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SCIENTIA POTENTIA EST
The
GUARDIAN

SAINT RAPHAEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL & PRESCHOOL + RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA
VOLUME IV, NUMBER I

New Faces



New Spaces



Photos: Mary Morgan



Photo: Mary Morgan

Dear Saint Raphael Family,

As I mark my fourth year as principal, I'm both humbled and awed by the dedicated families, staff, and friends who make up the Saint Raphael School Community.

Over the last several years our school has grown exponentially in the number of students enrolled and in the programs offered. When we opened our doors for the 2015-16 school year, 416 Guardians, ranging from kindergarten to eighth grade, eagerly filled the hallways.

News about Saint Raphael is traveling fast! You'll understand why as you peruse this issue of *The Guardian*, now in its third year of publication.

Since our last edition, the school has added:

- a Latin program,
- an additional fourth grade class,
- new teaching staff,
- a youth soccer program for ages preschool through fifth grade,
- a school chorus, and
- a theater class in our middle school, further expanding our fine arts department.

Additionally, our art teacher Cindi Messina is the recipient of the prestigious 2015 Lewis Award for Excellence in Teaching. All of these pieces complete a puzzle of a thriving and vibrant school.

As our school continues to grow, your commitment to ensuring its success are greatly appreciated and welcome. I call special attention to the year-in-review section of this issue highlighting the Ignatius Fund. Because of the tremendous generosity of parents, grandparents, alumni, staff, and friends, the second annual fund far surpassed the original goal of \$60,000. Thank you for your unwavering support for and belief in this important initiative.

As we begin our 21st year of Catholic education, please keep our school community in your prayers for continued success, guidance, and fellowship. If you haven't been back in a while, I invite you to visit your alma mater. Our doors are always open to welcome you home.

God bless,

John Mihalyo
Principal



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Photos: Mary Morgan





Mrs. Messina Named Lewis Award Winner for 2015

Principal for the Day



8th Grade Clap-out



Isaiah Austin returns for book signing



Photo: Ellen Guarente



8th Grade vs. Staff Kickball Game



Photos: Mary Morgan

May Crowning



The Ryan O'Connell Memorial Golf Tournament

What makes a great preschool?

For our preschoolers who join us every day, the important things are having fun, playing with friends, learning new songs, discovering intriguing toys, and running, climbing and exploring on the playground. Our preschool parents are probably a bit more interested in our nurturing environment, activities in the classrooms, learning opportunities during the day, and ways in which we share our faith. While all of these are important elements to what makes Saint Raphael Preschool a wonderful school, did you know the Diocese of Raleigh requires much more of us?

Every five years our preschool undergoes the Diocese of Raleigh Assessment of Early Childhood Centers. This assessment is established to ensure that we are constantly improving and providing a quality preschool program. In March of 2016, Saint Raphael Preschool will receive an assessment visit from an independent diocesan team. The Preschool will be evaluated on nine different Standards that cover everything from the school's Catholic Identity to its administrative policies, to learning goals, and

classroom practices. The school's financial health, the professionalism of its personnel, the degree of family involvement, its emphasis on safety and health, the state of its facility and its finances—all these and more will come under review. The process is rigorous, with the standards aligned not just with the Diocese of Raleigh's Catholic School criteria, but also with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards, American Montessori Standards, and the North Carolina Childcare requirements.



Photo: Ellen Guarente

The team will divide their time during the visit meeting with the director and in observing in the classrooms. The classroom environment and teachers' classroom management skills are assessed, instructional strategies are observed, and curriculum and learning goals are noted. In addition to

time observing each class, the team will also review evidence of compliance that teachers and the director have gathered and organized for the review team.

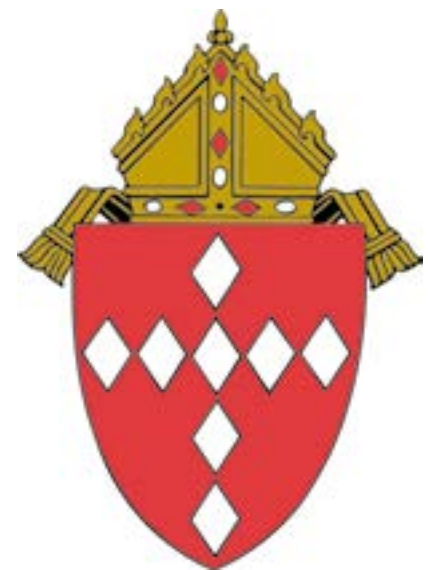
As you can imagine, this visit every five years requires preparation. Fortunately, Saint Raphael Preschool has its own annual continuous improvement process that keeps the preschool aligned to standards each year, not just in the year in which we are assessed.

Every school year begins with a review of the preschool's center-wide goals that have been adopted at the end of the prior school year. These annual goals are developed with input from our parents, teachers, director, the parish, and the assistant Catholic Schools superintendent.

Our planned ice cream social? That event is one strategy to meet one of our current year goals of building community among our families—a goal born from comments received from parents. **Our new bathroom sinks and playground?** These were planned to meet two additional goals.

By the time the end of the school year rolls around, the teachers and director will evaluate how well we met the center-wide annual goals. Then the process begins again—with a discussion of goals for the upcoming year. In this way, the preschool staff ensures on-going improvement of our school for the benefit of our students and their families.

Providing a quality education experience for each preschool child is very important to us. While we spend many hours “behind the scenes” making sure that we are constantly improving our program and meeting the guidelines and standards to be accredited, we truly hope what you see is the love your child has for our preschool!



Logo courtesy of the Diocese of Raleigh



Photo: Shanon Baggett

Look at all the improvements! When our preschoolers arrived for the new school year in September, they noticed a few changes around our building. This past summer, with the help of the Ignatius Funds raised last school year, the preschool was able to make some much needed improvements to our facility.

Our first upgrade occurred in the hallways. We chose four focal walls to paint each a different, somewhat bolder color. This helped to add interest and create a more positive feeling around the building. These walls will be used to highlight our preschoolers' artwork. The wall in the school entry sports a beautiful new alphabet decal.

Next on our list of improvements was the purchase of four new bathroom sinks. Being in the same location for the last 35 years is wonderful when you are talking about experience as a preschool, however, it also means your building has suffered some "wear and tear" through the years. Our existing sinks were adult-sized, with faucets very difficult for little hands to use and, after so many years of use, showed some rust. After much

research and discussion with local plumbers, we decided to purchase child-sized, double sinks with automatic touchless facets. Not only are these sinks much easier for our children to use, they also are more sanitary and safer—no more having to use stools to reach the faucets!

Last, but certainly not least, is the largest improvement of all – new playground equipment for the preschool. This was the most exciting project the preschool has undertaken in a long time. Months were spent in discussion with teachers about their needs and suggestions, three different companies were interviewed regarding their products and prices, and hours were spent designing the selected equipment to best suit our space. The consensus of all involved in this project was that the equipment has to serve all ages at our preschool (2-5), needs to be



Photo: Shanon Baggett



Photo: Shanon Baggett



Photo: Ellen Giarante

Before



After

Photo: Shanon Baggett

appropriately challenging, enhances our goal of helping children with developing their gross motor skills, and allows for interactive, creative playtime. We feel the pieces selected and installed meet all those requirements and best of all, the children love it!

While teachers are constantly replacing their supplies, refreshing their decorations, and purchasing new toys and books for their classrooms, our common areas around the preschool were in need of some improvements. With such a successful fundraising campaign last school year, the preschool was able to attend to some of those needs. All three of the projects we chose this year benefit the entire preschool and serve to keep our children safe, healthy, active, and happy.

Kathleen DONNELLY & Will ROLLINSON

Kathleen Anne Donnelly ('04) and William Joseph Rollinson ('04) were married on Saturday, August 15, 2015, at a 2:00 pm Nuptial Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in downtown Raleigh.

Father Patrick Rogers, S.J., was the main celebrant. Father Pat taught religion to Kathleen and Will while they were in seventh and eighth grade. Also participating in the Mass were altar servers Makenna ('17) and Jacob Miles ('14), both former students of mother-of-the-bride, Anne Donnelly. Mrs. Donnelly was a third grade teacher for eight years at Saint Raphael Catholic School.

Additionally, Bill Donnelly ('08) was a groomsman and Marilyn Leap (former teacher), Father-of-the-Bride Bill Donnelly (former basketball coach), and Mrs. Donnelly were Eucharistic Ministers.

Several alumni attended the festivities. Among them were Geoff Hamrick, Jordan Senter, Tara Rajani (also a bridesmaid), Mason Delacourt, and Joe Hill.



Photos courtesy of the Donnelly family

Kathleen and Will met when the Donnelly family moved to Raleigh in April of 2003. Will had been a student at Saint Raphael since preschool. Kathleen and Will continued their friendship at Cardinal Gibbons High School and began dating in college. Kathleen graduated from Elon University and Will graduated from NC State University. The rest is history!!



Geoff Hamrick, Billy Donnelly ('08), Tara Rajani ('04), Joe Hill ('04), Mason Delacourt ('04), Ryan Daly, Jordan Senter ('04), Father Pat Rogers, S. J., Kathleen (Donnelly) & Will Rollinson (both '04)



Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Clendenin

Jessica PRITCHETT CLENDENIN

An impressive collegiate resumé, exciting career, and recent marriage are just some of Jessica Pritchett Clendenin's accomplishments since her years at Saint Raphael Catholic School.

When did you graduate from Saint Raphael?

I graduated in 2004.

Where did you attend high school and college?

Sanderson High School and North Carolina State University

What are your degrees in and what are you currently doing?

My degrees from NC State are in Animal Science and Poultry Science. I'm currently an Applied BioResearch Associate II for an animal health company called Zoetis.

What is your greatest accomplishment to date?

My greatest accomplishment to date is graduating from college Magna Cum Laude with two degrees in four years.

How did Saint Raphael prepare you for high school and college?

Saint Raphael Catholic School prepared me both academically and socially for my future educational endeavors. I left Saint Raphael with a solid educational background and had no problem jumping right into the intimidating world of public high school. Saint Raphael is also where my love for volleyball and basketball began, which I continued to play through high school, and still enjoy playing to date. With these seeds planted at Saint Raphael, I was eventually able to go to my first college choice, NC State.

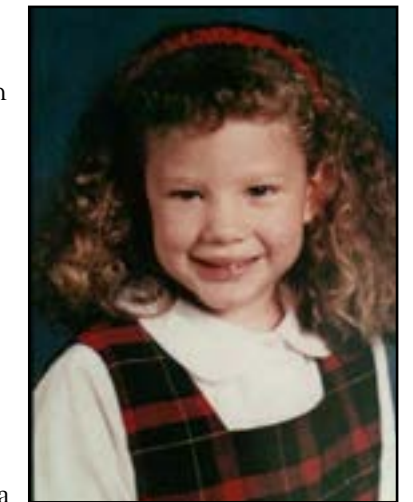
What is your most memorable moment at Saint Raphael?

One of my most memorable moments was in 7th grade when I was on the first volleyball team and we won our very first match at Saint Thomas More after a long season of learning and a little bit of struggling because none of us had ever played volleyball before. It was so exciting, and I think it was our only win that year, but it was worth it.

What else would you like our readers to know about you?

More recently, I was married in July 2014, and now live in Durham with my husband and our cat and dog.

Jessica Pritchett - Kindergarten



Photos courtesy of the Pritchett family

Teacher Spotlights:
MR. & MRS. DAPOLITO

Jake **DAPOLITO**

How long have you been teaching at Saint Raphael Catholic School?
I've been teaching at Saint Raphael for four years. The 2015-16 school year will be my fifth year.

What classes do you teach?
I teach sixth, seventh, and eighth grade social studies.

What other positions have you held at Saint Raphael?
I served as the athletic director from 2012-2015; was an assistant with the boys basketball program and an assistant with the boys lacrosse program. Currently, I am the middle school cluster head, the lead teacher for the student council, and I help coordinate the geography bee.

What do you like most about teaching at Saint Raphael?
Meeting all the wonderful students and their families. Saint Raphael attracts very good people. Working at a Catholic school has also helped me grow in my faith.

Where are you from originally?
I grew up in Clyde, New York...the center of the universe!

Where did you attend college?
I attended Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York.

What were your interests in college?
I played four years of football. It required a great deal of commitment which is why it was my main interest. Fortunately, the history department at Ithaca was excellent so my courses interested me greatly as well. When football finished my senior year, my main interest was Molly Scanlon (now Mrs. Dapolito).

What brought you to Raleigh?
Saint Raphael Catholic School! Molly and I learned of the school and its job openings through the Donabedian family, whom we met at a wedding. We applied, interviewed, and the rest is history!

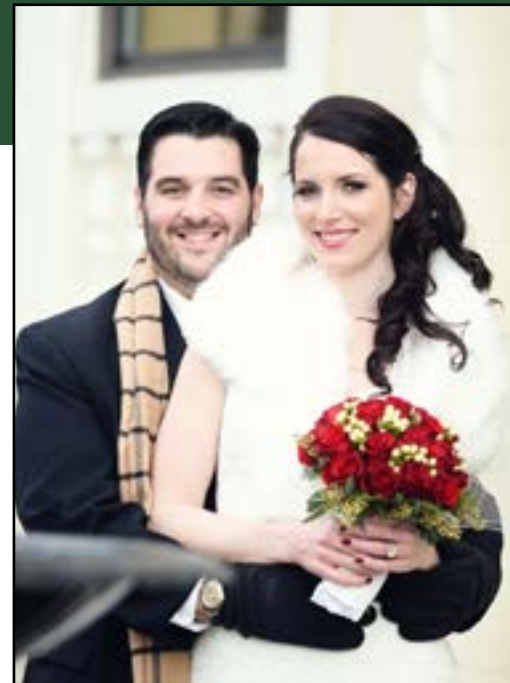


Photo courtesy of Molly and Jake Dapolito



Photo courtesy of Jake Dapolito

Molly **DAPOLITO**

How long have you been teaching at Saint Raphael Catholic School?
I completed my fourth year at Saint Raphael this past June.

What classes do you teach?
I teach third grade.

What other positions have you held at Saint Raphael?
I've coached the cross country team as well as the road runners club. I also help coordinate the annual geography bee.

What do you like most about teaching at Saint Raphael?
I value and appreciate the community feel that our school fosters. When I moved to Raleigh, it was my first year teaching, as well as living outside of New York state. My coworkers, the parents, and even the students welcomed me from the start. Throughout the years, the support and respect we all have for one another is continuous.

Where are you from originally?
I'm originally from a town outside of Syracuse, New York called Phoenix.

Where did you attend college?
I attended Ithaca College for both my undergraduate and graduate degrees.

What were your interests in college?
In college, I was on a much different career path with a business major and a concentration in marketing. My internship at the time focused on sustainable business and I was on the head committee that lead the Women in Business Network. Post-undergrad life led me to explore teaching and my decision to return to graduate school for education. I ultimately find teaching a more fulfilling profession.

What brought you to Raleigh?
My husband, Jake Dapolito, and I moved to Raleigh for our positions at Saint Raphael. We've loved getting to know this wonderful school and city.



Photo: Mary Morgan

You know you're on the right path when students are genuinely excited about the upgraded plumbing and freshly painted walls throughout the school!

These much-needed enhancements, along with a number of others detailed in this section, were made possible because parents, grandparents, alumni, and staff generously supported the second annual Ignatius Fund.

Additionally, our heartfelt gratitude goes out to our generous challenge donors, Xenia and Jim Miller, who doubled every donation from May 9 to June 30, 2015. Because of this exciting opportunity, donors enthusiastically responded in-kind.

Every dollar donated to the fund bridges the gap between tuition charged and the actual cost to educate every child. Such giving ensures that each student has the opportunity to excel and flourish in mind, body, and soul.

Thank you for your commitment to last year's Ignatius Fund and for believing in the mission and vision of the preschool and grade school. Because of you, our schools continue to reach new heights.

Ellen Guarente
Advancement Officer

Your Support of the Ignatius Fund financed the:

- launch of the new Latin program;
- attendance of two middle school English teachers at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Conference in Washington, DC for the first time;
- extensive overhaul of plumbing, including the installation of new bathroom faucets throughout the K-8 school;
- painting all hallways, stairwells, and the majority of the K-8 classrooms;
- installation of new carpeting in the second grade classrooms;
- installation of a new playground at the preschool;
- installation of child-size sinks and sensor faucets in all pre-school bathrooms.

Thank You!

K-8 School Chairs:
Kathleen & Ron Burkhart

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Marilu Thordsen-Velez
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Silvia Bryant
Patricia & Jeremy Russin
Blaire & Rod Kessler
Jennifer & Jeff Troch
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The Ignatius Fund 2014-2015

Goal: \$60,000

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Mr. Richard Mueller
Mr. Ambrose Van Vooren

Gala & Auction • November 8, 2014

Net Raised: \$33,002

Gala Chairs: Mrs. Kelly Burich, Mr. Ron Burkhart

The annual gala and auction (the second held in the same calendar year) transformed Ignatius Hall into an '80s-themed venue. Proceeds benefitted the many programs of the Home & School Association, The Athletic Boosters Club, and the school.

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Thirty-one/Jennifer Fitzsimmons

Ryan O'Connell Memorial Golf Tournament • April 20, 2015

Net Raised: \$12,500

Chairs: Kevin Haas, Cynthia Hanks, Angela & Rick Nelson, Jennifer & George Stephenson

The tournament was held at TPC Wakefield Plantation in Raleigh. The sold-out event included a field of 100 golfers. Proceeds primarily benefitted the Ryan O'Connell Memorial Scholarship Fund which provides assistance for school families experiencing a debilitating illness or death. The Home & School Association and the Athletic Boosters Club received a smaller percentage of the revenue generated.

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Financial Assistance \$48,467

Diocese of Raleigh God's Work Our Challenge

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Mr. Scott Qualls

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Miscellaneous Award \$525

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