



# Spirit Week inSights

January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Dear Families,

Welcome to Spirit Week! With the Feast of our Patron – St. Thomas Aquinas – celebrated on Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, we look forward to a celebration! We have so much to celebrate. This year, in particular, we have chosen the theme “Celebrating Faith”. This theme is in anticipation of our Holy Father’s Designation of a Year of Faith beginning in October of this year.

The privilege of learning – even ABC’s and 123’s – in the context of faith is reason for gratitude and celebration. What a gift you have given your children. May you, this week, truly “Celebrate Faith”. And may we, this week, pray for each other and for all of our children. In His goodness, may God use these years to develop a firm foundation that will allow your children – His children – to build their house on the rock of faith. The winds will surely blow, and the rains will surely beat against them. But blessed by the gift of faith, may they always rely on God’s promises and know that nothing will be impossible for God!

Looking forward to a special week,  
Leslie Mitros

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<sup>1</sup> **It was a privilege to spend the day with 56 middle and high school students in Washington last Monday.** What a powerful witness it is to see so many young people, many of whom have travelled quite a distance, as a voice against the atrocity of abortion. It was a drizzly, cool day, but that did not dampen anybody’s spirits. Following the March, we arrived at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception much earlier than usual. We made use of that time to pray a rosary for the protection of the unborn and then concluded the day with Mass in the Crypt Church of the Basilica. May the day come that this annual trip is no longer necessary. But until then, I’ll make that trip with 56 Aquinas students any day!

<sup>2</sup> **College Night will be this Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>.** Geared particularly toward juniors starting the college application process, sophomores are welcome to attend with their parents, and parents of seniors will have the opportunity to review the process of

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filing the FAFSA and the financial aid process. This evening would be helpful for both students and their parents. **The evening will begin at 7:00 in room 304.**

<sup>3</sup> **Middle School Parents are invited to a High School Information Night on Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. in room 304 of the high school.** This will be an opportunity to learn about the high school curriculum and the opportunities and advantages of Aquinas Academy High School. This presentation is intended for current Aquinas parents and students, as well as families from other schools who are interested in the high school. We anticipate two sections of 9<sup>th</sup> grade next year – and with that, we plan to expand our foreign language offerings to include French. Mark your calendars and bring your questions (Parents are welcome to come listen during the girls' home basketball games that evening!)

<sup>4</sup> **Parents of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students: The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Retreat Day is set for Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>.** Students may dress up that day. They will spend the morning at Aquinas Academy, where the morning discussions will be led by Mr. and Mrs. Meland. Following 11:00 Mass, students will go to St. Richard's Church Hall where they will have lunch. In the afternoon, Fr. Marty Miller will join the students as they deepen their understanding of the Sacrament and the presence of the Holy Spirit with each one of them.

<sup>5</sup> Last Thursday **we had a very successful Kindergarten and Preschool Open House;** the interest in our school is growing and a few new families have already registered for next year's kindergarten class. **If any of our current families have children coming to our kindergarten in the fall we ask that you please fill out the attached Application for Current Families and send it to the office this week.** This also applies if your child is in our preschool and planning to attend Kindergarten at Aquinas in the fall. Thank you so much.

<sup>6</sup> Do you like to live on the edge? With as mild as the winter has been, SURELY the weather on the night of the **Wine and Cheese Party (February 18<sup>th</sup>)** will be snowy and cold! All the more reason to gather for good food, good friends, and a good time! The invitation is attached just in case you misplaced yours! The evening will also offer the opportunity for silent auction of the class baskets with a wide variety of themes that will appeal to everyone. There will also be three or four live auction items ... among them, dinner with Bishop Zubik on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012; a Progressive Dinner for Parents (rather than students!); and an iPad. There will be music for dancing or listening as well. **Please RSVP with your check by February 10<sup>th</sup>.**

<sup>7</sup> In conjunction with their Greek Fest on January 20<sup>th</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade students dressed down for a small contribution to "Ark of the World" – an organization in Athens, Greece, serving needy children. **\$125 was raised by the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade that will be sent to Ark of the World.** The students did a fine job with Greek food, along with presentations on Greek architecture, mythology, and scholarly contributions.

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<sup>8</sup> **Preschool Postings:** As January comes to an end, I thought the families of Aquinas might be interested to know that our preschool is nearly bursting at the seams! Last week, we welcomed our newest student, Tommy Mack, to our afternoon Pre-K class. This latest addition to our family means that both our AM and PM Pre-K classes are full! (Twelve students per class.) Moreover, our 3-year-old class includes eleven students! A total of 35 students in preschool is certainly a record!

This past week, we had our annual Preschool and Kindergarten January open house. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Mike Burchill and Juan Mata, we welcomed many new families who are excited about Aquinas. (We nearly ran out of seats!) If you have a son or daughter of preschool age and would like to know more about our program, please feel free to contact me to schedule a visit to our classroom!

<sup>9</sup> **APA meeting: Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>**. Lower School Science Room at 9:15. Beginning at 9:30, Prayer Ministry has provided an opportunity for spiritual enrichment with a DVD titled "Giving God the Love We Should – one of the most important ways to fulfill your life's purpose". It is noted on this Lighthouse Catholic Media DVD that "*His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI imparts his Apostolic Blessing to all those associated with this project.*" Following the DVD, at 10:00, there will be a business meeting regarding upcoming needs, events, and updates!

For those who stay for Mass, or who would like an afternoon out, **parents are planning to meet for lunch at Max 'n Erma's before some of the lower school parents return to school for the 1:00 talent show.** Please see the attached APA meeting flyer!

<sup>10</sup>There are many events in the upcoming weekend/following week.

- **Several 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students will be participating in the PA Junior Academy of Science presentation/competition on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>,** at Woodland Hills. This is the first year that Aquinas has been broadly represented (Last year, one student competed and then went on to the state competition).
- **The Pittsburgh Public Theatre Shakespeare Competition is on February 6 (LS); February 7 (MS); and February 8<sup>th</sup> (HS).**
- **All the 5<sup>th</sup> graders have the opportunity to watch the Aquinas 5<sup>th</sup> Graders compete in this year's Shakespeare Competition at the O'Reilly Theater on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. They will be gone from roughly 10:45 to 1:30. All students need to be a BAG LUNCH that day.**