

## ***From the desk of Rob Costante, Principal...***

**February 5, 2012**

In many ways, this past week bore a similar feel to the joy of springtime. The similarity of this notion doesn't bear a resemblance to the warm temperatures of the season, but rather, the comparison rests in the time during the latter days of a cold winter where the seeded field begins to sprout and abound as we reap what we have sown. The darkness that often accompanies midwinter can suddenly be overlooked by a few days of brilliant sunshine. Recently, the brilliance of **Catholic Schools Week** was in full bloom on the campus of St. Francis de Sales. After weeks of planning and preparing, many were able to delight in the joy of this special week. Those who paid a visit to our "charming little school house" bore witness to the impressive features of our academic program; the communal culture that exists within our building; the unpretentious warmth that is indoctrinated in all that we do and believe; and the emanating presence of our Catholic identity.

As I reflect on the simple joy of this past week, a few distinguishing images come to mind. One such image came during Monday's "Student Appreciation Day". This day evoked a sense of pride as I watched our 205 students enjoy the shared fellowship of their peers with an afternoon viewing of the movie *Finding Nemo*; of course all while consuming an unending bag of popcorn. Another blissful image appeared during Tuesday's "Parent Appreciation Day". On this special day, our students, along with their mothers and fathers, found pleasure in the unconditional happiness that was felt while our families enjoyed our "Pastries with Parents" event. As the week continued, a visit from Mayor Jim Irenton offered our students a deeper understanding on the honor and tradition of Catholic education. After the Mayor's address, our day concluded with a faculty vs. students basketball game. This special event was filled with a good-natured, yet spirited sense of competitive entertainment. As the week progressed "Penguin Pride" was on full display. Our "Admissions Open House" events welcomed countless prospective families to witness first-hand the communal pride of the St. Francis students, teachers and parents. As the week concluded, Friday watched a cavalry of adoring Grandparents and Special Friends stroll about our campus. The generational link between our young people and these special adults is an extraordinarily significant bond which passes along an indefinable quantity of wisdom and sage ethos to our students. This special week would not have been possible without the enduring commitment of the adult leaders on our campus. On this same day, it was only fitting that Catholic Schools Week ended by honoring the contributions of those who care, guide and teach our students. As colleagues, we were able to celebrate the gift of our vocation as Catholic educators. The camaraderie of our afternoon luncheon at the Sunset Grille in Ocean City brought about a treasured memory of shared fellowship that I won't soon forget.

As stewards for the continued growth of Catholic education, may we pray in thanksgiving for all those in our community who support our institutional commitment toward infusing the principles of ***Faith, Academics and Service*** into all that we do and all that we believe.

As we celebrate the twenty fifth week of the school year, I would like mention a special and noteworthy event:

- **The Science Fair comes to the Parish Center! On Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, our budding scientists in grades 6-8 will present their Science Fair projects to an accomplished group of judges.**
- **Then on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, all parish members and school families are invited to visit the Parish Center to enjoy the scientific method in action. Our student's Science Fair projects will be on display following Saturday's 4:00pm mass and each Sunday mass from 9:00am through 2:00pm.**

Have a blessed and enjoyable week!

**PENGUIN PRIDE Lives Here!**