TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONG
Bishop Miller Visits HFS Chapel

To honor the opening of Holy Family's 26th school year, Metro Chicago Synod, ELCA, Bishop Wayne Miller and his wife, Pam, visited the all-school chapel service on October 5th. Bishop Miller spoke of the importance of standing together as a school community. Recognizing the rapid growth of the Holy Family student body the past two years, he reminded the students that they are all children of God, much more alike than different.

Bishop Miller honored Holy Family's tradition of combining a serious message with a spiritual pep rally by ending his remarks with a sing-along. Taking out his guitar, the bishop led a rousing rendition of "Pharaoh, Pharaoh (Let My People Go)." The students, who were already familiar with the song,

(Bishop Miller, continued on page 2)

Meet Jonathan, 8th Grade Student Council Rep

Jonathan and his younger brother Alexis take the 30 minute bus trip every morning from their home in Little Village to Holy Family School. On days when she is not working, their mother rides with them and comes back in the evening to pick them up. Like their mother, Jonathan and Alexis are unassuming, but Jonathan has become a strong presence for his family and in his 8th grade class at Holy Family. This fall he was elected by his classmates to represent the whole 8th grade on the student council.

(Jonathan, continued on page 7)
Bishop Miller, continued from page 1)

responded by singing with enthusiasm, mirroring the bishop’s every Egyptian move.

Chaplain Hunter then picked up on the theme of unity, delivering a homily that cleverly illustrated the Bishop’s point. Pulling a pencil from his pocket, Mr. Hunter demonstrated how easily a lone pencil is broken. When he pulled three pencils from his pocket, he struggled but still managed to snap the trio in half. When the bundle was comprised of 15 pencils, however, he was unable to break them even when giving full force to the effort, thereby demonstrating the power of standing together. We are called into community. We become part of the family of God and together we worship, serve, and support one another.

In closing, Principal Collins assigned the chapel reflection topic, “I Have the Power to Heal the World.” All students were asked to respond to this topic in the ensuing week, and a sampling of the most thoughtful responses would be read the following week.

Thinking Outside the Box with Dr. McQuarters

Last spring, Holy Family School was honored to host Saturday Academy, a math and science program led by Dr. Alfred McQuarters, a biology professor at Malcolm X College and the executive pastor at C3—Covenant Community Church. Dr. McQuarters enlisted his students and fellow professors from Malcolm X to deliver a hands-on program to twenty 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders—ten boys and ten girls—from Holy Family School. The program was based on biology, chemistry and math curriculum, along with co-ed chess matches in the school’s library. The inventive program inspired the students to think outside the box, and they loved it. Its success has prompted Holy Family to begin developing a similar program to be up and running this winter.
Holy Family Gains Talented New Staff Members

This has been an exciting year at Holy Family. We opened the 2010-11 school year with 230 students in grades K-8 and 47 students in Little Learners Academy, more than a 20% increase over last year’s enrollment. We’ve added three new classrooms in grades five, seven, and eight, and hired two teacher aides. We’ve also increased our administrative support, and added hours for our tech, art, music and gym teachers.

We also welcome Fr. Ken Erickson in a dual role. You’ll see him at the school each week teaching religious studies to our students, in partnership with Chaplain Leslie Hunter. Other days he works closely with the Northfield fundraising/business office to manage Church & Donor Relations.

Two school staff members have stepped into different roles this year. Sparkle Gibson, formerly our Parent Coordinator, is now a Pre-k teacher. Sheila Wilson, our Pre-k Lead Teacher last year, is now Program Director.

NEW TO HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL

Janeth Alcala  -  Pre-k Teacher
William Baxter - Art Teacher
Landon Bergner - 5th Grade Teacher (Inner City Teaching Corps Member)
Brett Bravo - Teacher Assistant, (Julian Year program)
Brandon Cotton - Gym Teacher
Stephanie D’Antonio - Pre-k Teacher
Abigail Daniell - K-2 Teacher Assistant
Rebecca Duggan - Office Assistant, (Julian Year program)
Giovani Johnson - Pre-k Teacher Assistant (joined Holy Family spring 2010)
Joan Lamb - 3rd Grade Teacher
Khalilah McCoy - Pre-k Teacher Assistant;
William Methling - Middle School Reading and Language Arts
Theresa Moore - Parent Coordinator
Brian Olmetti - 4th Grade Teacher
Megan Schillinger - Music Teacher
Barbara Shallow - Middle School Reading and Language Arts

Teach For America

Both Janeth Alcala and Stephanie D’Antonio recently completed a two-year commitment with Teach For America, a nationwide program developed to encourage top college students to choose teaching as a profession. TFA is highly selective, with less than 15% of applicants accepted. Participants receive intensive training and ongoing support and coaching throughout their two years in the program. Although Janeth and Stephanie are not serving at Holy Family for their TFA commitment, they bring with them the knowledge and experience they gained while in the program.

Inner-City Teaching Corps (ICTC)

Landon Bergner comes to Holy Family through the Volunteer Teaching Corps program at ICTC that places recent outstanding college graduates as teachers in inner-city Chicago classrooms. Participants commit to ICTC’s Four Living Realities: (1) Teaching as Service; (2) Simple Living; (3) Faith-Based Community; and (4) Spirituality. ICTC provides support such as housing, meals, insurance, and personal and professional support personnel. The program is offered in partnership with Northwestern University, and participants receive credits toward a Master of Science in Education degree.

The Julian Year program

The Episcopal Service Corps operates the Julian Year program in Chicago for 6-8 young adults who commit to living simply in community for eleven months while they grow spiritually, develop leadership skills, and engage in meaningful work. We are very fortunate to have two participants from this program who have been placed in Holy Family School for their work experience – Brett Bravo and Becky Duggan. The Julian Year is affiliated with Episcopal Charities and Community Services in the Diocese of Chicago.
The Rachowicz's involvement with Holy Family began gradually. For some years at Trinity Lutheran Church in Evanston they'd taken names of children from Holy Family and purchased Christmas presents for them. Then one day someone at church mentioned to Earl that they were looking for people to help out with Holy Family's Spring Benefit. Earl suggested that Cindi might be interested in helping – and thus began a years-long involvement by both of them as faithful donors and volunteers.

Cindi responded eagerly to the call for help on the Spring Benefit committee and jumped in feet first. Earl gets drafted every year to take care of whatever's needed for the benefit – including cleaning up after the event is over.

Cindi and Earl have also come forward to take care of other less glamorous projects, like stuffing, sealing and stamping envelopes for big mailings. Earl has volunteered the use of the postage machine at his company, Peapod, to speed up the sealing and stamping, and sometimes has paid for the postage.

For two years Cindi has volunteered for the summer Adventures in Learning carnival. “The kids are so excited and it’s so much fun for them. You’d think they were at Great America,” Cindi observed. She was the Lollipop Lady, and she ran the booth for kids to guess how many jelly beans were in a jar. Guesses ranged from 3 million to a mere 6 more than the actual number, she said.

Cindi has helped Holy Family in her professional life, too. She helps manage the affairs of a retired gentleman who is a generous philanthropist. Her boss told her that he would contribute to an organization of Cindi’s choice, and she selected Holy Family. Since then, her boss has made a significant gift to Holy Family every year.

Cindi is also an active volunteer at her church, St. John’s Lutheran Church in Wilmette, where she’s been the volunteer treasurer for twenty years. This October St. John’s held an auction, and Cindi’s pastor asked her to handle the silent auction. She was able to manage this project – because of what she’s learned over the years on the committee for Holy Family’s Spring Benefit!

Holy Family is especially meaningful to Earl because education has always been important to him. His mother instilled in him a love of learning. During his college days, he was an honor student and active in programs to provide academic support to other students. He was a student member of the highest academic council at the university. In graduate school he worked toward a Ph.D. in accounting with the goal of teaching before deciding to go into the business world.

As Earl put it, “the more I heard about Holy Family – and it is an amazing story – the more I respected Holy Family and wanted to help it exist and grow. I am impressed by the dedication of the students and their parents. I imagine the parents must go through a lot to give their kids this education.”

Cindi’s own story has helped her feel deeply that Holy Family is a very significant organization. Because she attended a Catholic grade school, she knows how valuable a Christian education is. She knows it’s important for children to have dedicated teachers. To her Holy Family is inspiring and heartwarming. She believes that to have God in your life as a youth provides a strong foundation. “Holy Family is a way to bring God into the lives” of the children who attend.

Cindi wishes she had more time to give to Holy Family. Her niche is in accounting and financial management, and some day she would like to give more of her skill and talent to Holy Family. In thinking about how they got involved and why they stay, Earl says that they’ve taken little steps, together with the involvement and encouragement of friends. He commented that it’s been helpful that other volunteers and staff have suggested ways for them to be involved, and they’ve just responded to the requests. “It’s been a process of growth, of discovery, and I’m hoping for a long-lasting relationship” he adds.

In summing up her commitment to Holy Family, Cindi said, “I always think very fondly of the kids at Holy Family. I’m excited they have the new building. I think it means all the best in the world to these kids that they’re getting a good Christian education.”
Getting to know Ken...

When I accepted the position as Principal and President of St. Gregory Episcopal School for boys in August of 2008, I had no inkling of the exhilarating and interesting path that lay ahead for me and the school. After two years as head of the school, and many, many meetings between our two boards, St. Gregory has now partnered with Holy Family, 50 of our students have transferred, and I am deeply involved in telling the good news to constituents new and old. Alongside teaching religious education to several classes, participating in chapel, and being present as a pastoral mentor for students on Wednesday, I am also working to develop church relations and bolster communication with donors. God is good, all the time.

As Swedes living on the South Side of Chicago, my family attended the Evangelical Covenant Church in Oak Lawn. It wasn't until the later years of college that I began attending the Episcopal Church, and it was at St. Barnabas, Glen Ellyn that an earlier sense that God was calling me into the ordained ministry was confirmed and strengthened. After marrying my Wheaton college sweetheart Katherine, we went off to Duke University for seminary. While in Durham, our son Emil was born, and he has traveled with us around the country as I worked in several churches as a parish priest. Here in the Chicago area, I worked at the Episcopal churches in Woodstock and Kenilworth before St. Gregory. God is good, all the time.

It has been very satisfying to be a part of the transformation of St. Gregory, and to offer the opportunity to attend such a great school not only to our students but to many future children growing up on the West Side. We have all taken a giant step of faith in forming this partnership to grow the school closer to capacity, and I am sure that God’s hand is already outstretched to catch us. I look forward to working with Susan Work, Cheryl Collins, the board and all of you to continually strive to offer educational programming through which the lives of our students are transformed. All the time, God is good!

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Provost Wins Prestigious Award for Service to HFM

Holy Family’s volunteer technology ace, Bob Provost, recently received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Eastern Illinois University’s Alumni Association for his service to Holy Family. The award is bestowed on individuals who have distinguished themselves in either academic or literary fields, business, and/or public service and who, through their accomplishments, have brought prestige to their alma mater. Bob’s service to Holy Family began in the late 90’s as a member of the Computer Angels helping to raise money for computers and setting up a computer lab. When HFM’s new facility was under construction, Bob and the Computer Angels installed the infrastructure of the building’s security, intercom, phone/voicemail and door control systems, in addition to its state-of-the-art data network. Today, Bob continues to contribute his time and talent as the volunteer technology director at the school. Bob, thanks and congratulations!
Hundreds of individuals, churches, organizations and foundations contribute annually to support the mission and ongoing work of HFM and its programs. Holy Family Ministries is grateful for each gift and each donor!

In this issue, Holy Family Ministries acknowledges with appreciation gifts totaling $500 or more received between February 1, 2010 and September 30, 2010. A list of all donors is published in the annual report, available online at www.holyfamilyministries.org or by calling 773-273-6013 and requesting a print copy.

Some donors’ gifts have been matched at their request, by their employers or by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Matched gifts enable Holy Family to enhance programs.

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Holy Family Students glad to be back in school!
Holy Family Participates in National Forum

Holy Family participated in the Schools That Can National Forum held last spring in Newark. Schools That Can is a national not-for-profit network that promotes collaboration between high-performing urban schools primarily serving students from under-resourced neighborhoods. We are proud that Holy Family School is one of three schools in Chicago that has completed a rigorous validation process headed by Dr. Jay Gottlieb of the Columbia University (NY) education department. The school received Full Member status in the network, the highest level of membership granted in recognition of the exceptional achievements of our students.

Close to two hundred school representatives and leading educational thought-leaders gathered at the Forum to discuss common challenges and share their cultures of success. The Forum was comprised of both panels and remarks from keynote speakers, including Newark Mayor (and rising politician) Corey Booker, Teach for America founder Whitney Tilson, Uncommon Schools founder Norman Adkins, and NJ Commissioner of Education David Steiner.

Susan Work, President of Holy Family Ministries, served on a panel that focused on the special challenges facing independent and faith-based schools in the current economy. Panel members discussed the importance of attracting and retaining talented teachers when resources are slim. They noted the increased risk of administrator and teacher “burn-out” when staff sizes are reduced. The panel also recognized the profound impact of the deepening recession on low-income parents who lose their jobs and have little or no extra income to tide them over.

We are extremely grateful to our donors for standing by our families and for providing the resources Holy Family needs to attract and support strong teachers and administrators.

(Continued from page 1)

The brothers began attending St. Gregory Episcopal School three years ago, when their mother decided that she wanted them to attend a faith-based private school so that they could have a better life than she has experienced. Jonathan, who translates for his mother because she does not speak English, considers her his hero because she works hard and sacrifices much to enable them to attend Holy Family. With her as a model, Jonathan strives to be known as a hardworking student, respectful, and dedicated to his work. He enjoys drawing and science.

With the help of his mentor Rob White, Jonathan has set his sights high, and he has applied for the Daniel Murphy Scholarship in the hope that he could attend St. Ignatius, Loyola Academy or Christ the King for high school. Because of his interest in disaster movies and science class with Mr. Lambert, Jonathan expresses hope of someday studying the weather in college and becoming a meteorologist.

What Jonathan remembers most about St. Gregory are the celebrations when the whole school community gathered to observe a special event, whether it be Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Graduation. He looks forward to those same kinds of celebrations at Holy Family, when he and his family are visibly and joyfully connected to the community of their chosen school.