

Spirited Perspectives

A Newsletter for Blessed Trinity Catholic School Alumni & Stakeholders



← Blessed Trinity Catholic School held a White-Out in January for Jack Jablonski, the injured hockey player from Benilde St. Margaret. They also prayed for him and collected donations to send to his family. Pictured: Nicollet Campus students (grades 4-8)

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS' WEEK STUDENT ESSAYS

from current Blessed Trinity students

Blessed Trinity is proud to share excerpts from student essays written during Catholic Schools' Week. The words truly demonstrate what Blessed Trinity offers—that our mission to be clearly Catholic, intentionally inclusive and academically excellent affects students' lives, hopes, values, priorities and futures—and that support for Blessed Trinity has lasting, even eternal, implications.

- * Each day is a new adventure with teachers, friends, and God.
- * We [Blessed Trinity students] all know God is always going to be with us. Knowing that while you grow up truly makes a difference in your life.
- * What Blessed Trinity means to me is that I get to grow closer to God every day.
- * My growth at Blessed Trinity got me closer to God.
- * We all grow in faith individually, but when we all come together it feels extraordinary.
- * Our religion teacher encourages us to believe in miracles. She says prayers can provide hope, kindness, compassion, and love for another person.
- * When you learn about the Good News, you want to spread it, and that makes you and the world better.
- * We grow in our faith as a family and are not afraid to ask questions about God or to explain things to our friends.
- * I love my school for many reasons, academics, service, faith, but most of all the people. The people who encourage me to do better, who are by my side and who care for me.

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WITH YOUR HELP

by Terry Braun, Blessed Trinity Development Director

Parishioners, alumni, parents of alumni and friends of Blessed Trinity have always been the backbone of the consolidated parish school of St. Richard's, St. Peter's and Assumption. Year after year you've answered the call to help us provide a Catholic education to any family, no matter their financial situation. In the fall we announced our annual matching gift challenge for tuition assistance. You outdid yourselves! Before the close of 2011 all \$20,000 was matched! That's right, your generosity provided \$40,000 in tuition assistance at Blessed Trinity. WOW!

Tuition Assistance is Assistance for all Families

I'm often asked why donors choose to give their money toward tuition assistance. A gift of tuition assistance is a gift for all families. Tuition assistance funds allow us to more fully live out our mission to be intentionally inclusive. Tuition assistance is given to any family that demonstrates a need. This money eases the burden on the family. In a very personal way these funds change the life of the student and family. But the gift doesn't stop there. These same funds touch every student in the school by bridging the gap between the tuition parents pay and the true cost of education. Very few families don't receive some sort of financial assistance, the greatest being our generous discount for parishioners of one of our three sponsoring parishes.

How is Tuition Assistance Determined?

Tuition assistance is available for every family that demonstrates need. The circumstances that qualify a family for financial assistance vary from family to family. That is why Blessed Trinity uses a third party service to help determine not only a family's need but also their propensity to give. This service is called TADS. TADS helps by giving our principal, Patrick O'Keefe, a family's true financial summary. The system compares over 140 different points to help determine each family's need and what sacrifice they are able to make for a Catholic education. No family is turned away from Blessed Trinity. It is our sincere wish to make a Catholic education at Blessed Trinity available to all who desire it.



Blessed Trinity is devoted to wholly educating our children to their greatest potential as images of God.

Time to Fill Our Classrooms!

The most aspiring goal of our school community and our three parishes is to fill our classrooms. This is our goal because we want the best for our kids in Richfield, in our parishes and our community. At Blessed Trinity we provide academic rigor and better educational outcomes by developing the minds, hearts and souls of our children in a faith-centered environment. It's my job as Development Director to keep increasing the amount of scholarship dollars available. It is the job of everyone in our community to invite their friends and acquaintances to check out our school. It is the opportunity of a lifetime. We want you to help us share it with all.

Will You Brag about Blessed Trinity?

You can talk about Blessed Trinity anywhere—at a sporting event, a birthday party, the grocery store, with family and friends.

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Every Blessed Trinity fourth grader created an original piece of artwork as part of their study of Peru. Mrs. Kalbfell sewed the artwork together to make a lovely quilt, which was auctioned at the annual Sno*Ball Dance in January. Father Charles McCarthy, pastor at the Church of the Assumption, won the bid and the quilt is currently on display in the narthex of the church!

LET'S HEAR IT FROM ALUMNI!

interviews featuring Mike & Corey Fitzgerald and their parents, Sean & Nancy

In the second of our ongoing series of alumni interviews, we had the pleasure of interviewing the Fitzgerald family—Sean, Nancy, Mike and Corey.

Mike Fitzgerald was part of the first kindergarten class to graduate after the consolidation of the three Richfield Catholic grade schools—Assumption, St. Peter's and St. Richard's. He graduated Blessed Trinity in 2003. His brother, Corey Fitzgerald, also attended BT from kindergarten through grade 8 and graduated in 2006. Mike and Corey's parents, Sean and Nancy Fitzgerald, chose Blessed Trinity for their sons because they wanted a faith-based education in a smaller school. "It was familiar to Mike and Corey and it was also our parish."

Because grade school is such a formative time in a person's life, we asked Mike and Corey what they remember most about their time at Blessed Trinity. Corey told us, "What I learned at Blessed Trinity will stay with me forever. The atmosphere in the classroom helped to push everyone to do his or her personal best while still making sure that no one was left behind." Mike's comments included his clear admiration for Blessed Trinity's Educator Emeritus, Mrs. Jo Culnane, "I have a lot of great memories from Blessed Trinity. I was lucky enough to have Mrs. Culnane as a teacher in eighth grade. I can say with confidence that she is the best teacher I have ever had! I learned so many things from Mrs. Culnane that go beyond the classroom and there are tips and tools of hers that I still use today."

As *Spirited Perspectives'* readers know, academic excellence remains one of three main tenets of Blessed Trinity's mission. Mike shared his experiences of high academic standards at Blessed Trinity. "There were high expectations from my teachers to do well and that motivated me to study and complete assignments on time. I especially thought the Science Fair projects were a lot of fun and they provided me with the opportu-

nity to learn how to gather information and present well. At Blessed Trinity we did a lot of projects, which often times required research. Learning how to research at a young age was a major benefit as it allowed me to enter high school with important skills. It is safe to say that I felt well-prepared throughout high school because of what I had learned and accomplished at Blessed Trinity."

For a parent's point of view, Nancy told us, "Expectations were definitely high at Blessed Trinity and our kids always wanted to do their best, so they pushed themselves. They wanted to get good grades and make the honor roll every trimester. They were definitely challenged and felt good about their successes."

"The experience at Blessed Trinity is incomparable to any other school. Teachers and staff prepare students for high school and beyond through academic excellence and important life lessons."

When it came time for Sean and Nancy to decide where to send their sons after Blessed Trinity, it was simple. "We knew they would be prepared well enough no matter where they went to high school."

After graduating from Blessed Trinity, Mike began his high school career at Academy of Holy Angels and then transferred to Richfield High School his sophomore year. He told us, "The math and English courses that I took at Holy Angels my freshmen year were basically review thanks to Blessed Trinity." BT's assigned reading, like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, gave him "an advantage when it came time to discuss the books." Like his brother, Corey was "able to take all of the honors and AP classes at Richfield High School because of what I learned at Blessed Trinity. BT helped me be ahead of the game in all my classes."

Knowing that Blessed Trinity prepared Mike and Corey well academically, we wondered how else BT contributed to a successful and fulfilling experience in high school and college. Nancy and Sean told *Spirited Perspectives*, "We often heard from teachers and coaches that they were good leaders and well liked by their

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Blessed Trinity is clearly Catholic, intentionally inclusive, and academically excellent.



LET'S HEAR IT FROM ALUMNI

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peers. We believe that because of their Catholic education, they learned to be especially caring and compassionate toward others, for which we are very proud! It is also important to note that even if your child will not be attending a Catholic high school or college, a Catholic grade school education is well worth the investment. It will set the ground work for higher education and the life experiences that will come later. And Blessed Trinity is the perfect place to start!"

When asked how Blessed Trinity will continue to impact her sons' lives, Nancy said, "They remember all the values and well-rounded experiences they had at Blessed Trinity and we know they will keep that in mind when choosing a school for their kids one day. They have many happy memories of Blessed Trinity and will often reminisce about them when we come to Mass together on Sundays."

Nancy has remained active at Blessed Trinity. She shared Sean's and her past involvement by telling us, "We were very active as volunteers when our kids were in school. Some of the ways we volunteered were by chaperoning field trips, serving school lunch, monitoring the playground, sewing costumes for school plays, helping with fundraisers, organizing and helping with eighth grade graduation and events, and coaching football and basketball. The best part of being so involved is that you can share the experiences that your kids are going through and see all the positive things happening in their lives."

At the end of our interviews, Mike summed up his thoughts about Blessed Trinity, "The experience at Blessed Trinity is incomparable to any other school. Teachers and staff prepare students for high school and beyond through academic excellence and important life lessons. Blessed Trinity really is worth the investment of the community's time, talent, and treasure."

Our next *Spirited Perspectives'* alumni interviews article will focus on Intentional Inclusiveness. Don't miss firsthand accounts from students, parents and teachers of why opening the doors at Blessed Trinity to every family who desires a Catholic education has been a blessing from God to us all!

WITH YOUR HELP *by Terry Braun*

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What Should I Say?

Share your experience about Blessed Trinity or any of the three Richfield Catholic grade schools that preceded it. Share the story of a graduate you know. Suggest they contact Blessed Trinity for a tour.

What Else Can I Do?

Ask an interested family to call me (Terry Braun at 612-869-5200) and we will take it from there. We will send them a note and give them a call. We will invite them to an upcoming event and to come in and tour the school. We will treat them as our friends and our family.

STUDENT ESSAYS

(continued from page 1)

- * We care, love, and pray. It is like we are one big family. Blessed Trinity takes you in and helps you grow in the best ways you can.
- * The students at our school are kind. We hold open doors, pick up peoples' dropped objects, and many more kindnesses. It is like a reflex. You see someone who needs help, and you help them.
- * At Blessed Trinity we all grow in faith. Every Wednesday our school gathers together to celebrate the Mass. We all come together to express the one thing we all have in common, our love for God. We have daily religion class where we share our beliefs and thoughts on the scriptures and God's word. It is a wonderful thing when our class openly talks about our love of God and shares in it together.
- * I am positive this school will keep on growing with great students and staff. As a student I am proud to say Blessed Trinity is my school and it is truly academically excellent, intentionally inclusive, and clearly Catholic!





**Clearly
Catholic**

**Intentionally
Inclusive**

**Academically
Excellent**

FRIENDS OF BLESSED TRINITY!

Jim & Laurie Amell
 Greg & Keri Amundson
 Assumption's Council of Catholic Women
 Merlin & Dorothy Barlament
 James & Verdella Borrell
 Rita Boulay
 Arthur & Margaret Bourgeault
 John & Kate Boyle
 Colleen Smock Trust
 Dan & Theresa De Grace
 Fr. Jerry Dvorak
 Don & Joan Elsen
 John Friel
 Mary Gagne
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 William Reichert
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Richard Sable
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 Marcia Shaw
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 Nancy Zander
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BLESSED TRINITY DONATION FORM

I want my donation to benefit: Tuition assistance for all families Other: _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

My/Our Gift is \$ _____

Payment enclosed (check payable to Blessed Trinity)

Bill my credit card: Visa Mastercard

Card number: _____ Expiration date: _____

3-digit V-Code (found on back of card): _____ Signature: _____

Mail To:

Blessed Trinity Catholic School; Attention: Terry Braun; 6720 Nicollet Avenue South; Richfield, MN 55423

Alumni

IN THE NEWS

Robert Frerich (class of 2008)

Accepted into three Scholars medical programs: University of Notre Dame Scholars for medicine and science, Yale University for medical engineering, and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, where he was awarded the "Golden Stethoscope" as the best student in a program of 200 scholars from around the world. He was interviewed for college by Georgetown and Stanford!

Danielle Mendez (class of 2008)

Honored as First Team All-State senior goalkeeper for the girls' soccer team at Academy of Holy Angels, this captain and three year starter was the top rated Class A goalkeeper coming out of the Minnesota Conference!

Bridget Schoffman (class of 2011)

Bridget was honored as First Team All-State freshman midfielder for the girls' soccer team at Academy of Holy Angels. It is somewhat unusual for a freshman to be selected, which is indicative of her amazing talent!

Sam Keis (class of 2009)

The starting quarterback at Academy of Holy Angels in his junior year, he was named "Player of the Week" by Minnesota Sports Online/Preps in October!

SEND NEWS ABOUT ALUMNI TO E-NEWS@BTCSMN.ORG

DRAWING WINNER!

Thanks to all who entered our *Spirited Perspectives*' drawing for \$100 cash! By sharing email addresses with us, you've helped reduce costs. By liking Blessed Trinity's Facebook page, we get to share with you special achievements as they happen. There were many entries to the drawing and the winners are **John & Kate Boyle!** Congratulations!

If you enjoy receiving this newsletter but would prefer that it landed in your Inbox only, just let us know. Send an email to melissa@btcsmn.org.



Penn Campus—PreK-Grade 3

7540 Penn Avenue South
Richfield, Minnesota 55423
612-866-6906

Nicollet Campus—Grades 4-8

6720 Nicollet Avenue South
Richfield, Minnesota 55423
612-869-5200

www.btcsmn.org

Go Tigers!



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Use an iPhone or Android to scan the code below to make a financial donation to Blessed Trinity!



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Class. Contribute. Change Your World.



**Clearly
Catholic**

**Intentionally
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