian Revolution. I was lying on my couch watching television when I heard a ruckus outside. Thinking it was a fight, I was filled with schoolboy excitement. I took a peak from the window but was unable to get a good view, so I rushed down to the fifth floor of my building where there was a larger window. I saw hundreds of people marching, chanting indiscernibly. It was not a fight, but I was piqued.*

*It turned out to be a country-wide demonstration. The national news was covering the event. Millions were flocking to the streets. The protests had begun. My parents, exasperated by the oppressive and decadent regime, did not restrain my brother and me from participating in the revolution. I yelled, chanted, and cried for liberty. I marched tens of kilometers in the name of justice. I endured tear gas and rubber bullets in the name of equality. When the police forces withdrew from the streets and the crime rate catapulted, I joined vigilante groups to protect my family and home.*

*The Arab Spring was the first time I pursued a cause with ardor. I might not have been mature enough to decipher my passion, but I felt it. I felt the raging flames inside me, fueled by oppression and suffering, overtake my body as I yelled for justice and equality. I felt the gleam of hope illuminating my features as I pictured the fruits of the revolution. I sensed the mixture of sweat and tears trickling down my face as I rejoiced the deposition of a brutal tyrant. Since the revolution was the first time I had chased a conviction with vehemence, its success proved to me that with enough passion, any task can be conquered. This lesson has supported me throughout my adolescence and will stick with me my entire life.*

*When the revolution was over, I was eager to stay in Egypt and help rebuild my country anew, but my family had different plans. Uncertain about the future of the country, my mother arranged for me to live with my uncle in the United States for a few years.*

*Initially, I was elated. I was going to live in the United States of America, the home of New York City, liberty, and the cheeseburger. I was eager to experience the American high schools that I so often watched on Disney Channel, with their long hallways lined with lockers, their vividly-dressed students, and their seemingly easy classes. My uncle enrolled me in Saint Paul's School in Covington. I anticipated and welcomed my novel experience with open arms and an eager heart.*

*As time progressed, however, I began to run into obstacles. Initially, I had immense difficulty adjusting. I barely spoke English, and assimilating into American culture was more difficult than I had anticipated. Apparently, American teenage life was not like the one portrayed in *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody*.*

*As I overcame the handicap of cultural shock, more hardships began to present themselves. On February 2, 2014, I received the devastating news that my father had died. I immediately flew to Egypt to attend his funeral. Even at the funeral, I still could not believe it. Was he actually gone? Would he not be sitting in his armchair, smoking his pipe, and reading the newspaper when I walked in the door? Would he not be there to welcome me home?*

*It did not hit me until I was back at school. It had been months since I had talked with my father. I had questions only he could answer; I did not know what to do with them. I faced some challenges, but his jokes were no longer there to get me through them. His absence was devastating, but the emptiness was eventually filled with an unexpected comfort.*

*I began to cherish our memories together, keeping them close to my heart. As I did so, the memories came to life and gained a whole new meaning. I realized that the hours we spent reading the Quran together were meant to enrich my spirit, and the long walks we had during which he donated money to the homeless living on the streets were a call for me to do the same.*

*I wanted to commemorate his legacy of service and altruism, so I started a chapter of Key Club International at my high school. From dealing with international officials to advertising the club to recruiting members, the experience of starting a club was definitely invaluable, teaching me responsibility, organization, and leadership. It gave me the opportunity to pursue my passion in a culture and environment utterly unfamiliar to me. So far, Key Club has restored a neighborhood playground; planted a community garden; assisted in building numerous Habitat for Humanity houses; cleaned local rivers; assisted hurricane and flood victims; conducted food, book, coat, and clothing drives; and adopted four city streets to maintain.*

*The people we have helped, the smiles we have brought, and the hearts we have touched are definitely the most substantial aspects of Key Club. Key Club, however, has a particularly strong personal significance to me. It is a way for me to perpetuate the ideals my father instilled in me. In a way, it brings him closer to me and constantly reminds me of how great a man he was.*

*As I have faced these hurdles and progressed through my high school career, I have gained a multitude of passions and interests. My primary interest quickly became medicine. When I was a kid, my uncle immigrated to the United States and became a doctor. He used to send my older brother and me expensive gifts. America seemed like a mythical place where anyone, even a man from Alexandria, could afford a PlayStation and nice clothing. It was apparent that he took advantage of the American Dream. From that moment on, my family decided I was going to become a doctor. Fortunately, medicine was what my heart wanted me to pursue as well.*

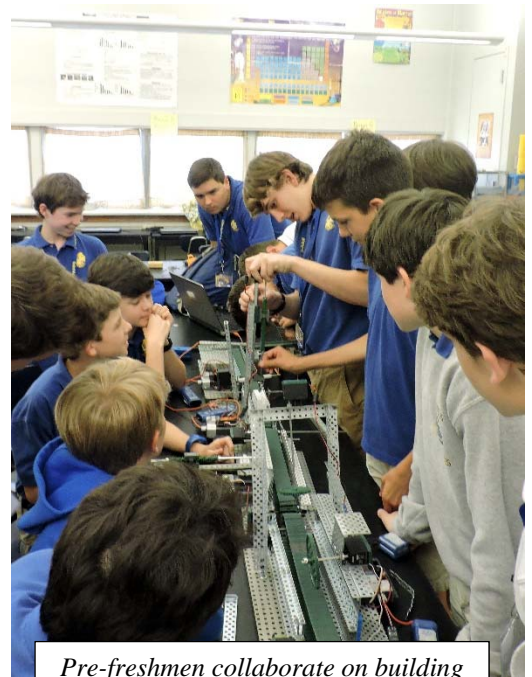
*Medicine is not my only interest, however. As far back as I can remember, I have been intrigued by knowledge itself. As a toddler, I spent days tinkering with jigsaw puzzles. As a kid, much to my parents' dismay, I was not content with the "what's." I ventured into the "why's" and dissected the "how's." As a teenager overtaken by curiosity, I would hazard into dark neighborhood alleyways because I felt an urge to uncover the unknown, to unveil what the darkness obscured. My love and appreciation for knowledge and insight have led me to pursue a multitude of diverse passions.*

*My most pressing interest is neuroscience. I have always been captivated by the intricacies of the human brain. Where do thoughts come from? How do we formulate complex perceptions from simple sensations? What gives rise to consciousness? I thought these questions would be answered as I grew, but, to my dismay, all I found were clues, bits and pieces of a grand puzzle manifested in research and technology, but no comprehensive, complete answers. As I contemplated these questions, the same sense of curiosity that led me down dark alleyways began to overtake me. I knew I was destined for a career that piques my curiosity and challenges my knowledge.*

*I have also expressed significant enthusiasm for the field of computer science. From taking online classes to working as a web designer, I have greatly enjoyed exploring the field. I take delight in the problem-solving aspects of coding and relish the process of creating a functioning algorithm or program. Furthermore, computer science borrows from two intellectual areas that I admire: language and art. The process of creating an original piece of code utilizes several languages and is, in a sense, reminiscent of painting, sculpting, or filmmaking.*

*Since I immigrated to the United States and experienced the remarkable uniqueness of languages, I have developed a keen interest in linguistics and anthropology. Already fluent in English and Arabic, I have studied Spanish for five years and have taken up French.*

*Unfortunately, I have only recently uncovered my knack for art. I have always enjoyed photography — I got my first camera when I was nine and have been taking photographs ever since — but only last year did I start painting and filmmaking.*



*Pre-freshmen collaborate on building and programming their robot.*

*This is my story. I would be remiss, however, if I did not mention the characters who have shaped and formed this narrative. I have been blessed with an amazing mother who has sacrificed watching me, her younger son, grow up because she wanted a better future for me. I am honored to have met a multitude of incredible friends who have helped me assimilate into American culture and stuck with me through thick and thin. I am indebted to have come across remarkable teachers and mentors who have helped me evade depression and despondency when I faced adversities and have pushed me to distinguish myself in an environment utterly foreign to me. I have been privileged as a foreign student to feel loved, accepted, and embraced by the faculty, staff, student body, and extended family of St. Paul's School, an environment that has become as much my home and my heart as Alexandria, Egypt.*

*I have no way of discerning what the future will hold, but I feel nothing but eager anticipation for what life holds in store for me. I know one thing for sure; I will not wait for the door of opportunity to present itself. I will tear a hole in the wall and build my own door.*

## **A Look Ahead**

### **April**

- 10 – GABC
- 11 – DEFG – Pack Time – Teacher Appreciation
- 12 – ABCD – Passion Play in BAC
- 13 – EFGA – Mandatum Assembly in Gym
- 24 – BCDE
- 25 – FGAB – President's Assembly
- 26 – CDEF
- 27 – GABC
- 28-- DEFG

### **May**

- 1 – ABCD
- 2 – EFGA – Pack Time (last)
- 3 – BCDE – Senior Exams
- 4 – FGAB – Senior Exams
- 5 – CDEF - Senior Exams
- 8 – GABC
- 9 – DEFG – Pres Assembly – Band Awards
- 10 – ABCD
- 11 – EFGA – Athletic Awards in AM
- 12 – BCDE – Academic Awards in AM
- 13 – Senior Graduation in BAC 4:00 PM
- 15 – FGAB – Pre-Freshmen Exams
- 16 – CDEF – Pre-Freshmen Exams
- 17 – GABC – Pre-Freshmen Exams
- 18 – 9-11<sup>th</sup> Final Exams begin
- 19 – 9-11<sup>th</sup> Final Exams – Pre Freshmen Promotion in BAC at 6:30PM (yes, this is the correct date)
- 22 – Final Exams
- 23 – Final Exams
- 24 – Records Day



*Fighting Math Wolves at the Mu Alpha Theta State Convention.*

**Please stress with your son the need to follow all rules this week. We had a couple of students make bad decisions last week. They are suffering consequences, as we will not overlook these poor decisions. We will teach until the end at 3 pm on Thursday. Let's start our Easter holidays (not spring break) on a positive, problem-free note.**

**The newsletter goes on a much needed Easter Holiday (not spring break) next week so you get a break from my ramblings. Know that I will be offering prayer for you and your families during this celebration of the miracle of Easter and Passover. I will especially be praying for the safety of our students during this time.**

And even though it's April of 2017, I will still close with a paraphrase from one of my favorite NPR radio shows (which I missed this week as I read questions at the Quiz Bowl Tournament): well, it's happened again – you've squandered perfectly good time reading my ramblings!

Thanks for being part of Saint Paul's School! I wish you a blessed week!

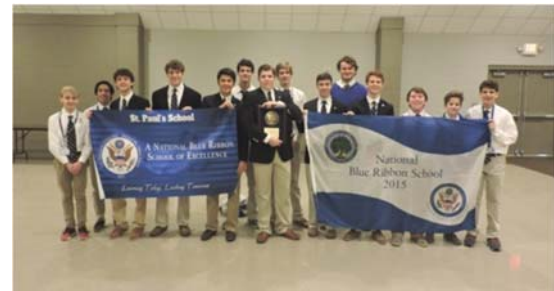
Brother Ray Bulliard, FSC

Praying for a Grace-Filled Holy Week as the 17<sup>th</sup> Christian Brother President/CEO of Saint Paul's School

**Quality education, inclusive community, respect for all, concern for poor & social justice, faith in God's presence – our mantras this week, throughout 2017, and always!**



**...by doing ordinary things  
extraordinarily well, making  
courageous choices, doing  
God's will, and remaining  
faithful!**



Prayer for Lent

Eternal Father, we are sinners, yet you love us deeply. You see into the secret places inside us and you know us in our weakness and in our goodness. Give us the courage to look at our faults. Give us humility to ask for your help to repent and to make better choices. Guide us into new pathways that will draw our hearts home to you. In this time of Lent, may we turn away from our sinfulness and return ourselves to you, always aware of your presence and always obedient to your will. We ask this of you who lives and reigns with your Son and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen

***O that shame - now ended in his glory! O that pain -- now lost in joy unknown!  
Tell it out with praise, the whole glad story, human nature at the Father's throne.***