

FALL 2011

Quarterly Newsletter  
for Alumni, Parents,  
and Friends

- 2 Technology
- 3 Students in Action
- 4 Alumni News

## Important Dates:

2011-2012 School Year

Oct. 21 - Jog-A-Thon

Nov. 5 - Father Daughter Dinner Dance

Jan. 29 - Open House & start of Catholic School's Week



# St. Mary Magdalen School news



LANDMARK OF FAITH, CHARACTER AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

2534 Ventura Blvd. • Camarillo, CA 93010 | (805) 482-2611 | [www.smms.pvt.k12.ca.us](http://www.smms.pvt.k12.ca.us)

## A letter from new principal Michael Ronan

The poet Maya Angelou wrote, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Thinking back to my visit to St. Mary Magdalen in June, I might debate her on the first two points as I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the classrooms and my conversations with the faculty and many of our parents, but I couldn't agree more with her on the third. The warm welcome I received truly made St. Mary Magdalen feel like home for me. The tight-knit, family atmosphere of a community united by their faith is a memory that I carried with me over the summer months. I feel blessed and truly honored to have this opportunity to serve at St. Mary Magdalen and work with so many amazing people.

I am very proud to announce that the Western Catholic Educational Association has granted St. Mary Magdalen a six-year term of accreditation. This accreditation is a reflection on the tremendous school that we have at St. Mary Magdalen and is something in which our entire community can take pride. Special thanks to Mrs. Laura Tellez and the rest of the faculty and staff for the countless hours of work they put into the accreditation process.

I am also very excited to share that the next step of our technology plan is

underway for the upcoming school year. Thanks to an extremely generous donation of \$100,000 specifically for technology, we have been able to order forty iPad 2s for our fifth and sixth grade classes. This is a unique opportunity for these students and one that will allow them to truly experience a "hands on" education. As we continue through this school year, I look forward to sharing new technology developments with all of you.

It would be an understatement to say that I am excited for the upcoming school year. Since 1954, St. Mary Magdalen has stood as a "landmark of faith, character and academic excellence." I know that over the

upcoming year, we will continue to excel in all three of these areas as we begin exciting new technology initiatives, look to expand our community service opportunities, deepen our knowledge about ourselves and the world around us, and celebrate and live our faith in everything that we do. The faculty this year continues to amaze me with their levels of expertise and wealth of experience. Even more, I am truly inspired by their dedication and commitment to the mission of St. Mary Magdalen and to all of our students. Please feel free to stop by and visit St. Mary Magdalen and learn more about the many exciting opportunities we offer for our students!

## Miss Sternburg says "Goodbye"



Miss Sternburg says farewell at last year's morning assembly.

*It is hard to believe that I am completing my twenty-seventh year as a classroom teacher at our school! I have been here so long that I am now teaching the children of former students as well as teaching alongside former students! My time here has been a wonderful journey as a Catholic school educator.*

*I will miss you all. The blessings that I have received from my work with children are immeasurable. I am humbled by the love and dedication of St. Mary Magdalen's parents and am enriched by the friendships I have made over the years with you and my colleagues. As much as I am looking forward to retirement, my heart will always be with St. Mary Magdalen.*

*Gratefully yours, Jackie Sternburg*

## 2010-2011 PTO Fundraising Recap

### Fly2Fitness Jog-A-Thon \$21,000+

The Fly2Fitness Jog-A-Thon was an inaugural event which took place on the field at St. Mary Magdalen School. Students and teachers started the year off by enlivening our philosophy of educating the whole child through physical activity. The money raised helped to renovate the basketball and volleyball courts.

### Tis the Season For Fashion, Faith and Fun \$8,000

Tis the Season For Fashion, Faith and Fun was the first event of its kind for the school. The local boutiques sold their wares, while school children and their parents modeled clothes in a one-of-a-kind fashion show. The money raised supports the academic enrichment programs at SMMS.

### 18th Annual Pennies From Heaven \$30,000+

The tradition of Pennies From Heaven continued for its 18th year with "All You Need is Love". Guests enjoyed a night of gambling, bidding on fabulous silent and live auction items, a delicious dinner, socializing with their school community and dancing the night away. This event remains a favorite of St. Mary Magdalen School parents and the local community, as well as a staple in our fundraising efforts.

### 11th Annual Monsignor Hughes Golf Classic \$28,000

The 11th Annual Monsignor Hughes Golf Tournament tee'd off on May 23rd at Las Posas Country Club in Camarillo. The golfers enjoyed a day filled with fun, birdies and a few eagles. The tournament was followed by a tasty sit down dinner and auction that also appealed to the non-golfers in the school community. Each spring this event provides a celebratory conclusion to yet another successful year at SMMS.

# Technology At Its Best

## Creatively integrating the state standards

You might wonder what a podcast is and where the word comes from. The 5th and 6th graders of SMMS know exactly what a podcast is and have become very proficient in their ability to utilize this technology to creatively express their understanding of the causes of weather in 5th grade and explore ancient Egypt in 6th grade. The word podcast is a play on the word broadcast combined with the word iPod (a popular device for listening to music). So imagine the ability to watch and listen to students creatively bring to life these lessons through their own productions – that's what you'll find in the classroom at SMMS.

In 5th grade, Mr. Tellez was thrilled with how his students embraced a standards based assignment intended to demonstrate their knowledge of weather including tornadoes, clouds and lightening storms. By verbally explaining the causes of weather and expressing these concepts visually, the podcasts allowed students to practice their oral presentation skills while using technology purposefully and proficiently.

Students in Mr. Bass' 6th grade class worked in small groups in the computer lab to complete an assignment that utilized technology to help students express their understanding of this California social studies standard as they analyzed the geographic, political, economic, religious and social structures of Egypt. The result included podcasts interpreting the mummification process, a study of the major gods, a biography of King Tut, and an analysis of hieroglyphics, to name a few!

The mission of these educators is twofold: to create an environment where they could assess students as they creatively expressed their understanding of the unit, and to improve computer literacy through differentiated instruction. For the 2011-2012 school year, a team of teachers will continue to test and model the integration of technology tools that support the vision for an exciting technology plan at SMMS!



Mr. Tellez' fifth grade students posing with our new iPad 2s.

## Families Celebrate First Communion

With parents, grandparents, friends and parishioners looking on, twenty-three second graders and three older sacrament students received Jesus for the first time on May 21st and 22nd. Father Patrick Mullen, pastor at Padre Serra Parish, celebrated with the students at the 5:00 p.m. liturgy on May 21st while Father John Neiman, associate pastor at St. Mary Magdalen Parish, presided at the 10:00 a.m. liturgy on May 22nd.

The young ladies were dressed in the traditional white dresses and the gentlemen looked handsome in their Sunday best. Parents sat with their children and First Communion became a family celebration. Leading up to this beautiful sacrament parents, along with their children, were asked to attend a half-day workshop/retreat to learn more about the importance of the Eucharist. Activities included a trip to the sacristy, scripture stories, craft making and concluded with the baking of bread.

It was a joy to see all twenty-six well-prepared students receive Jesus for the first time with so many supportive parishioners from both parishes present.

## Pleasant Valley Education Foundation 3rd Grade Speech Winners

Every year in early spring, PVEF (Pleasant Valley Education Foundation) hosts a 3rd Grade Speech Tournament. The top 30% of participating 3rd graders from each public school in the Camarillo area compete in their chosen category at a citywide tournament. Private schools are also welcome to compete.

Students may choose to compete in the categories of poetry, storytelling, expository and dual speaking. Saint Mary's was the only participating private school this year and placed 2nd for the small school category. Sophia Pelaez also placed 4th in storytelling.



Left to Right: Sharon Taylor, Executive Director PVEF, 3rd Grade Students: Brooke Norman, Chloe Hogan, Anna Enos, Sophia Pelaez and Hanna Kessinger.

## Congratulations to the Class of 2011

Thursday, June 9, was a big day for the St. Mary Magdalen School graduates! A graduation luncheon was held at the Spanish Hills Country Club, with the actual graduation following at 6:30 P.M. in the historic chapel adjacent to the school.

The Class of 2011, consisting of eight gentlemen and twenty ladies, will be attending ten different high schools in the fall. A few will call Camarillo, Newbury Park and Calabasas High Schools home, while the remaining will be enrolled at Chaminade College Preparatory, Crespi High, La Reina High School, Oaks Christian School, St. Bonaventure High School, Santa Clara High and Villanova Preparatory School. Several members from the class earned "Honors at Entrance" from these fine schools. We are very proud of each and every one of these students.

Scholarships and Distinguished Awards were presented to the following:

- Knights of Columbus Scholarships:  
MacKenzie Comeau and Julia O'Brien
- Edward O'Donnell Memorial Scholarship:  
Hannah Ray
- Sisters of Notre Dame Graduate Award:  
Maria Robles
- St. Mary Magdalen Award:  
Julia O'Brien and Emma Zandbergen

Hats off to the Class of 2011!



New SMMS Spirit Squad happily greeted students the first day of school!

## The Night Before Kindergarten

Every September the new Kindergarten class comes to school the evening before their first day of school where their teacher Mrs. Waltman reads them a story, "The Night Before Kindergarten" written by Julie Durrell. This year they had a surprise visit with their new principal, Mr. Ronan.



New kindergarten students practice sign language with Mrs. Waltman.

# Save The Dates...

# Camarillo's Educator of the Month

## Father/Daughter Dinner Dance

SATURDAY  
November 5th  
5:30-9:00pm

SMMS Participation  
in the  
**Camarillo  
Christmas  
Parade**  
SATURDAY  
December 10th



St. Mary Magdalen junior high math teacher and athletic director, Ruth Rydberg, was honored this school year by the Chamber of Commerce as an Educator of the Month in the 2010/2011 school year. Educators who receive this honor have been nominated by their peers for going above and beyond the call of duty to make a difference in the lives of their students and the future leaders of this community.

## Get Connected Stay Connected



### St. Mary Magdalen School

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We respect your privacy and will not sell your address or use it for purposes other than communicating news about St. Mary Magdalen Catholic School.



## Profile Of A Graduate

Upon graduation, students at St. Mary Magdalen School will be:

### Global Citizens who

- Respect and care for God's creation
- Listen, speak, read, and write effectively and creatively
- Work independently and cooperatively in problem solving

### Reflective Thinkers who

- Develop individual goals and strategies for success
- Synthesize and evaluate information
- Apply concepts

### Active Examples of Our Faith who

- Serve others in the local, national, and international communities
- Participate in Catholic traditions and practices
- Express knowledge of our faith

### Dedicated Inquirers who

- Analyze results and work for improvement
- Use technology purposefully and proficiently
- Ask relevant and thoughtful questions



## Cory Piowowarski

Moorpark College

Cory, a SMMS and St. Bonaventure graduate, is currently enrolled in the Exotic Animal Training and Management (EATM) program at Moorpark College.

Upon graduating from St.

Bonaventure High School, Cory's plan was to receive an AA degree from Moorpark College and then attend Cal Poly and major in agriculture. Half way through her second year at Moorpark College, Cory learned about the Exotic Animal Training and Management Program and realized that her interest in exotic animals was much stronger than working in the agriculture industry. She applied to EATM and was excited to be accepted on her first try – other students have been known to apply up to five times before being admitted to the program.

Cory has since completed her AA and is now learning to care for animals and train animal behaviors. In addition, she works with the animals and helps host shows to inform the public. So far the EATM program has been the most rewarding experience of Cory's life! After she graduates, it is her hope to work at either Disney's Animal Kingdom or San Diego Wild Animal Park.



Cory poses with last year's First Grade class when they came for a visit to watch her work.

alumni