



# ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## PEARLY GATE

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### EIGHTH GRADE TO BASILICA OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

BY MARY KATE MONTGOMERY 8A

On the 8<sup>th</sup> grade retreat to Baltimore, our class visited the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This was America's first Cathedral, founded in 1821 by John Carroll, the first bishop of America. It was designed by Benjamin Latrobe. The Basilica was funded by the Jesuits, and designed with beautiful architecture and great acoustics. From the beautiful dome ceiling with its flower coffers to the statues of Mary and the Saints, the Basilica of the Assumption is a beautiful cathedral full of rich history.

Although the idea for the cathedral was formed in 1776, it was not built until 1821. Pope Pius XI gave the cathedral the rank of basilica in 1937. In 1996, Mother Theresa visited the Basilica and a bust of her was built. Later, John Paul II visited the Basilica. This unique history and architectural design make the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary a wonderfully fascinating place.



### ST. JOHN'S BIBLE AT WALTER'S ART GALLERY

BY MEGAN MCWATERS 8A

For our eighth grade retreat, we went to the Walter's Art Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland. Here, we experienced the artwork of Middle Eastern cultures. We were shown the four major monotheistic religions of the world. This included Egyptian art, jewelry worn by the Huns, stained glass windows, altar pieces, choir books, a replica of a knight's hall, a suit of armor and much more. I was fascinated by how historical and rare the items were.

The main reason we went to the Walter's Gallery was to see the St. John's Bible. The St. John's Bible is a remade bible that was created by calligraphers. It takes twelve years to make these bibles because they are written by hand. They are decorated with modern art symbolizing heaven, slavery, the Garden of Desire, the hope in God's love, rebirth, and even Jesus Christ. Those who created these bibles at the University of Minnesota thought they would be more interesting if illustrated. Therefore, the art was put in after being created on a computer mock-up. The bible pages we saw were of many different varieties and were definitely one of the highlights of the retreat.

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## PHILADELPHIA AND THE SHRINE OF SAINT JOHN NEUMANN

By Olivia Carran 5C

The fifth grade went on a wonderful field trip to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We learned about the history of downtown Philadelphia and about the United States Mint. Probably one of the most memorable parts of the field trip was visiting the Shrine of Saint John Neumann. St. John Neumann was an immigrant from Bohemia. He had a desire to become a foreign missionary. He was ordained in 1836 and afterwards decided to move to Philadelphia to teach. When he was in Philadelphia he built eighty churches and forty schools just in the course of eight years! He also was the first in America to ever organize the Forty Hour Devotion at the diocesan level. He founded the Sisters of Saint Francis of Philadelphia. In 1860, St. John Neumann died minutes away from his new church. He was mailing a chalice to another priest. He was said to be buried underneath St. Peter the Apostle Church, a Redemptorist parish. In 1977, St. John Neumann was taken up from the ground. None of his body had disintegrated; one of the signs that he was a saint.

A priest from the Shrine told the fifth grade the story behind placing the body of St. John Neumann underneath the altar. The church noticed that some of the saint's nose was crushed due to his casket falling on part of his face. The church asked a man from a wax museum to repair St. John Neumann's face. The man warned them before going into the process that he was not a Catholic, but the priests still let him repair the face regardless of the man's religion. The man's wife walked in looking very ill from cancer. The couple asked if they could pray to St. John Neumann for her. A week later her cancer was gone! The Parish of the Shrine knew it was St. John Neumann who performed the miracle. The couple definitely knew that they should become Catholics to thank God and St. John Neumann. The fifth grade absolutely enjoyed this field trip and learned a lot of the saint's life story.

## PHILADELPHIA MINT AND WALKING TOUR

By Patrick Haney 5C

The fifth grade went to Philadelphia on a field trip and did two fun things. First, we went on a walking tour that showed us many exciting historic sites. The tour started at the National Constitution Center. We next went to a street that had the names of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence on plaques on the sidewalk. We also walked by Independence Hall, which was where the Declaration of Independence was written and signed. It was also where the Constitution was written. We visited the First National Bank and learned some facts about it. Another stop we made was at Betsy Ross's house and grave.

She sewed the first American Flag. Lastly, we visited Benjamin Franklin's gravesite. Many people throw pennies on it for good luck.

The second thing we did was go to the United States Mint. You can see the coins being made. The process is highly automated. The museum showed some historic coins. They had many videos of how coins were made and when they were first established. Coins made in the Mint have a high historical significance. The trip to Philadelphia was fun and exciting.

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

By Moira Berzins 5C

It was time to celebrate the arts again at St. Mary's Elementary School on May 12th. Each year students display their creativity and talent in the form of group song, art projects, and individual piano recitals. The Cherub Choir, the Youth Choir, and the Musical Revue cast sang and danced for the audience's enjoyment in assigned time periods. The Cherub Choir, including the first, second, and third grades, sang three songs for all to enjoy. The Youth Choir, grades four, five, and six, performed a short play. The Musical Revue cast, comprised of the seventh and eighth grades, sang an arrangement of songs. Throughout the evening, students of private piano lessons demonstrated their achievements in piano with ongoing piano recitals. Many students demonstrated their particular artistic abilities in art class and are chosen to exhibit their talent in the Fine Arts Gym or in the Main Building. St. Mary's "Celebrate the Arts Night" is a night to remember!

## BLACK EYED SUSAN VOTING AND PICTURE BOOK WINNER

BY JESSICA PERRY 5C



During the week of April 20, 2009, the St. Mary's Elementary School voted on their favorite Black Eyed Susan books. Kindergarten to third grades, voted on picture books, grades four through six, and seven through eight voted in two categories of chapter books. Children all over Maryland have voted. In our school, Grades kindergarten through fourth voted in a booth on pieces of paper, while grades fifth through eighth voted on computers. This year's voting was once again fun!

Our school's picture book winner was Scaredy Squirrel. Scaredy Squirrel is a hilarious book about a squirrel who is afraid of everything. He never leaves his nut tree; he is safe and knows what will happen. One day, an unexpected event occurs and he must learn to deal with it. Scaredy Squirrel learns that one cannot prepare for everything. He is no longer afraid and has great adventures.

## SMES BLACK EYED SUSAN NOVEL WINNERS

BY KATIE BISSON 5B



GRADES 4 - 6 NOVEL

GRADES 6 - 8 NOVEL

Winston Breen is a normal teenage boy who likes puzzles. However, when he buys his little sister a birthday present he accidentally gives her pieces to a puzzle leading to buried treasure. Together, with a threatened librarian, a retired police officer, a news reporter, and two strange men, Winston and Katie attempt to solve the puzzle.

It's not that easy. The puzzle pieces lead them all over town. After the treasure hunters call it quits for the day, the librarian's pursuer breaks into Winston's house and forces Winston to lead him to the treasure at gunpoint.

The Puzzling World of Winston Breen, by Eric Berlin, is a funny but scary story. Although it's a Black Eyed Susan for grades four through six, it's a great book for all ages.

In the story Life As We Knew It, by Susan Beth Pfeffer, Miranda, a normal teenage girl has a pretty normal life... until disaster strikes! When the moon is scheduled to be hit by an asteroid, the astronomers miscalculated one important fact, that the moon would be pushed closer to Earth. Suddenly there are power outages throughout the country. Huge tidal waves destroy coastal shores worldwide. There are earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and the power's still out! Summer days without power are terrible, but winter days are worse. Trying to get food and water is a struggle. Life will never be the same.

This moving Black Eyed Susan for grades six through eight is a definite read.



## FUN FAIR BY BRENDAN AUMILLER 5C



On Saturday, May 9th, St. Mary's Elementary School held their annual Fun Fair at St. John Neumann Church. It was a warm and sunny day so the activities were held outside. There were many fun games like the Chicken Wing Fling in which you had to throw three rubber chickens into a hole and if you were lucky enough to get one in, you won a prize. There was putt-putt golf and a mini-basketball hoop

that kids played over and over. I really liked running the obstacle course. It was fun racing against my friends.

The two most popular events were the Cake Walk and the Fish Ping Pong Toss. My sister and I used a lot of tickets trying to win one of the fantastic cakes made by some of the teachers and parents of our school. My sister finally won a cake made by Mrs. Sears. The cake

walk is definitely the biggest activity at the fair. In addition to the goldfish game, the raffle table with baskets was also popular.

Last but not least, the food at the Fun Fair was awesome! There were burgers, hot dogs, and Papa John's pizza. I know I will be going back to the Fun Fair next year because I enjoy spending time with my friends, eating good food, and winning cool prizes. Thank you HASA!



## Go Saints!

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## MATH DAY

BY BRENDAN LOONEY 5C

The Math Day fun started with sport jerseys and patterned shirts. Numbers ruled the day from numbered cookies to Roman numeral pencils. Word problems lined the walls and at recess we had special math activities supplied by Enrichment parents. The theme was creative, the activities were fun, and I really liked math class because we learned about Roman numerals. I hope every Math Day is as fun as this one.



## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT 8TH GRADE

BY JUSTIN NOEL 8C

The most important thing about 8th grade is expectations.

The teachers expect more from you.

Their standards are set higher.

They hold you accountable for more of your actions.

But the most important thing about 8th grade is expectations.

The most important thing about 8th grade is you set the example.

You're the oldest students.

The little kids look up to you.

They watch and follow your actions.

But the most important thing about 8th grade is you set the example.

The most important thing about 8th grade is experience.

You've been there the longest.

You've gone through everything the younger grades will go through.

You know what the teachers expect and will expect.

But the most important thing about 8th grade is experience.



BY MACKENZIE KONKA 8B

The most important thing about 8th grade is the memories.

Eighth grade is exciting,

Going on the New York trip with all your friends,

Having a dinner dance,

BY MARCUS STARTZEL 8B

The most important thing about the eighth grade

Is that we graduate.

But it's also important that

We have an eighth grade dance,

We learn new ways to solve problems,

And that we make new friends.

But the most important thing about the eighth grade is that we graduate.

The most important thing about the eighth grade

Is that we learn new things.

But it's also important that

We prepare for our future,

Pick our high school,

And beat the seventh grade on blue and white day.

But the most important thing about the eighth grade is that we learn new things.

The most important thing about the eighth grade

Is that we go to NYC.

But it's also important that we go to

Hershey Park,

And that we go to mass,

And that we do our best to keep St.

Mary's a Green School.

But the most important thing about the eighth grade is that we go to NYC!



Being the "big kids" and showing an example.

Preparing for graduation,

Growing up and moving on to high school,

But the most important thing about the 8th grade is the memories.