



Summer 2007

St. Brendan's Parish School

Alumni Newsletter

Letter from the Pastor

Dear Alumni and Friends,

With this issue of the newsletter, I write to announce our upcoming 100th anniversary celebration of the Parish of St. Brendan, which will be celebrated from October 2007 through October 2008. The Parish Council has labored intensively to ensure that this celebration will be a great one.

Over the last century, St. Brendan's has been a spiritual home and refuge for thousands. Since its founding under the leadership of Fr. Dennis O'Donovan, our first pastor, St. Brendan Parish has been a shining and powerful force here in the Norwood section of the Bronx.

Many things have changed since those early days and yet some things remain constant. Men and women struggle to raise their families and provide for the physical, educational and spiritual needs of those they love. The names and faces are different, but the mission of St. Brendan's remains the same.

I invite you to join us in celebrating our centenary celebration this upcoming year. As an alumnus/a, you are an important part of this parish and we look forward to welcoming you home. In this newsletter, you will find a list of dates. Please make note of them and mark your calendars. Until then, please keep the Parish and my intentions in your prayers.

In Christ,

Fr. George Stewart

Pastor

From the Principal's Desk

Dear Friends and Alumni of St. Brendan School,

As we enter a year of celebration, the 100th anniversary of St. Brendan Parish, I am looking forward to speaking and meeting with you, our alumni.

Saint Brendan School continues to be an outstanding school. Our mission to provide quality, value-centered education is realized daily by our dedicated faculty. We believe "there is no better place" because our community works together to excel academically and spiritually. As you read the accomplishments of our students, you will realize that Saint Brendan's is the school you remember.

We hope that with the 100th Anniversary upon us, we will see and hear from you. It is through your support that we will continue St. Brendan's tradition of excellence for many generations.

See you for the Opening Mass October 21, 2007.

Gratefully,

Miss Michele Pasquale

Principal

The Year in Review

St. Brendan's School excels in many areas, with a strong, well-deserved reputation in the Norwood community. Alumni will recall the commitment to educational excellence experienced during their years here. Our pledge to serve the students who come to us, to ensure that they progress educationally, spiritually and emotionally, is still as robust as ever.

We are very proud of our student's academic success, and scores from the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, which measure individual achievement in specific content areas, confirm that we continue to provide today's children with the same quality education that you received. Our students continue to score well above the national average and the majority of our students are on the Honor Roll. Math scores are up dramatically over the past two years and we forge ahead, knowing that our students will continue to achieve academically.

The parish joined together on April 27 to witness our 42 seventh graders and 30 CCD candidates receive the sacrament of Holy Confirmation. Bishop Sullivan confirmed the children in a moving evening Mass as friends, family and teachers looked on joyfully. It is with great happiness that we witnessed our second graders receive the sacrament of First Holy Communion on May 12th. The sun shone down upon the boys and girls, bathing them in radiance as it beamed from within them, as well. Our pastor, Father Stewart, was the celebrant for this joyous ceremony.



St Brendan's teams have a long history of success in many sports, serving both boys and girls. Over one hundred students participate in the CYO program at St. Brendan's. Many of you will remember your days in CYO fondly, and will recall how the experience shaped your life. That feeling is the same for today's young athletes.

It was a great year for the Boys' Junior Varsity team. First place finishes in various tournaments spurred school spirit on to new heights. Our team qualified for the league playoffs and fought hard. The mettle shown this year will surely carry over to the upcoming season and our hopes are high for a championship. Our Midgets, the 1st to 4th grade boys team, played like true champs. They won their division, going on to Staten Island to play a Manhattan rival. They didn't come away with a win, but they are tops in our eyes. The Girls Junior Varsity team did St. Brendan's proud by exhibiting tremendous sportsmanship as they went on to the Division playoffs. "The girl's competitiveness and ability was incredible and it never wavered throughout the entire season," said Principal, Miss Pasquale.

The Great Flood at St. Brendan's

Where's Noah when you need him? New York City was struck by massive rainstorms on New Years Day 2007. In the wake of this very wet weather, St. Brendan's experienced a flood. The school was submerged under two feet of water, causing much damage, resulting in a two-day school closing.

Dave Murphy, Buildings Commissioner for the Archdiocese of NY reported, "Essentially, the flood was caused when the drains in the street became overtaxed. An exceptionally heavy rain caused the system to back up and flood the lowest point on 207th Street, which was the basement and cafeteria of the school."



City agencies had to come and clear the sewers and drains. The school's terrific maintenance crew immediately jumped into action, cleaning and sanitizing the entire flood area. A back flow preventer, called a clap valve, was installed to prevent the possibility of this ever happening again. Damage was done to the floor, which had to be replaced, new sheet rock was installed and a fresh coat of paint was put up. Now if heavy rains hit the area, St. Brendan's is sure to be safe and dry for years to come. But this repair came at a dear price. The \$10,000 cost for clean up and repairs, and the replacement of lost books and furniture was not anticipated. However, resolute staff and students came to the rescue without hesitation.

On March 21 a Dance-a-thon was held in our gymnasium to raise the necessary funds. Students solicited pledges from friends and family, who responded generously. Each child, dressed in a special dance-a-thon t-shirt, boogied and bopped the hours away. The goal of \$10,000 was achieved!

Mr. Murphy noted that the school's roof is in need of replacement in the near future, and Ms. Pasquale is looking forward to making this a reality. She said, "We know that St. Brendan's is truly blessed by what we have been able to accomplish so far. I have no doubts that the good Lord will help us in our efforts to raise funds for our additional repairs. I am grateful to everyone who's helped us throughout this ordeal."

Remembering Our Troops

An outpouring of good wishes and generosity left from the halls of our school packaged safely in 30 boxes headed for Iraq. St. Brendan's students sent notes and cards, along with personal care items, goodies and small presents to help troops pass time and make life a bit easier while serving our country proudly.

Hearing that Lieutenant John Fusco, a Bronx native and St. Brendan's alumnus, is serving in the Middle East, Ms. Pasquale challenged the school family to show support for the men and women of the Armed Forces by collecting items that would be useful to the troops. Lt. Fusco, who is also the husband of former Assistant Principal, Mary Ann Fusco, is stationed at Camp Slayer in Baghdad, Iraq. He and his unit happily received boxes loaded with items that aren't easy to acquire in their desert base such as candy, snacks, drink mixes, stationery, health and beauty items, magazines, batteries and movies. Grateful servicemen and women wrote to thank their friends at St. Brendan's for the care packages. They sent a large banner featuring a photo of the military base, covered with notes of thanks from our troops. "You guys rock! All your gifts, time and effort brighten a whole lot up for us out here," wrote PFC Bell. Iraqi and Australian contractors working alongside the Navy at Camp Slayer also expressed gratitude.

As God has blessed us at St. Brendan's, we thank Him for allowing us the opportunity to help our men and women in uniform. We ask that you join us in praying for our troops serving our country.

The Halls Are Alive, With the Sound Of Music

Education Through Music has partnered with us here at St Brendan's for a second year to ensure that every child receives excellent instruction in music at least once a week.

This program is provided by a grant help schools provide music instruction to every child. Music is taught both as a subject in its own right and as a means of supporting learning in other areas.

The Education Through Music program donated 15 guitars and a full drum kit to St. Brendan's. Upper grade students are putting those instruments to good use, and are quite adept at using the more sophisticated instruments. In fact, all of the SBS students are thriving under this program. Our progress has been so remarkable that the students of St. Brendan's performed at the May 2007 ETM Benefit in New York City along with renowned recording artist, Kenny Rankin.

Music teacher, Mr. Phil Tambakis noted, "Our children have benefited greatly from this program. They have learned to work together more effectively and this has helped them to accomplish their musical goals." He reported that the children perform at school Masses, assemblies. From time to time their talents can also be witnessed at Sunday Mass.

"Our partnership with ETM has been wonderful. The growth that our students have shown since the start of the program is remarkable. Our students have acquired a new love for music and performing," noted principal, Michele Pasquale. We hope that you will have the pleasure of seeing a live performance by our young musicians so that you, too, can realize the value of the Education Through Music program.

Hooray for Reading!



The First Grade helps to promote literacy by celebrating the 50th birthday of The Cat In The Hat.

TEACHERS WISH LIST

40 Bibles	\$11.00 ea.
Let's Find Out Big Box of Science	\$40.00
Electronic White Board	\$2,000.00
HP Photo Smart Digital Camera & Dock	\$200.00
Scholastic FX Book Collection	\$427.00
50 Classroom desks	\$129.00 ea.
Scholastic Social Studies Book Collection	\$44.00

Please consider donating any of the items mentioned to benefit our students.

Saint Brendan Parish School

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Have you moved since our alumni directory was published in 2004? Did you change jobs, get married or have children? Please send us your current information using the form below.

Name _____ Class of _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

What information would you like to share with our alumni? _____

ALUMNI CORNER

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THESE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS AS WE JOIN TOGETHER TO PUT ST. BRENDAN'S ON THE MAP FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS!

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| OCTOBER 21, 2007 | 1:00 P.M. MASS TO CELEBRATE THE BEGINNING OF THE 100 TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR |
| NOVEMBER 3, 2007 | 12:00 NOON MASS IN MEMORY OF DECEASED PARISHIONERS, ALUMNI, AND SPARKILL DOMINICAN SISTERS |
| APRIL 5, 2008 | 12:00 NOON ALUMNI MASS AND LUNCHEON HONORING THE SPARKILL DOMINICAN SISTERS' MINISTRY AT ST. BRENDAN'S |
| APRIL 26, 2008 | 2:00 P.M. INTERFAITH PRAYER SERVICE |
| MAY 16-18, 2008 | CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF ST. BRENDAN AND STREET FAIR |
| JUNE 7, 2008 | 2:00 P.M. MULTICULTURAL CONCERT AND POETRY READINGS |
| OCTOBER 24, 2008 | 100 TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DINNER DANCE, MAESTRO'S, BRONX, NY |
| OCTOBER 26, 2008 | 1:00 P.M. MASS TO CELEBRATE ST. BRENDAN'S 100 TH ANNIVERSARY |