

Knighly News

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Spring Break was Chance for Students to Relax

By Isaac Cooper

Spring Break is a U.S academic tradition that started in the 1930s and is also observed in some other western countries. Spring Break is also a vacation period in early spring at universities and schools in various countries around the world.

Mater Dei's Spring Break started on March 20, and the Mater Dei students were back on the 28th. Many used this time for relaxation. Some other things that the younger Mater Dei students did over Spring Break were go to the movies, go bowling, eat out at Coyote Canyon, and visit family.

Overall the students had a great time on Spring Break. Now since all the students are back from relaxing on break, they are working hard on their science fair projects (the science fair was on Wednesday, April 26).

Pi Day Allows Students to get Involved

By Gabbi McCarthy

On March 13-17, Mater Dei students had their Pi Day 5 Day Challenge. All the students were to bring in specific items to donate to different organizations. The goal was to get 314 of each.

The Pre-k through 2nd grade brought in toothpaste, shampoo, bodywash, and deodorant. Exceeding their goal of 314 items, they brought in 341 items. All the items brought in were given to Doorstep, just down the road from Mater Dei.

Third grade through 5th grade brought in peanut butter, cereal, and pasta noodles. They brought in 270 items, which they gave to the Catholic Charities Food Bank.

The middle school raised money to buy Shoes that Grow for kids in third world countries. Shoes that Grow are shoes that have adjustable straps on the heel, toes, and sides. They can fit kids for five sizes. The goal was to collect \$315 to buy 21 pairs of shoes. They raised \$540 and bought 36 pairs of shoes. Some of the middle schoolers even baked cookies and sold them to raise money.

Each day the students brought in an item, they got their names put in a drawing to win prizes. The most tickets they could get were 4 tickets, and the more tickets they had the better the chance of winning a prize. The prizes were moonpies, oatmeal creme pies, Dairy Queen blizzard coupons, Dairy Queen smoothie coupons, a large Godfather's pizza, a Pie Five make your own pie coupon, ten dollar Old Chicago coupons, a pie from Perkins, and Dairy Queen cake.

Fish Fry Cooks Up Fellowship

By Gabe Gonzales

The Fish Fry is when kids, parents, grandparents and more spend time together and eat great fish dinners on Fridays at Mater Dei Assumption Church. Mater Dei only does these during Lent, because Friday is when you should give up fish because Jesus gave up his life for us. Spaghetti, mac and cheese, broccoli, and cookies are served alongside the either fried or baked fish. For drinks, lemonade and pop are offered. Volunteers helped to serve and cook the food. Also every Friday Mater Dei students would have stations of the cross at 2:45, but now since Lent is over the Fish Fry and the Stations of the Cross is over.

SUMday Participants Compete for Mathematical Glory

By Olivia Schmitz

5!, $\frac{3}{4} \div \frac{5}{8}$, **402-305, 2³** Can you solve these? Well, you might be a candidate for SUMday next year. SUMday is a math competition that Mater Dei has been participating in since it became a school. It has been going on for more than 20 years in Topeka. All of the math teachers in Topeka and surrounding areas are notified of this event. The students have been practicing by working on old tests and learning strategies to do the problems. This year it took place on April 1st at Washburn Rural.

This year Mater Dei had participants from the 4th - 8th grade. The 4th grade participants are Emily Lee, Ashley Lee, Treyton Tetuan, Izzy Wood, Grace Everett, and Addie Tanking. The 5th grade participants are Aiden Amis, Makayla Traylor, Hannah Schmitz, Daniel Smith, Ian Mead, and Natalie Hillebert. Those who competed from the sixth grade are Ryan Spindler, Molly McGuire, Eli Tanking, Ethan Burns, Alyssa Droge, and Morgan Stous. Miranda Hillebert, Gabby McCarthy, Sandy Anguiano, Sophia Friess, and Logan Crow competed from seventh grade and the eighth grade competitors were Olivia Schmitz, Ethan Spindler, Mary McGuire, Cecilia Friess, and Ian Wietharn.

Ian Wietharn, Cecilia Friess, Olivia Schmitz, Logan Crow, and Ethan Burns placed in the top ten in Mental Math. Olivia Schmitz, Sandy Anguiano, Ethan Burns, Hannah Schmitz and Ian Mead placed in Geometry. This year Mater Dei did an amazing job at SUMday, and let's hope to see a lot of them next year.

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Irish Fest Defies Weather for Success

By Ethan Spindler

The Irish Fest that took place on March 11, 2017 was a huge success! The event made about \$20,000, which is more than the first year. Although that is pretty good, the weather did complicate things. It was supposed to be really nice, but then they called for snow. It didn't snow much, but it was pretty cold for the middle of March. To solve some of the issues caused by the cold weather, the tent in the street had gas heaters. Although the heaters did help, the committee had to move some of the events downstairs. They also had to cancel the kids' carnival, but there were still kids there making their own fun. They had two Irish bands that played loud and very well. People got up and danced, and all had lots of fun. So overall, the Irish Fest did very well. The committee was able to defy the weather and still get people down there to have fun.



Volunteers scramble in the Irish Fest kitchen. Photo by Ethan Spindler.



5k Fun Run participants run despite cold. Photo by Ethan Spindler.

Students Learn Meaning of Lent During Stations of the Cross

By Madeline Gearhart

As our Lenten season ends, we have done great as far as giving up or doing things as a promise, attending the Fish Fry, and of course attending Stations of the Cross. Stations of the Cross happened every Friday at Mater Dei with the students from 2:45-3:15. This was a great way for the students to become more in touch with their faith life and learn about all that it cost for Jesus to die on the cross to save us. Each Lenten season gives us a chance to learn a little bit more. Everyone was excited for Easter, but the journey before makes it a little bit more enjoyable because we know the effort that went into it.

Many of the people at our school have different experiences during Stations of the Cross, so they were asked what their favorite part is. Olivia Schmitz from 8th grade said that it was good to realize what Jesus did for her sins. Lydia Dennis from 3rd grade said that hers was looking at the pictures in the church because of their meaning. Gabriel Gonzales from 6th grade said he enjoyed helping the little kids. Everyone has different opinions of Stations but we are united in the fact that we must remember the sacrifices Jesus made to give us redemption.



Students file out after a Lenten mass. Photo by Madeline Gearhart.

Easter Vacation

By Jaden Mosqueda

Students of Mater Dei recently had five days for Easter vacation, which was from April 13-17. Easter is a Christian festival that celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible says Jesus died on Good Friday and was brought back to life three days later, on Easter Sunday. Some fun things about Easter are bunnies, Easter egg hunts, being outside, and spending time with family.

Second Graders Experience First Holy Communion

By Olivia Schmitz

On Sunday, April 30, 2017 the second graders received their First Holy Communion. They have been preparing by learning the parts of the Mass. The second graders say Holy Communion is important because they are receiving Jesus and when Jesus is inside of them, they will be good. It will also keep them thinking about God and help them to be like God. The Eucharist will help them to show God's love by their actions.

The second graders are excited and say that their future will be awesome with God in their hearts. Many also expressed that it could help to decide whether or not they will become priests or sisters. The Eucharist will also help them to be a good example and help them to treat people the way they would want to be treated. Mrs. Myers, families, and friends have also been preparing special gifts for the second graders.

Editorial- Appeal for the Reinstatement of an Effective Student Council

By Cecilia Friess

Some of you students and parents may not remember this, but Mater Dei used to have a student council. I served as a representative for my class in 6th grade, and during my time there, I was surprised to learn how few responsibilities the council had. Our first few months were spent talking about the haunted classroom for Halloween, which had to be scary enough to entertain the older kids but not so much as to scare the younger kids. After we were done with that project, we quite literally did nothing except man the snack cart, a relatively inconsequential duty, for the rest of the year. We talked about getting T-shirts to commemorate our time of servitude, or going out for lunch to celebrate our year, but all those conversations amounted to nothing.

There are a few reasons I was upset about my term in the council, the main one being our inability to affect meaningful change in our school. We never got to meet with teachers or the school council, and we never attended PTO meetings as a group. We never even talked about issues that actually affected the student body. My second reason is that it wasted my time. I gave some of my lunch and recess periods, which make up a good portion of my downtime at school, to talk about what color of T-shirts we should get for our year of ineffectiveness. My third reason is that I felt vastly misled about the importance of the council. I campaigned on the idea of giving my classmates more choices and outlets to speak up through in the coming years, and I truly meant to do that, but we had no connections to actually meet and talk with people who could help us with such endeavours. My fourth and final reason has much to do with the others: the council was poorly regulated, and the rules and our duties were highly ambiguous. The rules for campaigning and elections were given through word of mouth, which produced confusion and unintentional disqualifying actions. All the council's meetings were closely overseen by two teachers, which made me, at least, hesitant to speak for my classmates, especially with complaints. We were at one point commissioned to create a list of duties to be performed by members of the council, but that never came to completion, and the criteria for the document meant to clarify the criteria for a good representative were in and of themselves unclear.

Despite the former council's lack of importance, I am immensely disappointed in its omission. But at the same time, I can't help feeling hopeful that the dismantling of the student council will allow for a new, more effective one to take its place. If a council is to be reinstated, a rulebook for campaigning and conduct within the council should be made through collaboration between the student and teaching bodies. The representatives should also be given a clear outlet through which to speak for their peers, as well as a way to participate in PTO meetings. Lastly, I think that student council should be considered an elective. Students who are elected to the council should be automatically signed up. Having meetings during elective time will remove distractions, such as eating and hearing shouts from outside, and allow more time for discussion. The importance of giving students a way to speak out and learn about government is not to be understated. The opportunities to improve confidence and diplomatic conduct in students should be reason enough to reform the student council.

This editorial is, in a way, my attempt at being my class's representative again, to make up for the lack of meaningful change during my term. I resent that I feel guilty for such things when I was given no resources for doing that in the first place, but I am not here to vent. I am here to appeal to our school's authorities, that they may see the importance in giving their students an effective voice through their elected classmates.

Track Team and Events Schedule

By Andy Storrer

Track is starting this spring. Ethan Burns, Autumn Lane, Shelby Meier, Molly McGuire, Alaura Salsbury, Sarah Schmidt, Ryan Spindler, Andy Storrer, Brandon Tinoco, Sandy Anguiano, Emma Bauguess, Maribelle Belaire-Serna, Megan Carr, Mia Fulton, Miranda Hillebert, Gabbi McCarthy, Ryan Calvin, Cecilia Friess, Andrew Kirmer, Mary McGuire, Cooper Meier, Josulyn Salsbury, Olivia Schmitz, Abigail Scritchfield, Kayla Simons, Ethan Spindler, Erick Teske, Ian Wietharn, and Jaylan Fulton make up the track team.

On Friday April 7th the team competed at Santa Fe Trail. On Saturday, April 8th was a TPL (Topeka Parochial League) meet at Hayden from 8:00-2:00. On Saturday, April 22nd was another TPL meet at Hayden. Friday April 28th was the Tentative Evening Meet (field events and relays). May 6 is the Deanery Track Meet at Hayden from 8:00-2:00. The Deanery Track Meet is where the team can earn ribbons for placing in events. Practices are on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 5:30-6:45.



Maribelle Belaire-Serna runs a relay at the Santa Fe Trail meet. Photo by Ethan Spindler.



Brandon Tinoco runs the 2 mile at Santa Fe Trail. Photo by Ethan Spindler.

Special Feature- Mater Dei Teams Make NHD State

By Abigail Scritchfield

This past February 25 was the National History day for the 7th and 8th graders. We- Iysis Salazar, Martin Gray, and I, Abigail Scritchfield never thought we had a chance of making it to state.

Early on the 25th we went to Washburn University to set up our board before the preview for the public. We had our own little corner and we were just waiting for the judging portion of the event. When we first started our project, we had no clue who to choose. That is, until we saw the name Muhammad Ali online and, for some reason, knew we should choose him.

We knew everyone thought of Muhammad Ali as the world's greater fighter (which he was) but he was also a passionate fighter for what he believed in. So that's why we chose Muhammad Ali, because we wanted to show everyone how he changed history. But going into the topic of Muhammad Ali we never thought we were going to hear our names called at the awards for National History Day. So when the judges did call us and told us we were going to state, it surprised not just us, but our whole 8th grade class.

Now we will be working on our project to make it state-ready. We will also try to get some statements from Muhammad Ali's children. We are excited that we get the chance to go to state and show everyone how much hard work we put into our project and how proud of our topic we are. Iysis, Martin and I will be ready and are so excited to get our project ready for state competition on April 28th.

But we are not the only one who made it to state. Miranda Hilbert, Gabbi McCarthy, Isaac Mead and Sophia Friess in 7th grade will be joining us on April 28th. They made it to state by doing a play about the underground railroad. Even though they were all nervous they did a wonderful job. The judges and audience loved watching their play. So this year's state competition needs to watch out for the Mater Dei Knights!

The 7th grade team won second place and will be advancing to nationals this summer. The 8th grade team was eliminated at state.