



OUR LADY OF THE WAYSIDE SCHOOL
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS

enriching minds.
fostering faith.

OLW Alumni Newsletter

December 2013

A note from our Principal, David Wood

Each school year Our Lady of the Wayside School adopts a new theme to guide us as we work to fulfill our mission to provide a quality, faith-based education for our young people. This year's theme *Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service* reminds us of the important role we play in helping our students to grow not only academically but spiritually and emotionally as well.

Academically there are many exciting things happening at OLW this school year. We continue to develop ourselves as a Balanced Literacy School as the teachers build on the many things they learned last year in our partnership with Roosevelt University. In addition to the Guided Reading program, Read Alouds, and Word Walls started last year, we added a new writing program to our curriculum. The elementary building is using Lucy Calkin's Writers Workshop and our middle school students are being instructed in the methods of the 6+1 Traits of Writing. We also unveiled new science and social studies units in grades K-3 that were developed this summer by many of our hardworking and dedicated teachers. Our middle school this year went to Block Schedule to help us better maximize our instructional time and enhance student learning. We also introduced new specials: Health (6th-8th), Public Speaking (7th), Publishing (8th), and Virtue Education (1st-5th).
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Welcome New Teachers

We welcomed five new teachers to our staff - four of them in our middle school. Miss Rachel Laughland (7th Grade Language Arts), Mrs. Julie Gowgiel (Science), Miss Hayley Savoca (6th/7th Social Studies) and Miss Carrie Shapiro (8th Grade Language Arts) have all helped to add to the middle school experience at OLW. As new program opportunities have helped our preschool grow, an additional kindergarten class was added this year. Mrs. Amy Lauren has been a wonderful addition to our kindergarten team.



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Letter from our Principal (cont)

We also are working to improve our use of technology at OLV. Through donations from the Family School Association through the annual auction, we have been able to add additional Smart Boards in first through third grade. We have also added lap tops and wireless internet to the fifth grade classrooms. We are fortunate to have a dedicated teacher like Mrs. Chris Bremner working with all of our teachers to increase our use of technology in the classroom. Through her efforts and support our teachers will be able to make using technology more purposeful and add to each student's instructional experience.

As a Catholic community, we are continually committed to living and sharing our faith in as many ways as possible. We are blessed to have the support of all the parish staff. We thank Father Ed, Father Peter, and Father Brady for their support of our school and for the different ways in which they inspire our students. We are fortunate to have a close working relationship with Sister Joan and Sister Adrienne who assist our teachers in so many ways. We are also thankful for Kevin O'Connell and his presence in our middle school. His work with our middle school students is a wonderful addition to our religion curriculum. Through the efforts of all those in



our community we are able to infuse important religion lessons throughout the day into all areas of the curriculum with the hope that our students will realize the important role our Catholic faith plays in our daily lives.



OLW School's Silver Gala

On March 1, 2014 OLV School will be holding its annual Auction Fundraiser Gala. This year's Gala holds a special significance as we celebrate the Silver Anniversary of community support for Catholic education at Our Lady of the Wayside. Since the first auction in 1988 the community has raised millions of dollars to sponsor technological development, capital improvements, curriculum development, playground facilities and many other worthwhile causes that contribute to the continued excellence at the school.

We would love to extend a special invitation to OLV School alumni to help celebrate these last 25 years. Please visit http://www.olwschool.org/?page_id=12276 to purchase tickets, see items available for bid, support fund-a-cause items and to help write the legacy of the next 25 years of support for the OLV School.

A message from our Pastor

Thank you for your interest in Our Lady of the Wayside School. Your interest continues because of the strong bond you have with OLV School during your formative years. The Alumni have told me many stories as OLV Pastor, what your grammar school education meant to you. We are a Catholic school first and foremost with an exceptional academic curriculum. This solid foundation has given you success in many areas. Maybe you were accepted at the university that was your first choice. It could be you were on the Dean's list in high school and college. Possibly your self confidence in your God given talents and skills assisted you in sports, theater, music, singing or school leadership positions. Maybe looking back on your OLV years you wish you had a better appreciation of the strong OLV Foundation, which you were setting for yourself in the success you have experienced and what you will enjoy along life's journey.

Many Alumni tell me stories of their friendships which began in Preschool at OLV. These friendships are identified as lifelong because of your formation and education at OLV, because you share the same strong foundation. Families became friends through the strong bonds of these healthy relationships. Often times I hear graduates telling me how happy they were that they were able to get to know their classmates' parents and siblings. These lifelong OLV connections continue to this day and exist because of your common positive background.

In my many interactions with administrators and faculty from our local high schools, often I am told that they can identify an OLV Alumni by just watching them walk down the hall. They tell me that the OLV Alumni possess a solid knowledge of themselves, the people and situations around them. You make a positive impact



on the greater community with service projects and being living examples of your faith by what you say and do. Because of this, many of you if not all, assume positions of leadership in high school, college and beyond.

Now let me ask you, what is your favorite activity after almost all high school and college events? This could be dances, sporting events, social gatherings, recitals, plays, concerts, parties or causal get together? There is only one correct answer, the mandatory picture of all OLV Alumni present. Did you ever ask yourselves why these pictures are so important? These are the people who share with you a common solid OLV foundation. They have the same values, experiences, faith formation, strong academic background, relationships, communication skills, appreciation of God given talent and skills, awareness of the people and situations around you and they are lifelong friends. This is why you continue to be interested in OLV School and Parish. This is why you are a proud OLV Alumni. That is why you are, "Always a Wildcat".

God Bless,
Reverend Edward R. Fialkowski/ Pastor

Academic Excellence thrives at OLW School

Each fall, every 8th grader in the Archdiocese of Chicago takes the EXPLORE standardized test. This test is used by Township District 214 (which includes Rolling Meadows HS, Prospect HS, and Hersey HS) and many others to assess incoming 9th grade students for class placement. OLW's Class of 2013 scored 5th highest among the 211 primary schools in the Archdiocese. This is quite an achievement considering that the Archdiocese of Chicago has more Blue Ribbon Award Winners, including OLW, than any school district in the US.

Further, as we all know, Arlington Heights is well-known for its excellent public schools. Catholic Canon Law requires that Catholic schools must provide instruction that is "at least as academically distinguished as that in other schools in the area." Given the reputation of public and private schools alike in Arlington Heights, Canon Law puts up a high bar for

to permit a more consistent, longitudinal comparison using the same measures throughout, the Board of Education has not allowed these requests. Instead, our students take the TerraNova test, which is different than the tests taken in public schools.

Our Lady of the Wayside School Class of 2013 scored in the 97th percentile across schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago

The test scores clarify not only that Our Lady of the Wayside School provides an excellent aca-



OLW as an academic institution.

The focus on the EXPLORE test is really two-fold. First, the test measures English, Reading, Math, and Science and represents a summary a student's academic development through nine years from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Second, it is the only clear comparison between OLW School and our public school colleagues. While the Archdiocese has asked the Illinois State Board of Education to permit its students to take the same tests that public schools take,

ademic education when compared against our excellent peers in the Archdiocese, but also continues to provide an academic education that is at least as good as our public school peers.



Protecting our Legacy, Securing our Future

Did You Know...

...the term *alma mater* is from Latin meaning “nourishing mother”?

...Our Lady of the Wayside refers to a fifth century Roman fresco of the Blessed Mother, which travelled throughout the Italian countryside?

...your *alma mater*, the Blessed Mother who nourished your development in school, Our Lady of the Wayside School needs your help?

Our Lady of the Wayside School continues its mission of delivering excellent academics and Catholic, faith-based character development, just as it has for nearly 60 years. However, this mission is becoming increasingly difficult due to a reduction in teaching religious – nuns, priests, and brothers – as well as decreasing enrollment, reduced participation in parish giving, and other financial difficulties. This is where the school needs your help.



Support the School’s Long-Term Viability – Financial donations to the school help alumni ensure that OLV will continue to provide excellent education to children both today and long into the future. Online donations can be made through http://www.olwschool.org/?page_id=212.

OLW School is a 501(c)3 religious organization. Please consider a tax-deductible year-end donation prior to 12/31/2013.

If you prefer to mail a check, please make checks payable to Our Lady of the Wayside School and mail to the following address:

Our Lady of the Wayside School
Attn: David Wood – Principal
432 S. Mitchell Ave
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Alumni Update

Donate Your Stories – OLV School is constantly looking to learn about our alumni. The stories about men and women who graduated from the school and went on to successful careers in business, education, engineering, the arts or any other field, are powerful. They help prospective families realize what is possible with an education at OLV. Moreover, they help emphasize the value of the Parish's continued investment in Catholic education.

Please send us an update with what you've done since middle school or consider nominating an accomplished classmate. Stories can be sent to alumni@olwschool.org.

Find us on Facebook & LinkedIn – We are excited to announce the recent launch of our Facebook page and LinkedIn Group. The Facebook page is intended to increase the dialogue among you, our alumni, so that you can reconnect with old classmates and friends and share photos and memories of your time at Our Lady of the Wayside School. Click the below link to find the OLV School Alumni page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/523950037680556/> and search Our Lady of the Wayside Alumni on LinkedIn.

