

# Spirited Perspectives



Fall 2011

←  
*Blessed Trinity students at the Marathon kick-off on September 12, 2011.*

## PRINCIPLED THOUGHTS

*by Patrick O'Keefe, Principal*

She bounced through the doors. Pressed and ready, she was returning to her school. Eyes filled with the excitement, the joy and the promise of a new school year, she made the small gesture that speaks volumes about our community and our school. She noticed the new boy standing in the doorway and quietly, but genuinely, said, "Welcome to our school." At that point it was my distinct pleasure to return her welcome and wish her well on the first day of kindergarten.

With a rich tradition of Catholic education in Richfield, drawing upon the foundations of our three parishes, I have found an amazing community of educators, families, students and supporters. The great strength of this school continues to be the foundation of community that permeates our lives and the education provided to our young learners. I have

lived and witnessed countless examples of this community welcoming those who wish to join this challenge, to wholly educate each person to their greatest potential as images of God.

Built out of the tradition of Assumption, St. Peter's, and St. Richard's, Blessed Trinity carries the torch of education through and within our faith. Our Catholic community calls together those who value strong academic foundation in a Christ centered, Catholic environment. We are blessed to enjoy the growing diversity of our Richfield community as students from all backgrounds gather to learn, play, and pray together, just as children for Richfield have enjoyed for over 90 years.

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Blessed Trinity's Penn Campus will host special tours Tuesday, October 25th, at 8:00am and

## A MEMORY OF MRS. CULNANE

by Father Kermit Holl, OSC, St. Peter's School, Class of 1977

Besides my getting to be a first-time "star" in our eighth-grade production of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" (guess which part I played—and it wasn't the chocolate factory), I have a much more formative memory about that which Mrs. Culnane taught me.

As I recall, within the first two weeks of the school year, Mrs. Culnane assigned us three "themes" to compose in our English workbooks on topics that she had outlined. "Easy enough," I thought, and I dutifully composed them, each a

few sentences in length, and all fitting on one page. I imagine that this was a project that took me an easy fifteen minutes; it hadn't cost me much effort. Nonetheless, I was sure that my work would be "good enough."

However, when the "theme" workbook was returned, Mrs. Culnane had written simply at the top of my page, "Kermit, spend some time on these themes." Obviously, this was a most surprising comment to me, for I still remember it vividly. It was in red ink, and I was a bit taken aback as to what it was to



Mrs. Jo Culnane

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

### Kelsey Metz

Kelsey Metz (Blessed Trinity graduate of 2007) was honored with the Richfield Athena Award at a banquet on June 20, 2011, naming her the most outstanding female athlete at Richfield High School that school year. Kelsey was All-Classic Suburban Conference four times in gymnastics and three times in diving. As a senior she placed fourth in diving at the state meet. Kelsey was also a 4.0 student, people's editor of the yearbook and a Special Olympics volunteer.

### Hannah Gallucci

Hannah Gallucci (Blessed Trinity class of 2008) was one of 32 students from around the country selected to participate in the Economics for Leaders program conducted at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, on July 10-17, 2011. All of the students who were accepted had demonstrated excellent leader-

ship potential. During the weeklong program, Hannah attained an understanding of economic reasoning principals and how to employ those concepts for successful and effective leadership.

### Katelyn Caron & Miranda Rich

Katelyn Caron and Miranda Rich (both from the class of 2008) were named Commended Students in the 2011 National Merit Scholarship Program. The designation as Commended Student means that they scored in the top five percent of the 1,500,000 juniors who entered Merit Scholarship competition by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

### Congratulations to all four!

Please send news about alumni to [e-news@btcsmn.org](mailto:e-news@btcsmn.org) anytime.

*Alumni*  
IN THE NEWS



## SITTING DOWN WITH AN ALUM *(first in a series of interviews)*

by Sharon Warmka

### Tell our readers about your relationship to Blessed Trinity.

I was a student at St. Richard's for first grade and moved to St. Peter's for second through eighth grade. My husband is a graduate of Assumption. I started my teaching career at Assumption before the consolidation and was hired to be a first grade teacher in the consolidation. I am back for a second time to Blessed Trinity as a teacher after being home with my children for eight years.

### Blessed Trinity (in conjunction with Assumption, St. Richard's and St. Peter's) has a rich tradition as Richfield's Catholic grade school. What impact do you believe Blessed Trinity has had on the community of Richfield?

I think Blessed Trinity offers a well-rounded, faith-filled option for a quality education in Richfield.

### Are you currently active at Blessed Trinity?

Currently I am teaching kindergarten for Blessed Trinity. I have also taught first grade, gym and second grade reading and math.

### It is Blessed Trinity's mission to be clearly Catholic. Has that been revealed to you? How?

With the ability to actually teach our students about the Catholic faith, the values I grew up learning are reinforced and reiterated on a daily basis.

### Blessed Trinity strives to be intentionally inclusive. Have you seen this inclusivity played out? How?

The fact that we have students of many races, varied religions, wide ranging economic backgrounds and a large geographic area clearly demonstrates how inclusive we have become.

### What has been your experience with Blessed Trinity's excellence in academics?

As a student, I went on to be successful at Academy of Holy Angels and Blessed Trinity has continued the tradition of preparing students to move on to higher education. As a teacher I have seen differentiation and other strategies used in the classroom to ensure that all students are learning to the best of their abilities.

### Tell our readers why you think Blessed Trinity is worth the investment of your time, talent, and/or treasure.

We do an excellent job here at Blessed Trinity. The people who are on the teaching staff could make significantly more teaching in public schools. Instead, we have CHOSEN to stay in Catholic schools and fulfill our vocations.



Blessed Trinity's Marathon Day was October 7th. What a great day! Over 400 lunches were made

for hungry children. There was a fun surprise in the priest competition (Assumption won!). Our parishes and streets were cleaned. Buddies were together. We ended the school day in prayer. It doesn't get better. Special thanks to Theresa De Grace and her crew of volunteers. Go Tigers!

Thank You  
BT DONORS

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Pax Christi Catholic Community  
Bob Hall

Every donation counts!

We are grateful to all our donors, including this latest list of "Friends of Blessed Trinity!"



## PRINCIPLED THOUGHTS

*(continued from page 1)*

In these challenging times, we continue to be grateful for the many sacrifices necessary to make Catholic education a reality. More than ever, with over half our students receiving financial support of some kind, we are grateful to the many works of generosity that sustain our programs. Through the prayerful support of so many, we are able to continue offering academically excellent instruction and challenge for the next generation of committed, Christ-centered learners.

Though our grand story is rooted in the rich tradition spanning decades of Catholic education, it genuinely begins and ends in the small moments of each day. We are truly blessed to have a vibrant, supportive Catholic community that welcomes each family and each individual to join in the celebration of learning and life at Blessed Trinity. I am honored to join and serve this community. Thank you for all that you do to support and promote Blessed Trinity Catholic School.

**May God bless you.**



**Preschool through Grade 8**

**Penn Campus**

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

**Nicollet Campus**

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

**[www.btcsmn.org](http://www.btcsmn.org)**

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## A MEMORY OF MRS. CULNANE

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mean. Spend some time on these themes? Wasn't this just homework to be completed? Was the exercise to have been something more than a mere jotted idea within a rushed paragraph? I was perplexed. "Spend some time on these themes"—just what was my young mind missing about the importance of this assignment?

Thirty-four years later now, my vocation is that of a Crosier priest. As such, I'm to spend my life trying to discern and articulate deeper things, mysterious things, and complicated things—godly things. To be useful in preaching, I must be articulate in thought. To be articulate in thought, I must be invested in thinking and pondering. Thus, in all of my reading and writing and communication, I must be willing to "spend some time" on words and language and ideas and their presentation to the world.

In retrospect, I see that Mrs. Culnane opened my mind to the possibility of depth. She caught my attention by gently indicating that a growing mind cannot simply reside in the expedient or obvious. She taught me that thoughts and words matter, first regarding my own engagement with the world and its experiences, and still today with our shared engagement searching through mystery for the face of God.

Mrs. Culnane caught my attention towards what I had been missing in life's pursuits by her one simple phrase and ever after I seem to have spent a lot of time in its pondering.

**Thank you, Mrs. Culnane!**

attendance by calling 612-866-6906 or going to [www.btcsmn.org/regpenntour.html](http://www.btcsmn.org/regpenntour.html).







**Clearly  
Catholic**

**Intentionally  
Inclusive**

**Academically  
Excellent**

## **GUARDIAN ANGELS AND OTHER HEROES**

*by Terry Braun, Development Director*

Last week I had the pleasure of meeting a very special lady. Her generosity has touched Blessed Trinity in an enormous way. She has given to Blessed Trinity for many years. For the last two years this donor has come forward and given \$20,000 for tuition assistance. Each year, her money has been matched by our countless other supporters and stakeholders.

The butterflies in my stomach started the weekend before as I looked at the lunch date on my calendar. We had never met. They weren't nerves, but excitement and anticipation. What would she be like? What would she say? What does she like to eat? Heck, I didn't even know what she would look like. I focused myself by listing what I wanted

**Our teachers are amongst our greatest donors and stakeholders. They meet each day and child with a smile and are on the front lines teaching, guiding, encouraging and growing these images of God.**

her the stories of our dedicated teachers who give so much of their time to create lessons that meet the needs of each student and a culture that promotes learning, loving and living our faith. Our teachers are amongst our greatest donors and stakeholders. Each year they are donating thousands of dollars to our school by choosing a career in Catholic education instead of one in the public sector. They meet each day and child with a smile and are on the front lines teaching, guiding, encouraging and growing these images of God.

This list started to overwhelm me. I couldn't even look at it without getting tears in my eyes. This lunch could get really wet. How was I going to adequately express my gratitude, my admiration and my excitement, let alone that of the school's?

Well, I have to tell you, it was the most delightful lunch! It was the highlight of my career at Blessed Trinity. Looking back at the lunch, I hope I was able to share everything I listed above. But I spent most of the time soaking up what she was sharing with me. Her kindness, stories and humor captivated me. She is an intelligent, hardworking woman and even a pioneer. She is a believer in Catholic education because of

her to leave our meeting knowing. She should know the great love Blessed Trinity has for all those who give to our school in time, treasure or talent. She should be told that our students and teachers are grateful and pray for her and all our donors. I needed to explain the ardent desire our school parents have to give their children a Catholic education in the loving community of Blessed Trinity, and how her generosity makes this desire a reality. Finally, I wanted to share with her the hard work of our community to live out our school's mission. I wanted to share with

*(continued on back)*

## **2011 Grand Gala "Rich in Tradition"**

**This Year's Grand Gala  
December 3, 2011**

Blessed Trinity's Grand Gala this year is going "old school." Our theme will be *Rich in Tradition*. By honoring the past we hope to further secure a bright future for our consolidated school. And you are welcome to join us!

### **Memorabilia Needed**

Do you have access to memorabilia from the past? We want to display photos, uniforms, yearbooks and the like at this year's Grand Gala. Memorabilia from St. Richard's School, St. Peter's School, Church of the Assumption's School and Blessed Trinity Catholic School are all needed. Items will be returned after the Grand Gala event on December 3rd. Photos will be scanned and returned.

### **Contact**

To receive an invitation to the Grand Gala or for more information about sharing your memorabilia, please contact Terry Braun at 612-869-5200 or BraunT@btcsmn.org.

## Guardian Angels and Other Heroes *(continued from other side)*

her own experience at another Catholic school, which makes her an unconventional Blessed Trinity supporter. She isn't a Blessed Trinity graduate, nor is she the parent of one. However, you wouldn't be able to tell by the way she talked. She described the clippings she had kept of our adorable students that were printed in the Catholic Spirit or this newsletter. She shared how impressed she was with the poise and reverence of several Blessed Trinity students exhibited when sharing essays last winter during Catholic Schools Week. She remembered with a smile one student's goal, "I want to be Joe Mauer." She expressed her delight when students serve or sing at senior gatherings, even remembering them by name because they were so polite (and cute!). Several times throughout lunch it struck me how she talked about the school as if it were her own. She sounded like a regular school parent bragging to another about her school. Never herself attended and never dropped off a son or daughter at our school's doors; yet, she has paid tuition for hundreds of Blessed Trinity students. Wow!

I learned much from this great supporter and now wonderful friend. As I gushed over her generosity and called her our guardian angel, she noted that the teachers, parents, parish and school leadership—even the kids—were heroes. We work among heroes at Blessed Trinity, raising the next generation of champions for Catholic education.

It brings me great pleasure to announce that we will once again be working to match our donor's generosity. She has agreed to donate another \$20,000 match toward tuition assistance. With your help we can turn her \$20,000 into \$40,000 for Blessed Trinity!



Please use the form below to make a donation by mail or go to [givemn.razoo.com](http://givemn.razoo.com) and type "Blessed Trinity Catholic School" in the "Search for a Cause" box located in the upper right hand corner. From there you may make a donation using your credit card. Please designate your donation when prompted by typing "Guardian Angel Match" in order to double your money!



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## Guardian Angel Match for Tuition Assistance

Please make a donation to the Guardian Angel Match for Tuition Assistance at Blessed Trinity Catholic School.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
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**My/Our Gift is \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed (check payable to Blessed Trinity)

Bill my credit card:  Visa  Mastercard

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### Mail To:

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



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