Note from the Principal

Dear Parents,

The school year has started beautifully! Our students are energized and working diligently. They really seem happy to be back in school!

2012-13 Theme
We have embraced our school theme, “Increase our Faith”. Pope Benedict’s encyclical about the Year of Faith encourages focus on the areas of sacred scripture, particularly the words of Christ in the Gospels, participation in the Mass through a greater understanding of the liturgy and Creed, and celebration of the gift of the Eucharist. As a result, we developed a plan of action to guide students and faculty through the school year. Each month we focus on three areas:

1. Gospel selections or stories on Faith
2. Commandments and portions of the Creed
3. Synonyms for the word ‘Eucharist’

In August, our Gospel reading was from Luke 17:5-6, the Disciple’s Request; the Commandment was “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and strength,” and our word for Eucharist was Holy Communion.

In September, the Gospel reading is about the Centurion, Matthew 8:5-13. The Commandment focus is “You shall not take the name of the Lord, your god, in vain,” and, the Eucharist focus is Most Blessed Sacrament. I encourage you to use these topics for reflection and discussion within your family throughout the school year.

Accreditation
This is a very important year for strategic planning and goal-setting at SHCS. Every five years, accredited schools undergo a process of self-analysis and review. In April, a Quality Assurance team will visit to examine our school programs, student performance data, and organizational practices against a clearly defined set of standards.

As we prepare for this review, Sacred Heart will need the input of our stakeholders to receive constructive feedback. Watch for more information about our online surveys and for ways that you can be involved in the review process.

Family Night Open House
Thank you for attending the Parent Orientation Nights (last Tuesday for Grades 1-5 and next Tuesday, September 18 for Grades 6-8). I look forward to seeing everyone during the Fall Family Night Open House on Tuesday, October 9. The Eagle Cafe will serve dinner beginning at 6:30pm, followed by a meet & greet in the classrooms where students will have the chance to show off their classrooms, their school work, and their teachers!

As we journey through this year together, please join me in this prayer from 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12: “...To this end, we always pray, that our God may make us worthy of His calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every good effort of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus may be...”
Welcome New Faculty

Meet the New Teachers!

**Donna Slater** - Teaching Assistant
I grew up in Middletown, New Jersey and attended Catholic schools. We moved to Knoxville in 2007. We have 2 kids at Sacred Heart, a daughter Madison in 3rd grade and a son Caiden, in 1st grade. I have been very active in the school including a year of substitute teaching and a year working in the cafeteria. I feel very blessed to be working in an amazing school where you always feel like family.

**Tricia Becker** - 7th Grade Teacher
Originally from Denver, my husband and I moved from Portland to Knoxville 6 years ago. I’ve taught language arts and social studies at Jackson Middle School and St. Anthony Catholic School in Portland, as well as St. John Neumann Catholic School in Farragut. My undergraduate degree is from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and my M.Ed. is in Curriculum and Instruction from Portland State University. Outside of teaching I am a big runner and love to mountain bike. In addition, I am a founding member of Adopt a Golden Knoxville, a non-profit golden retriever rescue organization.

**Valerie Hanks** - 1st Grade Teacher
Hello! My name is Valerie Hanks and I’m originally from Nashville, TN. I graduated from The University of Tennessee with a Bachelor’s Degree in Child Development and a Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education. The past 13 years I taught first grade in Knox County. I am so excited to now be teaching first grade at Sacred Heart. These past weeks have been a wonderful experience for me religiously, academically and professionally. Thanks to everyone for making me feel so welcomed at Sacred Heart!

**Chase Estepp** - 3rd Grade Teacher
I grew up in Nappanee in Northern Indiana and attended Manchester University (formerly Manchester College) receiving my Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education. One interesting fact about me is that I still hold the record at the hospital where I was born for being 14 lbs. 9 oz. at birth. I am a huge Notre Dame fan growing up an hour south of South Bend, IN. I love Sacred Heart because of the family and community environment that surrounds this school. Being a first-year teacher, the support and guidance from my peers has made the transition into the school year much easier. I look forward to this year and the adventures that will come with it.

**Robby Wigger** - Technology Coordinator
I grew up in Mobile, Alabama and attended the Southeast College of Technology. Prior to coming to SHCS, I worked in Information Technology at the Department of Energy in Oak Ridge. I live in Seymour and LOVE the outdoors!

**Marissa Traer** - 7th Grade Teacher
I am from Thunder Bay, Canada. I graduated from Tennessee Wesleyan College with a Bachelor of Science degree in English and Education. I attended Tennessee Wesleyan College on a 4 year soccer scholarship. I am also helping out with coaching soccer for Sacred Heart. I love Sacred Heart Cathedral School because it is such a welcoming and caring community. The faculty and students are amazing, and being able to express your faith in God in the classroom is incredible. I am beyond thrilled to be a part of such a great school and parish.

**Britton Sanders** - 8th Grade Teacher
I have recently completed the teacher education program at the University of Tennessee Knoxville where I graduated with a Master's of Science in Education. I spend most of my free time with my lovely wife, Lindsey, and with my twin three-year-olds, Jonah and Ruby.

**Katie Alley** - Drama Teacher
Katie Norwood Alley is thrilled to be a part of the Sacred Heart Cathedral School faculty this year! She is an actor, director, teacher, and mom (Devyn, 6 & Caroline, 4). Katie co-founded the Knoxville theatre company, The Actors Co-op, in 1997, and worked extensively with the company until 2005. She has performed in over 35 productions in the last 14 years with The Actors Co-op and The Clarence Brown
Theatre. Katie taught Theatre Arts at Bearden High School from 2000-2006 and directed eight full-length productions, including "La Dispute" which received 1st place in the 2004 TN Theatre Association One-Act Play Festival. She has served as Children's Coach for The Clarence Brown Theatre production of "A Christmas Carol" for the last five seasons, and most recently taught with The 2012 Clarence Brown Theatre High School Acting Camp.

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**First Day of Kindergarten**

*From the Kindergarten Team*

Welcome to our Kindergarten children and their families! Our new students were busy once again trying to catch the gingerbread man! On their staggered days, while reading the story, "The Gingerbread Man", the students found a clue in their story book from the gingerbread man. He wanted them to come and catch him in the Art room. Once there, we found a clue leading us to the Gym. Following the clues enabled the children to 'tour' the school and meet many of our staff and other students. We never did catch him, but maybe we will catch him next year! Thank you to all of our parents for helping your children start off to a great year in Kindergarten. We look forward to working with you and your children!

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**Sacred Heart Fall Golf Classic**

You're invited to join us for the 12th Annual Sacred Heart Cathedral School Fall Golf Classic on October 5, 2012 presented by MASH and the SHCS Development Office. Be a part of this tradition and enjoy a day of friendship, fellowship, and fun as the Sacred Heart community comes together for the benefit of Catholic education.

We will have a beautiful day of golf at Egwani Farms Golf Course. The event will include a golf, breakfast, lunch and an awards reception following the tournament. Please join us in thanking our Presenting Sponsor, EdFinancial. Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact Joni Punch at 558-4136 or jpunch@shcknox.org for more information.

9:00 a.m. Registration, Breakfast & Putting Contest; 10:00 a.m. Tee Time (Shotgun Start)

Tee times are filling quickly! Contact Joni today to reserve your spot!
For Our Good and His Glory

A Mission Trip to Guatemala with Sixth Grade Teacher Rhae Nell Poteet

For several years now I have had a desire in my heart to go to a Spanish speaking country to share God's love with His people. Having grown up in San Antonio I have always felt a kinship with Hispanic people. When the Maryknoll Guatemala Mission Trip letter from Sister Mary Marta was placed in my teacher’s box on Friday afternoon January 27th, I saw it as God’s way of saying “Here’s where I want you to go.”

I immediately called Sr. Mary Marta and left the following message, “I received the letter you placed in the teacher’s boxes about the mission trip to Guatemala. I am hoping that my being Baptist will not hinder me from being allowed to travel on this trip with other Catholic School teachers.” As God would have it, that evening was the Knoxville Catholic Green and Gold Gala and who just “happened” to be ahead of me in the line? …Sr. Mary Marta! I spoke with her and she assured me that my lack of Catholicism would not keep me from going on the trip. I started the paperwork process the following Monday morning!

For the next six months, the process of getting all of my ducks in a row included getting my passport, researching and obtaining the necessary inoculations, making airfare arrangements, and electronically meeting with the other eight school teachers and two directors from across the United States with whom I would be living for nine days in June.

June 19th we arrived in Guatemala City and stayed in the Maryknoll House ~ neat, clean rooms (although no American air conditioning), a precious lady to cook for us, and running water all day long. Our base in the city allowed us to travel to Colegio de Monte Maria, a private girl’s school, where we were able to meet with the students one day who were so proud to show us around their school. The girls who were chosen to show us around spoke English beautifully so we were not stretched too much during this visit. The following day we were invited to be part of the faculty meeting and even participated in their break out groups in which we discussed how different personalities all bring something positive to the working environment. Most of the teachers did not speak English, so we were forced to communicate in Spanish. My biggest ah ha during this day was that even though we do not speak the same language, ultimately as teachers our main goal is to prepare our students academically for the future. Day by day, I was coming to the realization of just how small our world really is.

Caminando de Paz, an inner city school just outside Guatemala City was one of the stops on our tour. We met with a young man who is continuing the ministry of Father Thomas Goekler by offering an education to the children of the community. He has partnered with a local university and two university doctoral students are doing their thesis while living and teaching at the home. Most of the adults living in the community are single mothers whose husbands have traveled to the U.S. to make a living and send it back to their families. We were told that often the fathers get caught up in the American lifestyle and soon “forget” about their families, making it necessary for them to fend for themselves. Caminando de Paz is stepping up and offering assistance in the form of education for the children, and also food and supplies for the families. This past year, Caminando de Paz celebrated their first ever student graduating from the local university.

We left Guatemala City for a five hour drive to Esquipulas ~ an inner city, non-tourist, poorer community where we were really immersed in the culture. Eight women stayed in two bedrooms with bunkbeds, and shared one “open to the environment” bathroom with running water until about noon.
each day. We encountered many creatures during our stay. Our Maryknoll director, Matt Rousso and his wife rent a house in the inner city and have it set up as Casa Nazareth where they make a great effort to help the people of the city by witnessing God’s love in a very practical way. Because of the risk of getting sick through food contamination, we had another cook. Amazingly, not one of us got sick!

Matt and Janet Rousso employ a lady – Lourdes who brings in the children of the neighborhood to teach them woodworking on two lathes that are set up on the back patio of their home. Currently there are about eight children who are learning to make wooden bowls and storage units to sell on the streets. Because there are not many jobs available in this poor community, the children are able to have an income to help with family expenses. Most families live in 12’ X 12’ homes with no running water or electricity. The lucky parents are those who have made a business out of ceramics or crafts which can be sold at the Basilica de Cristo Negro where Catholic tourists come for pilgrimage throughout the year.

Lourdes, a native of Esquipulas implored us not to give to the children begging on the streets because this just perpetuates the poverty. She said she wants to be able to help the children grow up and be able to take care of themselves. I was reminded of my favorite classroom saying “Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime.”

We were able to visit with several teachers who opened their classrooms to us and told us of the hardships they face in trying to educate the students. Many families cannot afford to buy the required uniforms to send their children to school. Another obstacle is getting their children to the classroom because the schools are not conveniently located and there is no public school bus system. Families often keep their older children at home to help with the family business, so that more items can be made and sold for income.

We spent an afternoon at the Esquipulas Orphanage where three nuns single-handedly take care of 88 children ranging in age from 14 months to 18 years old. The school age children attend the public school during the day, while the younger children are cared for at the orphanage. The nuns do the best they can to prepare the children to live on their own, because at 18 the children are expected to go out and make their own way.
Santa Ana, a local community was one of our stops. Whole families – parents, children marrying and staying, cousins, and grandchildren live next door to each other their whole lives. A community bathroom is the only means of running water. Residents live on 10’ X 10’ concrete pads and secure their own walls, windows and doors. The seventeen-year-old lady we visited with had two small boys and a husband living in her home. The husband is a welder and travels each day the two hour drive to Nicaragua for his work. As we played games with the 70-80 local children, I watched as mothers held their babies and talked and laughed just as we would in any American community. The idea of “small world” hit me once again.

This group of teachers spent nine amazing days praying together, laughing together and worshiping our Lord by being His hands and feet to a people less fortunate than us. We spent time with folks who wanted nothing more than to spend time with us. We were told by many adults and children that just knowing someone from the U.S. is a big deal. I do not know yet what God has in store for me and how He will have me use this experience for His glory. I do know that I do not see the world in the same way that I did before this trip.

“Let us take seriously the cause of the poor as though it were our own – indeed, as what it really is, the cause of Jesus Christ…”

It is inconceivable that anyone could call themselves Christian and not make, as Christ did, a preferential option for the poor.”

Bishop Romero Homily ~ September 9, 1979