



May 8, 2009

Dear St. Francis Xavier Families,

This has been an amazing week. So many marvelous things are happening, and we are very grateful to everyone for your support. Again we are touched by the outpouring of gratitude expressed by the families and friends of St. Francis Xavier School during Teacher Appreciation Week, and would be remiss if we did not begin this letter with a huge thank you from the entire faculty and staff. We are truly grateful for your generosity, thoughtfulness and creativity. Your expressions of appreciation warmed our hearts, and it is difficult to convey how much we value your ongoing support. It is such a blessing to be part of such a strong and vibrant community.

Friday, May 1 was the 7th Annual Calcutta. It was the most successful yet, and we are hearing so many positive things about this event. We want to thank everyone who contributed so much time and effort.

Sunday, May 3 was a very special occasion – **First Communion** for our Second Grade students. The Mass was beautiful, Monsignor gave a touching and meaningful homily, and our students did an exceptional job. Congratulations to all our students who received Jesus in the Eucharist for the first time. We thank their families for laying the foundation of Faith for them and for continuing their guidance and education. Thank you also to Sue Catozzi, Jeff Badillo and Diane Potvin for coordinating this special day, and to the families of the first grade students for lovely reception after Mass. The second grade class also wants to express their gratitude to the first grade families for all their support and for coordinating the celebration after Mass.

On Tuesday we held our annual **May Crowning Ceremony**. Following the Mass, the whole school community led by Monsignor Lavalley and the Second Graders gathered around Our Lady's statue for the crowning and the singing of the traditional hymn "Hail, Holy Queen". After the crowning, the community returned to the church to pray the rosary. We are pleased that so many families, friends, and parishioners were able to join us.

Tuesday also was our annual **Cinco de Mayo celebration**. The rain held off, and the students did a marvelous job. We have some remarkable dancers, speakers, and actors. Thank you to Senora Sonia Rivadeneira for all your hard work, and thanks to the teachers, families, and friends who help support this truly enjoyable event.

The annual **St. Francis Xavier Stampede** is coming Saturday, May 9. This fun fundraiser features a .2 mile loop around the school and playground, a 2.5 K race and a 5 K race. The .2 mile loop is geared for younger students and is free. The other races are \$5 for children age 14 and younger and \$10 for those 15 and over. (GMAA members subtract \$1). This year we are delighted to be sponsored by Fleet Feet Sports - each participant will receive a \$10 gift certificate to the Fleet Feet Sports store in Essex! There are also prizes for top finishers. For complete information about the Stampede and to get additional registration forms, please click on the link at the SFX website: www.sfxwinooski.org.

We have 84 students signed up to participate in the First Annual **St. Francis Xavier Spelling Bee**

(grades 1 – 8) which will be held on Tuesday, May 26. Definite times for specific grades will be announced shortly. This is within our school and next year we hope to be able to participate in the statewide spelling bee through the Vermont Principals' Association. Thank you to Ms. Pell for getting the ball rolling and coordinating this event.

Library News: “Poetry Guy” Coming Thursday, May 21

Young writers at St. Francis Xavier will be fastening their seatbelts, loosening up their “laughers,” and sharpening their poetic pencils in anticipation of a visit by children’s poet Ted Scheu (pronounced “shy”) on Thursday, May 21. Scheu will present some of his own work in an opening assembly for students and teachers, and then conduct three writing workshops with grades 1-7. Scheu lives in Middlebury and travels all over the country as a visiting author; he is visiting St. Francis Xavier thanks to a generous grant from the Amy E. Tarrant Foundation.

Ted Scheu’s own poems, published in over a dozen anthologies, spring from his childhood memories, as well as from his experience as an elementary teacher and parent. “I try to capture in my poems the silliness and sadness, the worries and the wonders of being a kid—whether it’s school life, or the surprising things that happen at home and with friends,” says Scheu. “My goal in my own writing, and especially in my teaching, is to help kids find their own voices. Poetry is the best way I’ve found to get kids revved up about their writing. Its simple format and easy emotional connections seem to open hearts and get pencils dancing.”

Information on purchasing Scheu’s books was sent home last Friday to families; order forms are due to your child’s teacher by Friday, May 8. (Checks only, made payable to St. Francis Xavier; the school will receive 20% of sales.) Mr. Scheu will be available to autograph books at the end of his visit day.

We are pleased to announce the **St. Francis Xavier School Teacher of the Year, and St. Francis Xavier School Staff Person of the Year: Ms. Beth Wood** was selected as **Teacher of the Year** for the outstanding work she does in Kindergarten, for her ongoing support of her colleagues, and for being available to help our school community. Thank you, Ms. Wood for your positive, nurturing attitude and your commitment to our students and families. **Mrs. Nancy Ryan** was selected as **Staff Person of the Year** for her tireless devotion to our school community. She is always available to help with whatever needs to be done. She is truly the heart of St. Francis Xavier School – the first face and voice that greets families, students, friends, and visitors. She can do countless tasks at once, and still remain calm and positive. While Miss Nancy often remains an “unsung hero” we would like to take this opportunity to sing her praises. Thank you, Miss Nancy, for your dedication to our school community. We appreciate all you do! On Monday, both Ms. Wood and Miss Nancy attended a Mass celebrated by Bishop Matano and honored at a luncheon following the Mass.

The St. Francis Xavier Girls’ Softball Team WILL NOT practice on Saturday, May 9th. Softball practice will resume on Monday May 11th. Our softball and baseball schedules, as they now stand, are on our website. If you would like more information about our softball program please contact Coach Chris Horton at 865-2777 or speak with Mr. Gaudette. For information about baseball, please contact Coach Greg Clairmont at 878-5699.

Next week we will be conducting our Terra Nova Testing throughout the week. We know it is a very busy time of year. Please help your students do their best by reminding them to get enough sleep and eat good, healthy meals and snacks.

On Monday, **May 18th** there will be a **Convocation to Celebrate Catholic Schools** at St. Michael's College. Early Education students (grades PK and K) will not be attending. The day will begin with a Mass celebrated by Bishop Matano at 10:30. Then there will be lunch, and all students will need to bring bagged lunch, followed by a presentation. Sr. Clare Fitzgerald will be speaking about the value of Catholic Schools to Priests, Seminarians, and any parents who would like to attend. Our middle school faculty and students will hear John Halligan, and elementary students and faculty will see Kids on the Block Vermont. All parents are welcome to join us – if you would like to attend, please let your student(s) teacher(s) know.

Planning is in full swing for the **Summer Extension Program**. If you are interested in having your student(s) attend the program, please **sign up outside of the Extension Program classroom**. It is important to know if you are planning to attend so that we may staff appropriately.

Most families have submitted their re-enrollment paperwork, and we thank everyone who submitted their forms and registration fee. **It helps with our planning for next year**. If you have not yet submitted your forms **please return your completed registration forms for 2009-2010 as soon as possible**. If you have questions or need more information, please let us know.

Do you know of a family that might be interested in learning more about St. Francis Xavier School? Please have them contact us. We would be happy to schedule a visit at their convenience. We have seen a lot of recent interest in the school, and we are meeting with a lot of families. Thanks to all our parents for spreading the word. We are planning an Open House on Friday, May 29. We will be available to speak with interested families, answer questions, and show them around our school. There will be light refreshments available.

Cub Scout Corner

Just wanted to remind our scouts of the upcoming Land of Champs Spring Camporee scheduled for the weekend of May 8th-10th. Cub Scouts are invited to attend the Saturday activities and camp out Friday evening. Any scouts interested, please check with your Den leader. Also for those interested, the Family Camporee at Camp Sunrise will be the weekend of May 30th. Please see your Den leader or the Green Mountain Council website (<http://www.scoutingvermont.org/>) for more information.

Our next meetings to be held at school at 6 PM, are scheduled as follows:

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| Monday, May 11th | Den Meetings |
| Thursday, May 28th | Pack Meeting |
| Monday, June 8 th | Den Meetings |

It's not too late if there are any other interested families! As always you can check for the latest information on our website at <http://www.bsapack658.org/>.

Boy Scout Corner

To learn more about our Boy Scout Troop, please see us at: www.bsatroop658.org

Thank you again to all our students, faculty, families and friends who work so hard to make our school and our school community such a special place. Have a wonderful weekend.

Mrs. Maria Horton

Mr. Jesse Gaudette

Mrs. Kathryn LaVigne