

Mount Royal Academy Bulletin

Monthly Bulletin

November 30, 2011

Letter from our Headmaster



Dear Families,

The word "Advent" come from the Latin word "adventus" meaning arrival. It is the season when we prepare our hearts for the arrival of Christ on Christmas. As we enjoy our annual school traditions this Advent I am realizing how important they are to the children. Many of the students have been checking with their teachers to make sure we are continuing certain traditions this year and visibly happy to hear they will continue.

I was recently reading an article by Allison Woods titled, "More Than Memories: The Importance of Traditions". In it Ms. Woods makes that point that traditions bring stability and a sense of identity to children and some continuity between the generations. This is most certainly true in a culture of quickly changing trends and a lack of permanence with important things. My own recollection of family traditions from my childhood include advent calendars, wreaths, Jesse trees, white lights (not colored), playing with the Nativity set, making apple pie with my grandmother for breakfast on Christmas morning, and knit stockings she made for each of us on the hearth. I still hang my same stocking 40 years later.

Mrs. Woods writes, "Family traditions provide great value, and the value lasts far beyond the moment. The value of a tradition isn't in completing the ritual; the value comes from what it provides for those who participate." The beauty is that each family can have their own unique traditions. I don't know how eating apple pie for breakfast on Christmas morning started in my family. I do know that I looked forward to helping my grandmother make them every year and that even today just a whiff of apple pie makes me think of her and smile.

Traditions are great for families. Not only do they build memories they help us grow stronger in our love for one another. They give children a sense of stability, help create wonder in a child's imagination, and help us grow in our relationships with one another. Don't be afraid to start a new tradition or bring back an old one. The tradition itself is not important....having fun doing it together is.

In Christ,

Dave Thibault

A Word from the Teachers...

Kindergarten

The kindergarten class has begun Advent with special daily prayers and lighting of the Advent Wreath, and also with plenty of joyful excitement! We are working on the GARDEN Christmas Pageant, which the children helped to plan with many good ideas: roles have been assigned, and we have begun practicing songs and lines. Unless I speak to you directly about your child's role, "costumes" will be *pajamas, (bathrobes optional)*!

Please mark your calendars! ~The date for our Pageant has been set for Friday, December 16th @ 10 a.m.~ This time is to allow half-day students to participate, and ALL students in the Pre-K and K are invited to participate, regardless of their scheduled class days. Garden students are also invited to attend the Pageant for grades 1 -12 on Dec. 21st @ 7 p.m., but they will not participate in this Pageant, due to the late hour.

This week we will read about St. Nicholas (St. Nick's Day is Dec. 6th!), and on Dec. 13th, we will celebrate St. Lucy's day with a Procession of Light, which you are welcome to join at 9 a.m. on Dec. 13th. It should be a wonderful month of preparation in the kindergarten for the coming of the Christ Child!

Grades 1 & 2

It has been nice to get back into a routine this week following Thanksgiving vacation. As a class, we have turned our focus to Advent and preparing for the birth of Jesus, which is also the topic for Religion class for the next few weeks.

In Math, the first grade is learning to tell time to the hour, count dimes and hone their subtraction skills. They continue to work through the decodable readers, and are working on writing poems and refining their handwriting. In Math, the second grade is focusing on money, measurement and ordering two digit numbers. They are reading "Birdhouse for Rent" in reading, learning how to write a compare and contrast paragraph and continuing to learn cursive.

In Social Studies, we have completed our South America unit and are moving on to Antarctica. We are discussing the process of inventing and designing new things in Science. As of the end of last week, the kids are 30 books short of their reading goal for this semester. If they each read three books in class this week, they will have exceeded their goal. I am really proud of their consistent reading since September and we will celebrate with an ice cream party once they reach the magic number.

Our classroom pencil sharpener has died and I will be replacing it, but I have suggested to the kids that if they have a handheld sharpener at home they may want to bring it in (don't feel you have to run out and buy one). Also, Mrs. Hill, our French teacher, has asked that the kids bring in a notebook specifically for French. Thanks for your help with these items!

Grades 3 & 4

In religion we are reading Chapter 14 King Solomon and the Promise of a King. In class we are learning about Advent and will have a test next Friday (Dec. 9th). The boys and girls have begun an Advent prayer chain that we will add to weekly. If you have a special intention you would like us to pray for please let me know and we will add it to our chain.

We began our next unit in science, Technology, with a hovercraft experiment. We learned that the hovercraft made with the bigger balloon traveled the greatest distance. This unit is packed with exciting experiments. We will have a final test before the Christmas break.

Mount Royal Academy 2011-2012 Staff

Headmaster:

- David Thibault

Office Manager:

- Kathleen McDonald

Admissions Director:

- Derek Tremblay

Business Manager:

- Corina Ouellette

Faculty:

Pre-Kindergarten

- Mary Beth Lowe

Kindergarten:

- Elizabeth Heath

1st & 2nd Grades:

- Catherine Richardson

3rd & 4th Grades:

- Jacqueline Diebold

5th & 6th Grades:

- Cynthia Dabrowski

Grades 7-12:

- Derek Tremblay
- Mary Bellino
- Mitchell Kalpakgian
- Allen Ouellette
- Kelly Ouellette
- Bonnie Akerman
- Taylor Fitzgerald
- Matthew McDonald

Foreign Languages:

- Delphine Hill
- Marie-Laure Lovell

Art:

- Margaret Dwyer-Davis

Music:

- Leanne Bek-Wesoja

In language arts the grade 3 class is reading "Two Days in May" and the grade 4 class is reading "What Rot! Nature's Mighty Recycler". We are writing realistic stories with strong beginnings, middles, and ends; and in grammar we are writing sentences with compound predicates. We will continue to review subjects and direct objects.

In math the grade 3 students are learning the 3 and 7 times tables and are working on speed and accuracy with addition and subtraction. No more fingers! The grade 4 students are learning how to read mixed numbers from a number line, subtraction with borrowing across zeros, and we continue to work on finding missing addends (some of us find this concept hard). ---Jackie Diebold

French K-4:

During the month of December we will meet 3 Wednesdays for French Time. The theme will be NOEL !

We will focus on Saint Nicholas and contemporary Christmas. We will learn some vocabulary associated with the subject and one song "L'as-tu vu?" = Have you seen him? (Talking about Santa). We will create a "lift the flap game" and make Holiday cards, written in French ! —Delphine Hill

Grades 5 & 6

With the new term upon us, it is very important that students stay up to date with all work. Between preparations for Christmas and family commitments, time easily escapes us. I will make every effort to keep personal, family time free from extra school work, but I must have students meet the responsibilities they have taken upon themselves in relation to their vocations as students. Working together, I know that the Christmas season will offer great moments of joy and holiness.

Advent marks the opportunity to serve one another. Church tradition portrays it not only as a time of awaiting the coming of the Savior, but the chance to live sacrifice through service as did Christ . In living this spirit please join with our class as we live and experience daily the love of Jesus through a more intense service to one another.

With participation in the Mass this weekend, we have been offered the opportunity to experience the Eucharistic celebration most powerfully. Students continue study of the wording of the liturgy as it calls both spirit and body to worship Christ. It is very important that parents provide their children with the opportunity to go to Mass and to receive the Sacraments. Parental support and example are irreplaceable. Their present and future lives will be strengthened by God's grace that comes especially through the Mass.

Lastly, the practice of study skills in the learning process is as always ongoing in our class. Nightly study of at least ten minutes per subject studied each day provides incalculable benefit. Parents, please be vigilant in following your child's studies. God Bless. —Mrs. Dabrowski

5/6 Graders French Experience: This month, 5/6 graders were introduced to a popular French -Canadian folk-song, "Alouette." In Canada, the lark was hunted as a game bird. In this song, the cook is plucking the bird's feathers before preparing to roast it. As they are learning the song students are learning the various body parts of the bird's anatomy. Students are concluding their study of French celebrating Christmas in a French manner. Like in America, Christmas is a time for family and friends, marked with many reunions, gifts and chocolate candy, gifts for the poor , Midnight Mass, and le "Réveillon." —Mrs. Lovell

Grades 7-12

Biology

In Biology we are finishing up our chapter on Meiosis and Mendelian genetics, and will continue our unit on genetics. We've done some fun labs – the students especially enjoyed a lab in which they determined what a hypothetical child would look like by modeling genetic probability with a coin flip. We've modeled meiosis with construction paper chromosomes, and next we will turn our attention to DNA and the Human Genome.

With the dawn of the new quarter, please remember that there is a new homework policy. If homework is not turned in on the due date, the students are required to stay after that day to finish. A strong effort on the homework equals a passing grade in Biology. I'm sorry in advance for the inconvenience that staying after may cause: I realize that some families drive far distances. Keep in mind that all homework detentions can be avoided by simply doing the homework when it is due. (doing it in class on the due date is not acceptable either – it will be collected at the beginning of class.)

Thanks and God bless, Mrs. Ouellette

Physics

Work, Power, Energy, Momentum. All words that have meanings in language, but specific meanings and formulas in physics! We will continue with our exploration of mechanics and further our discovery of how the universe works. Assignments will continue in the same format, and updated online via MyStudentsProgress. We will have at least one, if not two, quizzes this quarter, and a few more labs. One will be a ballistics lab; exciting! —Mr. Ouellette

Students in **Great Books** have read and written essays on the following books: Willa Cather's DEATH COMES TO THE ARCHBISHOP, Shakespeare's A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, and MACBETH. They are currently studying C. S. Lewis's THE GREAT DIVORCE.

Students in **American and British Classics** have read and written essays on these books: GULLIVER'S TRAVELS and Shakespeare's THE TEMPEST. They are currently reading Tolkien's THE HOBBIT.

Students in **Latin I** have completed their study of the first five declensions of nouns and are becoming competent in translating from Latin to English and from English to Latin.

Students in **Latin II** are learning the use of the subjunctive mood in indirect questions and in purpose clauses.

Students in **Senior Seminar** are learning of the Greek world's contribution to Western civilization by studying the difference between civilization and barbarism in the ODYSSEY, by learning the nature of tragedy in Greek drama, and by understanding the meaning of natural law in ANTIGONE. —Dr. Kalpakgian

French 1: In this unit, French 1 students are discovering more about everyday life in France: “La vie de tous les jours.” They are learning to talk about their daily activities and how to extend and respond to invitations. They will talk about the things they do such as working, studying, practicing sports, and watching TV. They will also learn to invite friends to do things with them and politely accept or turn down an invitation. If they were going to France, they would discover that French young people are interested in the same activities.

In order to express themselves accurately, students will also begin to learn how the French language works: grammatically the primary focus will be on the present tense (affirmative and negative), and questions formation. More specifically, students will be introduced to the concept of subject-verb agreement and the importance of verb endings.

Spanish 1: “La comida” is this unit theme this month. Students are learning to talk about foods and beverages for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, about likes and dislikes, to express how often something is done, and to understand cultural perspectives on meals. Students watched a comical episode about cultural misunderstanding about what people eat. They explored some of the different practices associated with meals. They will continue their study discussing food, health, and exercise choices. Students will conclude their study enjoying a flavorful Mexican lunch in a local Spanish restaurant, “The Little Red Baron.” The *Gramactiva* videos reinforce key grammar points taught in this unit, such as formation of -ER and -IR verbs, and the plural of adjectives. —Mrs. Lovell

Scriptures: Students recently wrapped up an introduction to methods of biblical scholarship, including a survey of the first five books in the Old Testament. The creation stories and patriarchs were then studied and read. Students are using a complementary text that will help them understand the development and meaning of the scriptures. In class, we spend most of the time reading and discussing selected stories. At the present moment, we are forgoing our regular curriculum in order to learn about the new missal translation. We are looking over the reasons for the revised translation, and then exploring major changes in each prayer of the Mass, attempting to discover the real meaning behind the prayers.

Foundations: We recently finished chapter 2, studying closely the topic of divine revelation. Miracles were also discussed at length, including the rigorous process that each supposed miracle is subjected to by the Church. Students then completed an essay on any topic that had been discussed in chapters 1 and 2. At the present moment, we are forgoing our regular curriculum in order to learn about the new missal translation. We are looking over the reasons for the revised translation, and then exploring major changes in each prayer of the Mass, attempting to discover the real meaning behind the prayers.

Catechesis: Recent topics learned about include the identity of God as Trinity, Jesus' divine and human nature, and how Jesus' identity impacted his ability to save mankind and reconcile us back to God. Students are challenged to write essays at the end of each topic-unit. This can be a difficult process, but each student is clearly given the expectations for the essay in class. Students then conduct peer reviews, and sometimes the class will even review a selected essay. Reading the essays out loud is an integral part of the process, as well as referring back to the rubric to see if all of the expectations are met. At the present moment, we are forgoing our regular curriculum in order to learn about the new missal translation. We are looking over the reasons for the revised translation, and then exploring major changes in each prayer of the Mass, attempting to discover the real meaning behind the prayers.

United States History II: Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration in the late 19th century were studied in connection with one another. Students completed 2 major assignments: a group assignment in which they were tasked to plan the design of cities in the late 19th century, and then present their plan to the class; the other was an essay in which they were expected to explain the relationship between the 3 most important trends (industrialization, urbanization, and immigration). As we transitioned into the 20th century, progressivism and the modern presidency under Theodore Roosevelt were discussed. Now we will learn about the presidency of Woodrow Wilson and his progressive program, which was stalled by the onset of World War I.

Western Civilization: Students participated in a philosophical symposium, an oral quiz, in which they were challenged to speak as if they were a Greek philosopher, debating the topic of the polis. We then transitioned into the conquest period of Greece, learning about the Macedonian effort to Hellenize the western world. We are not moving into the rise of the Romans, the Roman republic, and then the Roman empire.

Christian Civilization: The class has recently covered how the enlightenment philosophy influenced despotic rulers in the 18th century. We divided the class into small groups in order to more closely examine how European despots failed to uphold the enlightenment values that they attempted to put into action. We are currently studying the causes and effects of the French Revolution.

Mount Royal Athletics

SOCCER BANQUET: The soccer banquet will take place on Friday, December 9th, beginning at 5:30pm in the lunch room of St. Joseph's Center. An email was recently sent out to all families, coordinating the pot-luck dinner.

MRA BASKETBALL SCHEDULE: The master schedule is attached to the Facts email. It will be sent out weekly, because the schedule is always subject to change. Practices for the months of January, February, and March have not been scheduled yet, due to the fact that games are still being scheduled. The practice schedule may shift depending upon the games. Individual coaches are going to communicate directly with each team regarding practices over Christmas Break, although they are not scheduled at the moment. Coaches will make decisions based on anticipated attendance at practices over the break. If you have any questions, please email Mr. Tremblay at dtremblay@mountroyalacademy.com.

MRA BASKETBALL ALUMNI NIGHT: On Tuesday December 20th, all alumnus who participated in the basketball program in the past are invited to the new St. Joseph's center to shoot hoops with our current players. The girls will be playing between 2:30 – 4:00pm, and the boys will begin at 5:00pm, lasting until about 6:00pm. Please communicate this event to any children who have graduated from MRA, and are interested in coming.

Campus Ministry

Two upcoming programs or events include the 2nd annual Crotched Mountain gift drive, and then the March for Life fundraiser. Hard to believe that the March is right around the corner!

ST. JOSEPH'S ORATORY PILGRIMAGE: A future pilgrimage date is still being discussed. If you are interested in coming along pending the finalization of the date, please email Mr. Tremblay. Passports are required, so we encourage your family to apply and retrieve for a passport in the interim. The total processing time can take up to 4-6 weeks.

CAMPUS MINISTRY MEETINGS: The date and times of the meetings will be announced during morning and afternoon assembly. We invite all students in the Upper School to participate in Campus Ministry. The student-led Campus Ministry team directs outreach service opportunities, assists with in-school service events, and also helps other spiritual activities in the school year.

MASS INTENTIONS: MRA will happily offer the Holy Mass that is celebrated each week for the intentions or soul of any member of our wider community. We understand that God has called us to be vehicles of grace for our busy parents, and we can't think of a better way to say 'thank you'. So please, contact Mr. Tremblay if you would like to submit a Mass intention.

SERVICE HOUR FORMS are available in Mr. Tremblay's office. Students in grades 9 – 12 are expected to complete a specific number of service hours in order to fulfill their theology requirement each year. Students were informed of how many hours they are required to complete by the end of the school year. We encourage students to keep a running log of all their volunteer activities as the year progresses, rather than try to recall how many hours were volunteered at the very end of the year. Hastily seeking service hours at the end of the year removes the meaning and damages the purpose of offering one's self to others. Please look over the service portfolio informational sheet attached with the Monthly Bulletin and Weekly Facts.

ST. JOSEPH'S ORATORY CLEANING: THANK YOU to all parents who have already stepped forward and generously offered their time to clean the chapel. We are covered until the month of January at the moment, but still need volunteers from February to June. Volunteers are needed to help keep our school chapel worthy enough for the presence of our Lord. We would like to draft a formal schedule of parents and students who clean the oratory. Please consider volunteering on a regular basis. It may only be once a month. We have up to January covered, and therefore need still need commitments for the remaining months in the school year. We are so blessed to have our Lord present on campus, and we ought to thank Him by keeping the school oratory as clean as possible.

BOOK OF INTENTIONS: A special thank you to the Nelson family who generously donated a formal book where we can continually compile special intentions for anyone within or outside of the Mount Royal community. The Book of Intentions will be kept inside of the St. Joseph's Oratory. We invite parents and classrooms to record any special prayer intention, and the school will explicitly mention those intentions before all school-wide prayer events, including our weekly Mass and rosary.

Other News:

First Friday Adoration - "O Come Let Us Adore Him" - We have expanded our First Friday prayer to 8 am - 2 pm, a true relay of prayer during the school day! December is a perfect time to stop into our Chapel in the Upper School to spend some quiet time with Our Lord thanking Him for His gift of Salvation through the birth of His Son, Jesus. Please join us **Dec. 2nd** for 10 minutes or as long as you'd like. The more, the merrier!

Picture Retakes: Monday, December 12th at 8am in the lower school. If you would like retakes, please return your photo package to the photographer on retake day. If your child was absent and you would like photos taken, please see Mrs. McDonald for an order form.

Hannaford Dollars for MRA (ENDS THIS SATURDAY, December 3rd) MRA is registered in the 2011 Hannaford Helps Schools Fundraising Program. Go online for a list of more than 700 participating products (Hannaford.com/hhs); get three school dollars for every 4 participating products you purchase; **deposit school dollars at Hannaford**. If all of our families each earns three school dollars each week of the program we would earn approx. \$3,000, which we can use towards new playground equipment, school trips, computers, athletic equipment, etc. Any money we've earned will be sent to MRA in early January. Thank you for your support!

HASA News

Please join us for the December HASA social on Monday, December 5th after drop off. Come by to say hi, meet someone new, or just have a cup of coffee.

Please see the attached flier about our first annual Christmas Potluck... a chance to gather with friends old and new and celebrate this wonderful time of year!!

Thanks to all who bought or helped make Advent Wreaths. We had another successful year and got a lot of support from outside the Mount Royal community —Kelly Ouellette

HASA Parent Rep. to the Board Report: The parent representative to the Board this year is Allen Ouellette. If you have any questions or concerns about anything related to Mount Royal, please feel free to contact Allen as another resource. His email address is al.o@att.net, and his phone number is 938-2212.

Upcoming Basketball Games: Fri., 12/2, High School Boys vs. Concord Christian 5pm (home); Sat., 12/3, Junior High Girls vs. St. Johns, 9am (home); Junior High Boys at Dunbarton 12:30pm (away). **Go Knights!!!**

MRA Ski Program: WE ARE IN NEED OF CHAPERONES! Please see Mrs. McDonald for a chaperone school release form if you are interested. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Jacqueline Tellier, Coordinator, at jtellier.08@my.colby-sawyer.edu or (603) 305-4982. The program runs for 5 weeks and will begin on Wednesday, January 4th.

Bumper-STICKERS For Sale in the School Office - **\$2.50 each**. Rectangular Mount Royal Academy stickers, Circular Soccer stickers, and Circular Basketball stickers are all available for immediate purchase.

Collection for the Troops: You've probably noticed the box in the entrance to the lower school for donations for care packages that will be sent to the military. Please pick up some extra snacks and toiletries on your grocery shopping day to add to the bin! There is a list posted of suggested items, or be creative and think of your own fun things to add! Kate Coleman will be sending these for us to a US Marines squadron stationed in Afghanistan. If you have questions you may contact her at harmonygyrl@gmail.com.

No School – Thursday, December 8th – Holy Day of Obligation - *Immaculate Conception*

Parent Prayer Group: Thursday, December 15th at 8am in the oratory. All are welcome, including young children. Please contact Jessica Fraioli, Coordinator, if you have any questions at 526-2285. *Please support our school in prayer.* If you are unable to join our monthly meetings, please pray at home for MRA and our community.

2nd Qtr. Grades Close for Progress Reports: Fri., Dec. 16th. Progress Reports will be sent home on Thursday, Dec. 22nd.

MRA Christmas Pageant: Wednesday, December 21st, 7pm at Mount Royal Academy (St. Joseph's Center).

MRA on Facebook: Are you, your family, or your friends on Facebook? Facebook is a great way to keep up-to-date on upcoming activities, athletic results, and share the great things happening at our school. Please visit MRA on Facebook and "like" our page: www.facebook.com/mount.royal.academy. Please don't forget to share with friends and family.

