



The Ferd Word

...weekly spotlight on a word to know at St. Ferdinand School by Principal Folino 😊 Dec 19 2019

PRESENCE, not PRESENTS

6 more days until Christmas? Where has the time gone? How can Advent almost be over and the big day upon us? Have we used this special season of waiting for the birth of our Savior to give our PRESENCE to others? The St. Ferdinand School community sure has!

First, many school parents chipped in to help the **Christmas Decorating Committee** beautify our school hallways, Activity Center, and Chapel areas with elegant and dazzling Christmas trees. ***Thank you for offering your presence to bring a festive ambiance to our daily learning, worshipping, and celebrating spaces.***

Then, **Kris Kringle** made an appearance at school mass on his big feast day, December 6! He reminded the children to give with love to help others, and then gave each child a cookie treat! ***Thank you, maintenance tech Norbert Garczynski, for making this day memorable for our students.***

Kris Kringle actually made a second appearance at the Family Mass on the day of the annual **Breakfast with Santa!** After worshipping together, many school families enjoyed coffee and treats with with Santa, as well as crafts, bounce house time, and photos with the big guy himself! ***Thank you, librarian Kathy DeMaira, for all your help in organizing this day, as well as to Charles Clemente for his time as Santa and Margaret Brumann for her photog skills - and all the parent volunteers, too - who made this day a wonderful kick-off to the season for our school community.***

Remembering and reaching out to those in need is important during the holiday season. When one family in our school was recently dealt a new health concern with which to cope both emotionally and financially, other school families organized a wonderful event at Cafe Prague in which Christmas crafts and treats were provided for a small donation. The generosity shown in this act truly reflects the Advent message of Jesus as it provided a means by which all could prepare their hearts for the birth of our Savior while showing compassion toward one of our own families. ***Thank you to all families and school staff involved in the planning and participating of this event.***

Student Council also provided an afternoon of merriment to those who signed up for their **Christmas Club**. Cookie decorating, Christmas karaoke, and reindeer games were all on tap for students in this after-school activity! ***Thank you to the Student Council members and moderators Andrea Alanis and Kia Loster for giving their time to organize this event.***

Due to the generosity of the **Daughters of St. Paul**, and continuing a tradition of St. Ferdinand School, our 5th grade class was given the amount of \$900 and asked to pick a charity to whom to give it. After much research, sharing, and debate, they chose St. Jude's



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Children's Hospital. **Thank you, Sisters, for giving our students the opportunity to choose a charity for which to be monetarily present this holiday season!**

This week, our singing and bell choirs were once again given the opportunity, through the Big Shoulders organization, to **Christmas carol at Millennium Station**. Busy commuters took time out of their hectic mornings to listen and even be moved to tears by our students' lovely singing and amazing musical accompaniment. The students then caroled to **KPMG** in the Aon Building, and were treated to a lunch afterward for adding joy to the workers' days. **Thank you, Br. James, Sr. Agnes, Big Shoulders, and parishioner Ann Liedke of KPMG, for providing our singing and bell choir students with the amazing opportunity to be evangelizers and a true presence to commuting Chicagoans and busy business workers!**

Amidst all this, students have been busy working on completing **Acts of Kindness** in little ways throughout this month. I can't wait to read all the ways they have been Angels Among Us when their December acts summaries decorate our bulletin board in January!

Lastly, we will finish our Advent preparation with a wonderful Christmas Concert tonight at 7:00 PM sharp! May you be moved by the heartfelt **PRESENCE** and joy of our beautiful students while taking a time-out from the craziness of the week to take in the real sounds and sights of the season in our St. Ferdinand Chapel.

May your final days of Advent be touched by those who offer you their PRESENCE, and may the joy of receiving our best present, the birth of our Savior, bring with it a wonderful Christmas Day for you and your families.

Merriest of Christmases to all!

