



ST. PIUS X / ST. LEO SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2016



MANY THANKS TO ST. PIUS X AND ST. LEO THE GREAT PARISHIONERS AND PARENTS for your investment in the lives and education of our students! As our website states, St. Pius X / St. Leo School is 'more than a school, it's a community'.

We take this opportunity, near the time of our celebration for Catholic Schools Week, to send our school newsletter to all parishioners of St. Pius X and St. Leo Parishes and any parents who are not parishioners. We do so, because we want to express our appreciation to you, whether you have children in our school or not. We thank you for your support of our school through your personal commitment of time and energy to the needs of our young people and/or through your monetary donations to your parish and our school which help to support the financial needs of the school. We are so grateful for the marvelous support of the parishes and parents to the educational mission of St. Pius X / St. Leo School.

May God continue to bless our parishes and our school mission of providing a quality Catholic education for our children.

"St. Pius X / St. Leo School is a diverse community forming students in the Catholic faith to excel in academics and service to others."

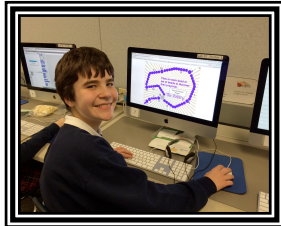


CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Communities of Faith,
Knowledge and Service



CODING CLUB

Our new club has 50 members from grades 5-8. The Coding Club meets once a week after school in the computer lab and the library, where they use Chrome books. The students could choose between two curriculums for developing computational thinking and basic computer programming skills.



One group is using Code Studio courses through www.code.org. Throughout the courses, students view videos to learn vocabulary and how to write algorithms using repeat blocks and conditionals. They write code

to solve puzzles featuring some familiar characters from games such as Angry Birds and Plants vs. Zombies. They also solve puzzles that involve drawing pictures, which requires them to figure out proper angles and line lengths.

The second group is learning how to program using a drop-and-drag programming language called Scratch. They are learning about many different kinds of programming blocks by viewing videos created for Google's CS-First curriculum. Students in this group could choose to focus on Music & Sound or Storytelling. They are able to create characters and program them to tell stories through dialogue, music, movement, and scenery. Each week, the students in both groups are challenged to be creative, persistent problem-solvers, who have fun while becoming computer programmers.

SCHOOL MUSICALS AND DRAMA PRODUCTIONS

The students at SPSSL are involved in three school musicals each year, as well as a speech and drama play during Catholic Schools Week. The 7th and 8th grade girls are able to participate in Girls Chorus as well as Show Choir for boys and girls. Our 7th and 8th grade students are also able to try out for the variety show in the spring. Last fall, the 5th and 6th students performed in the Shrek, Jr Musical. The speech and drama students will perform *Honk*, a musical adaptation of *The Ugly Duckling*. Honk performances will be held on Friday and Saturday (February 5th & 6th) during Catholic Schools Week at 7:00 p.m. in the school gym. There is no charge to attend. Please feel free to attend either performance.



SERVICE PROJECTS



Over the years, thousands of non-perishable food items have been donated during the Thanksgiving food drives and given to the Stephen Center and St. Vincent de Paul Pantry, as well as to the St. Pius X and St. Leo Pantries. The school has also held coat drives for the Heart Ministry Center and raised money for Essential Pregnancy Service (EPS). This past December, the students raised over \$880 for EPS. Each December, 5th

grade students participate in a wax museum of scientists. For a quarter donation, the scientist will come alive and talk about his/her life. This past December donations to the wax museum totaled over \$1,000 and the proceeds were given to the school's adopt a family Christmas program.

"SPSL is a welcoming community and has a welcoming heart." – Josephine, 4th grade



S.A.M.E.

For over 20 years SPSSL students in 7th and 8th grade have participated in the Society of American Military Engineers' Student Mentoring Program. This program is designed to stimulate students' interest and excitement in engineering, architecture, and related sciences. The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) and the Peter Kiewit Institute provide teachers and students in the program with mentors from engineering/architectural fields. This year the students are working on a thoughtful and reflective redesign of the school library, titled 'Food for Thought'. Throughout the year, SPSSL teams have received top honors for many of the projects presented.

"If family members are sick or suffering, the SPSSL community does everything they can to help. If I ever need help, I can count on not just my family, but my school." – Elleisna, 6th grade

*"I love St. Pius X / St. Leo School because we pray."
- Even, Kindergarten*

7TH GRADE ROSARY PROJECT

In seventh grade religion classes the month of November is spent covering the mysteries of the rosary and Our Holy Mother. The students created websites about one set of the mysteries, learned all of the prayers of the rosary and how to pray it, as well as learning more about Mary and some Marian apparitions. Finally, the students were asked to create their own rosaries. The students aren't given many guidelines other than the rosary has to be accurate with the correct number of decades and beads so that it can be prayed and also be constructed to stay together and be useable in the future. The creativity is left up to the students; every year rosaries come in with very meaningful stories behind them.

Some students choose to purchase their beads of certain colors or they choose to use beads from home adding a crucifix that comes from a rosary from a grandmother who has passed away. Others use beads that represent something about themselves. There are countless ways they find to show meaning. This year was no exception.



When Paul Hayes was in third grade, he was diagnosed with a tumor on his kidney and began extensive treatment. In his rosary, Paul used beads that were given to him as "milestone beads" during his cancer treatment. He had these beads on a string at home but thought this would be a good way to use them and have them forever.

When he presented the rosary in class, the students were quite touched by the importance of what the rosary now represents to Paul and even to them since they witnessed Paul's battle with cancer.

ATHLETICS INFO

St. Pius X and St. Leo parishes offer six sports throughout the year which SPSL students can participate. Those sports include volleyball, girls and boys basketball, track, baseball, and soccer. We are happy to report that our trophy cases continue to fill up as our sports teams have experienced much success throughout the years.

"The first day I came here I knew it was the place for me." - Lilly, 4th grade



CHESS CLUB

SPSL Chess Club teaches chess to beginners, coaches intermediate players, and works on theory with our advanced players. Students play friendly games against each other and participate in local scholastic tournaments. Chess is a great way to make friends, learn sportsmanship, and develop brain power. This past fall, the SPSL Chess Club completed an in-house tournament among the senior advanced players. The competition among 21 players was tough and three players tied for first place: Zahid Falcón, Trevor Gregg and Jack Johnson. In November of last year, club members competed in the Central High School Scholastic tournament. Caleb Hans and Trevor Gregg, 5th graders both received trophies at the tournament. Last season, the Gregg and the ten Bensel families set a school record. Each family had three members return with trophies from a tournament during the school year; the first time in the eleven year life of the club. Lastly, this year will mark our first out-of-town tournament at North American Martyrs School in Lincoln on January 30th.

"I like to learn about God. I wish I could time travel and meet God. I love religion class so much. I love that he is our creator of everything that is alive. I love my Catholic school." - Willard, 2nd grade

BOOK FAIR

The Feeling Groovy Scholastic Book Fair will be held in the school library during Catholic Schools Week. It will be open to families on Sunday, January 31st from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. A pancake breakfast will also be held this morning during the same time in the school cafeteria. All students will also have an opportunity to shop during their assigned library time during the school day the week of February 1st - 4th. Families may also shop the Online Book Fair from January 24th - February 6th. More information on online ordering can be found on Mrs. Vogel's library classroom page on the school website (www.spsl.net).



SPSL SCHOOL RECOGNITION DINNER

St. Pius X / St. Leo School proudly announces the first annual SPSL School Recognition Dinner will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2016. The following awards/honors will be presented:

- The Reverend George Kempker 'Volunteer of the Year' Award – Ann Kineen
- The NCEA and SPSL School 'Distinguished Graduates' Award – Police Chief Todd Schmaderer and Fire Chief Bernie Kanger
- The Sister Brigetta (Burns) 'Teacher of the Year' Award – Paula Holder
- The Sister Viola (Miksch) 'Servant of Mary' Service Award – Pat Kobza
- SPSL School 'Hall of Fame' inductees – St. Pius X School's First Graduating Class of 1957

If you would like to receive an invitation to the dinner, please email Bob Nowaczyk at bob.nowaczyk@spsl.net.

"Going to St. Pius X / St. Leo School has been one of the best experiences I have had. It has prepared me for years to come." – Magdelene, 8th grade



C.A.R.E. NEWS

Make a NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION to buy more C.A.R.E. gift cards this year. SPSL School earns a profit from each gift card that is sold and you can earn a credit towards your SPSL tuition. Visit the home page of our school website at www.spsl.net under 'ways to support' for a list of the C.A.R.E. gift cards that are available in the school office. Many of the most popular gift cards are also available after the weekend Masses at St. Pius X and at St. Leo.

Baker's Please note: Baker's changed the way they participate in our C.A.R.E. program. The 5% rebate back to our school is linked to your Baker's Plus card. To enroll your card for our school, please follow these steps:

- 1) Visit www.bakersplus.com/communityrewards.
- 2) Create an account.
- 3) Enroll your current Baker's Plus card.
- 4) Click COMMUNITY near the top of the screen. Select Community Rewards. Enter our school code **39528**.
- 5) Select our school name and ENROLL.



"When you go to a Catholic school, you have the privilege of going to Mass multiple times a month."

– Gigi, 6th grade



TOP TEN REASONS I LIKE SPSL SCHOOL

(by Mary, 4th grade)

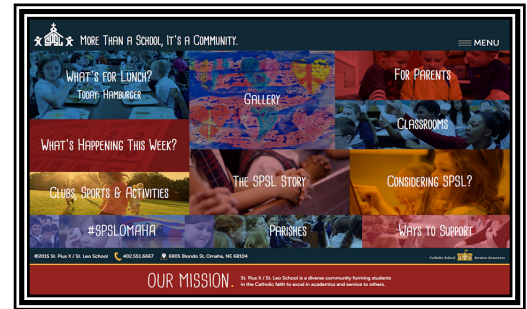
1. The people are amazing and nice.
2. There is diversity and difference here.
3. We talk and learn about our religion.
4. We get to have P.E., library and music. 
5. When we wear our uniforms, no one is judging us by our clothes.
6. People always welcome one another.
7. Certain teaching techniques help me learn better.
8. SPSL has lots of technology, Chrome books, Google, iPads, and computers. 
9. All of my good friends go to SPSL.
10. There is no bullying at SPSL.

"I am very thankful that my parents let me continue to receive a Catholic education." – Grant, 7th grade

NEW SCHOOL WEBSITE

The SPSL website (www.spsl.net) has a new look. The re-designed site has information, resources, and tools for our parents, showcases student artwork and essays, and current events. Teachers post newsletters, events, and links on their classroom page so you know what is going on in their class.

SPSL also has a new Instagram page. Check out #spslomaha for an inside look at what is happening at SPSL. We encourage you to follow us and like our posts.



ST. PIUS X / ST. LEO EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND

Our hearts are so grateful for the many people who have made known their wishes to have memorials, at the time of their death, given to our Endowment Trust Fund, or, the loved ones decide that the memorials should come to our Endowment Fund. Over the past years, in this Catholic Schools Week newsletter that is sent to all parishioners in both parishes, we have shared with you many of the people who have had memorials given to the school. Since we have told you about all of the memorials through 2014, this year we would like to tell you about all of the memorials that we have received during 2015. As we said, we'd like to tell you about the memorials no matter if they have just a few dollars or many dollars, but space does not allow for us to give you this information. We've chosen those whose memorials in their honor have reached from hundreds up to several thousand dollars for our school. But, please know that all memorials, no matter what size, are always greatly appreciated.

Year 2015

John Durkan: preceded in death by his wife, Doris, and two grandchildren, Richard Rutherford and Kenny Staats. John and Doris' children who graduated from our school are Douglas'73, Kathleen'74, Daniel'75, Theresa'76, Michael'79, Matthew'81, John'82, Mary Beth'84, and Russel'87. John and Doris also had grandchildren who graduated from our school, Nicole Durkan'00, Zachary Durkan'01, Dustin Staats'01, Rebecca Staats'02, Joseph Staats'04, Andrew Durkan'05, and Erica Smith'11.

Mark S. Finn: preceded in death by his parents, Richard Patrick and Gwendlyn Finn. He is survived by his brother William'70 and his sister Erin'77.

Robert Gregory: preceded in death by his wife, Theresa and his daughter, Mary Margaret. Robert and Theresa were the parents of Bibiana'63, Peter'66, Robert'66, Jovita'68, Teresa'69, and Catherine'70. Robert and Theresa also had some of their grandchildren graduate from our school. They are Jovita and Daniel Vuagniaux's children, Jeremy'93, Gregory'97, and Miranda'98. Robert proudly served in the U.S. Navy in World War II.

William Kirk: preceded in death by his wife, Rickie Kirk. William and Rickie's children who graduated from our school are Michael'77, Kathleen'78, Tom'79, Pat'81, Mary Ann'81, and Dan'83. William and Rickie also have grandchildren who have graduated from our school, Molly Burns'04, Claire Burns'06, Emmett Burns'08, Helen Burns'10, Margaret Gerards'13, Leo Burns'15, Sarah Gerards'15, and present students John Burns in 6th and Bridget Gerards in 7th.

Helen Mahon: preceded in death by her husband, Richard. Helen and Richard's children who graduated from our school are Charles'66, Colleen'68, Cathleen'69, Richard, Jr.'71, Mary'72, Marlene'73, John'74, and Patricia'76. Helen and Richard also had three grandchildren who graduated from our school. They are Cathleen Vanhauer's children, James'02, Andrew'05, and Caitlin'07.

These people and their families had such faith in our school and our students that they, or their families, chose to give the memorials offered at the times of their death to St. Pius X / St. Leo School. We are so grateful for this belief and trust in our school.

SAVE THE DATE

Music in Catholic Schools will hold a Benefit Dance and Silent Auction on Friday, February 5, 2016, 7:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. at the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Center, 5419 N 114 St, with music by the Nebraska Wind Symphony **Swingtones**. Free dance instruction will be given from 6:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. Tickets at the door are \$15 each for adults; \$10 for seniors and students. Funds raised enable students with need to participate in band at their school.



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ROUNDUP FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN (3 & 4 YR OLDS)



We are hosting a Pre-Kindergarten Roundup on Saturday, January 30th from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. This Roundup is for families interested in our 3 year old and 4 year old Pre-Kindergarten programs. We are excited to introduce an all day 4 year old Pre-Kindergarten program. The programs will be detailed and you will have a chance to visit with the Pre-Kindergarten teachers and look at the modern classrooms these students use. We are very proud of these classrooms and teachers and would love to give you this opportunity to visit us!



KINDERGARTEN ROUND UP FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

If you have a potential kindergarten student for the 2016-2017 school year, please join us for Kindergarten Roundup on Saturday, February 6th from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. We welcome you to become more acquainted with our exceptional learning environment here at SPSL. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

welcome to
Kindergarten!

If you or someone you know who have children who will be in 1st through 8th grades for the 2016-2017 school year and have an interest in learning more about SPSL school, please call the school office at (402) 551-6667 to arrange a tour. Also, be sure to check out our school's website, www.spsl.net, to see classroom information, upcoming events and more.