

Aquinas High School

Principal's Newsletter

Scripture of the Month:

"Do what is right; then if men speak against you, calling you evil names, they will become ashamed of themselves for falsely accusing you when you have only done what is good."

1 Peter 3:16 TLB



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Principal's Message

Parents, it is hard to believe half of the school year is over. Seniors are just six months away from starting college and getting on with the rest of their lives. In just a couple of months we will begin course selection and registration for the 2010-2011 school year.

Semester grades went out two weeks ago. All of the students with D's or F's have met with or will meet with their guidance counselor to discuss strategies to bring their grades up. The NHS/CSF is about to have their induction ceremony for Aquinas' best and brightest.

Congratulations to the winners of our 3rd quarter Mardi Gras Money Madness fundraiser. Cruz Sanchez

won 1st prize, Sylvia Villaneda won 2nd and Marcy Moon won 3rd prize. Thank you for all of our supporters for participating in our 3rd quarter fundraiser.

Our winter sports program has come to a close. The boy's and girl's basketball teams both advanced to the second round of CIF playoffs to top off an outstanding season. The boy's basketball team was the Christian league champs for the third year in a row.

The Vice Principal is looking for interested persons to be on an adhoc committee to review and update the school's dress code. If anyone is interested, please contact the attendance office.

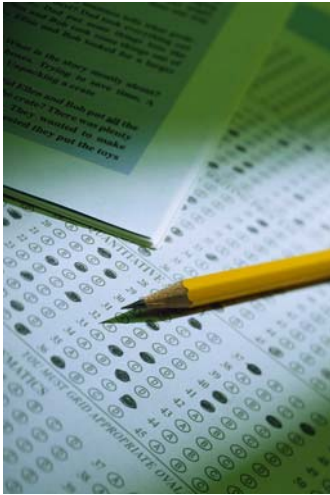
Please try to attend one religious celebration on campus this Lenten season. We offer mass every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In addition to Mass we offer Eucharistic adoration on Wednesdays at break and the Stations of the Cross Friday's at break.

A special thank you to all the parents who attended our tuition and finance roundtable on February 1. Your comments and suggestions will be helpful as we plan for next year.

Fran Herdlein
Principal



Now is the Time to Decide!



“Public school is so much cheaper, why shouldn't I just send my kids there?” This is a very popular question nowadays, and one that does make sense. Given the state of our economy it is easy why families are asking this question. Fortunately, I have an easy answer.

Obviously attending Aquinas costs more money than attending a public school, but the cost is well worth it. What can be a better investment than one in the future of your children? Many families have spent thousands of dollars sending their children to private schools through elementary and middle school, but when it comes to high school they decide to try the public school route. This is what does not make sense to me.

A child's high school years are the most formidable years in their lives. A student enters high school at the age of 13-14 and leaves at the age of 17-18. Basically, the student enters as a child and leaves as an adult. For 8 hours of the day a child is at school; surrounded by influences that can have a lasting impact on the formation of who this child will become. Parents must then ask themselves this ques-

tion, “Do I want my child surrounded by students where failure is accepted, deviant behavior bears no repercussions, and roughly 30% of the students go to college?” Or do they want their child at a school where students learn to be successful, that they will be held responsible for their actions, and where 98% of the students go on to college? I think the answer is very clear.

We understand that Aquinas is not perfect and neither are our students, but when students are held to a higher standard with higher levels of accountability they are able to achieve great things.

Over the past couple months we have administered two different placement exams to our incoming freshmen. We had a great turnout, testing nearly 100 students. This is very good considering we will be holding another test date on March 27th.

As the next school year gets closer remember to keep spreading the good word of Aquinas. It is through the parents telling of their personal accounts of the great opportunities Aquinas has provided for them and their students that Aquinas will continue to flourish.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
LOG ON TO**

**WWW.COLLEGEBOARD.COM
FOR SAT INFORMATION OR
WWW.ACTSTUDENT.ORG
FOR ACT INFORMATION.**

FINANCIAL AID:

**WWW.PIN.ED.GOV
WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV
WWW.CALGRANTS.ORG**

Senior Section: Mrs. Burton's Office

From the Guidance Corner...

Cal Grant forms are due back to me ASAP! We must have them submitted by March 2nd. Scholarships come in to my office daily. Please remind your student to come in and check out the scholarships posted on the white board in the Guidance Conference Room. Encourage your son or daughter to apply for any scholarship that they qualify for...it's free money! Keep in mind that if you are doing your own search for scholarships that you should never pay for a scholarship!

As always, I am available by email at mburton@aquinashs.net or by phone at (909-475-4194).

From the Vice Principal: Senior Ditch Days and Senior Pranks

Senior Ditch Day:

Senior Ditch days have all but been eliminated from Catholic High Schools throughout California. The legal liability is simply too great. Just as Off-Campus lunches were banished in the eighties so too were Senior Ditch Days. Many high schools define a ditch day as “when two or more senior students gather during school hours with an unexcused absence, the administration considers this a senior ditch day.”

Parents may not provide absence excuses for students who are not their own. If we have not received an absence excuse by 9:00 a.m., we will notify parents of absences by phone. At this time of the year, priority calls will go to seniors first. Remember, we are a small school. Gossip gets around all too easily. Many high school students/teens readily “come clean” when asked about their

questionable absence. We expect senior parents to cooperate with the school and to not lie or cover for their student.

Senior Prank:

Another issue of concern at this time of the year is the Senior Prank. This is not a “rite of passage,” as often believed, but something destructive and hurtful. In my 19 years here at Aquinas, I have never seen a senior prank pulled off that was not controversial and did not result in action taken by the school. Remember again, that the campus is the property of the Diocese of San Bernardino. Damage done to the campus is essentially damage done to the Diocese.

Please remind your senior of the legal liability involved with what essentially amounts to vandalism. Although a student may start off with the intent of a “harmless” senior prank, we have

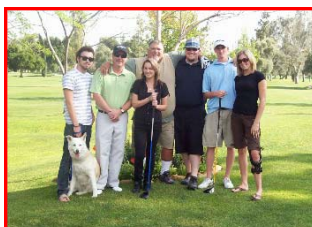
found that it often turns out to be an unfortunate incident, and although they will be very sorry after it is done, it does not change the fact that there is damage.

Aquinas High School DOES NOT condone a “Senior Ditch Day” or a “Senior Prank.” If a student participates in either, they could lose any or all of their senior privileges, up to and including walking during Graduation.

There will be a mandatory Senior Parent Meeting on April 12, 2010 at 6:30 pm.

Please arrange to have at least one parent present.

Aquinas High School 18th Annual Golf Classic



Come and join us at one of the best private golf course in the Inland Empire and support our athletic program. For more information and sponsorships, please contact Brandi Williford at 909-886-4659 ext. 282 or email her at mwilliford@aquinashs.net.

Registration, Sponsorship or donation forms available online at www.aquinashs.net.

Arrowhead Country Club Saturday, April 17, 2010 Tournament Schedule

- 1:00 p.m. Registration and Practice Range open.
- 1:30 p.m. Putting Contest
- 2:00 p.m. Shotgun Start
- 5:30 p.m. Golf Ball Opportunity Drawing
- 7:30 p.m. Dinner and Auction

Thank you to our corporate sponsor for our tournament!!!



Sports Update:



Aquinas High School

Our Revised Mission Statement : “Aquinas High School’s mission is to form through education young men and women as leaders in the light and truth of the Gospel of Jesus.”

The winter sports season has come to an end. All the teams competed extremely hard and thank God we came away with no major injuries. We did have some very good things happen this season. The boys varsity basketball team won the Christian League Championship for the 3rd consecutive year! That’s a three-peat baby!!!!!! Excellent addition to the boys ing well, the varsity girls basketball team also had an outstanding season.

They finished tied for second in the Christian League! Way to go ladies! Both teams advanced to the CIF playoffs and made it as far as the second round. The boys and girls completed a tough year on the field. Both teams played very hard all year and ran into some tough luck at times, but never gave up. Good job this season! The wrestling team finished the year at home with a tough loss to St. Margaret’s. The team competed well in both duels and

We did not have any individuals qualify for CIF this season, but look to change that next year. Good season Gentlemen! We now approach the final sports season of the school year. The spring season brings with it many high hopes and expectations. We wish all the sports teams competing in the spring the best of luck!!!!

God Bless,
Coach Ybarra

Campus Ministry Corner

Renewing the Vision: The Noble History of Catholic Education by Fr. Justin Rose

We just celebrated Catholic Schools Week (February 1-6). I admit that some years this week has made little more impression on me than the Mass on the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas which happens somewhere near the week.

Perhaps the recent struggle to keep Catholic grade schools open in this Diocese has made me more mindful of the great value of Catholic Schools. In my homily on the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas (January 28), I spoke about the history of Catholic Education in America. My preparation for that sermon taught me a lot.

I had forgotten what a painful beginning Catholics had in America. In the late 1800’s Catholics immigrants from Ireland, Germany, Italy, Hungary (not to mention the Melkite and Maronite Catholics from the Middle East), did not find a warm reception in the United States. Catholics were sometimes openly discriminated against. I had forgotten the outrages of the “Know Nothing Party,” who burned convents and shot nuns as they fled. Growing up in Maine, I had forgotten about Jesuit father John Bapst who was tarred and feathered and rode out on the rail to the edge of town. His work on the coast of Maine with the Irish immigrants and the Pessamaquoddy natives angered the local Know Nothings.

Ask me sometime to tell you the story of how the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, (California) took on the Ku Klux Klan and built two hospitals.

It is hard to believe that public schools would actually *target* Catholics for discrimination, but that actually happened. Catholic students were often ridiculed and told that their religion was wrong in the public schools.

In the 1850’s there was one Catholic Diocese in America-in Baltimore, MD. The Council of Baltimore not only produced the famous catechism to standardize religious education, but also called upon each parish to open schools to educate the children of poor immigrants. These pastors knew the dire need for solid formation in the Catholic Faith if the next generation of Catholics were ever to become priests, nuns or monks or faithful married couples. (cont. pg.5 “Renewing”)

“Renewing” From page 4

By the early 1900’s there were hundreds of Catholic grade schools and high schools. Tuition costs were low because religious orders of nuns, brothers or priests staffed these schools. Not requiring full salaries kept Catholic education affordable for the immigrant poor whom they served.

The last 50 years have not been kind to Catholic education. Vatican II, which has done so much good in the Church, was received in this country with a certain amount of giddy license. Over the years, I heard that “clown Masses” and top 40 music played in Church were all a result of “Vatican II.” Today, having read the documents of the council, I know that these things were more a result of the zany 70’s than of the teaching of the Vatican Council



Daily Mass Schedule:
Monday, Wednesday,
Fridays:
7:15 a.m. in the chapel.

In recent years, the American Church has begun to regain some equilibrium and now looks around to see the result of over 40 years of relative neglect of its Catholic Schools. Where we once had scores of dedicated nuns, brothers or priests staffing our schools, now we have well qualified lay people. Since these folks do not all live in the same residence and eat at the same table every night, they require a wage. Having to pay for excellent teachers means that tuition must rise. Research has proven that we are still the most affordable “private” schools around. In fact, at Aquinas, our tuition is over \$3,000 lower than the next most affordable Christian school in Southern California. While I am very proud that our schools have endeavored to keep costs as affordable to families as possible, nevertheless it is lamentable that we cannot continue to realize the vision of gathering anyone who wants a Catholic education.

Another casualty of shrinking presence of clergy and religious on our campuses is a loss of common vision and purpose. This also is something, in my opinion, that American Catholics are just realizing about their schools. In grade school (in Portland, Maine), I had the Sisters of Mercy. They had a common vision about education because they were formed in it, reminded of it daily in their common prayer and at the dinner table conversation every night. I attended a Jesuit high school. Any Jesuit brat will tell you that you come out of their schools with a Catholic vision of justice and peace. They live it, breathe it and are formed in it from their novitiate. St. Anselm College in Manchester, NH, was a “Benedictine Catholic college in the liberal arts tradition”...even after 20 years, I can still remember it. The venerable Anselmian and Benedictine tradition of “faith seeking understanding,” formed me.

What is our common vision at Aquinas? What do we live, breathe, believe to our core? Over the past few years, our faculty has considered these questions carefully. Because we did not attend a common novitiate and because we do not eat dinner together every night with a superior to correct us and because we did not join the same order, how do we establish that *ethos* that has marked Catholic education?

I think that our Mission Statement says it all: “Forming young men and women through education as leaders in the light and truth of the Gospel.” I do not usually like mission statements because folks rarely follow them. I believe that most of our faculty passionately believes our Mission statement, however. Our vicariate program has really helped to form values and to make connections between class work and lived experience. Our faculty look for “teachable moments” to form our kids in the Good News of Jesus. Everything we do, daily prayer, morning and monthly liturgy, retreats, classes, sports, Student Government...everything has come to be oriented toward one goal-formation.

I think that the bishops at the Council of Baltimore would approve. They would challenge us to find ways to make a Catholic education affordable for everyone; a task we continue to work at. They would, however, bless our efforts to form new generations of Catholics...and now, new generations of students from every walk of life...in values that will be life-giving. Vocations to ministry, strong families, moral choices in the workplace; these are all the fruits of a Catholic education. May we continue in the noble tradition and vision of the Baltimore Council to face the challenges of this generation with the light and truth of the Gospel.

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Lux et Veritas

**We're on the Web:
www.aquinashs.net**

Upcoming Events:

- 2/27 Campus Clean Up Day
- 3/5 Minimum Day
- 3/6 Campus Clean Up Day
- 3/7-10 WASC Visitation
- 3/12 No School
- 3/24 Making Your College Search Count
- 3/27 Freshmen Placement Exam
- 3/31 Cesar Chavez Day—No School
- 4/1 Holy Thursday—Easter break begins

Every Tuesday and Thursday is recycling
Please check the website for the latest information.

Office Hours:

The Aquinas Main Office is open Monday through Friday from 7:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please try to make your appointments during the normal business hours.

Our website is continually updated. We ask that parents use this important means of communication.

Non Discrimination Policy:

Aquinas High School admits students of any sex, race, color, religion, creed, national and ethnic origin to all rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to all students of the school. Aquinas High School does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic or other administered programs.