

Principal's Newsletter

Scranton Preparatory School

January 2012

Dear Parents,

Each Jesuit school in the Maryland Province (which includes Jesuit schools in Scranton, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.) has signed a "sustaining agreement" with the Society of Jesus as a way to ensure that the Jesuit identity and character of the school is maintained. The schools in the Maryland Province have agreed to assess their Jesuit identity and character through a self-study that will center around some elements contained in the document *What Makes a Jesuit School Jesuit?* Following a school's self-study, a committee of educators from other Province schools will visit and offer reflections on the self-study. This process will then be repeated every five years so that schools continue to remain focused on their Jesuit identity.

The period for Scranton Prep's sustaining agreement self-study is this school year, and the visitation of the Province Committee is scheduled to occur in the 2012-2013 school year. A twelve person steering committee was formed at Prep this past summer for the purpose of guiding this self-study process at our school. The committee is comprised of faculty, administrators, current and former board members, and current and former parents.

The steering committee met in early September and discussed the norms to be looked at in the school's self-study. The committee selected norm #4 ("Religious Education and Formation") and #8 ("Cooperation in Mission") from *What Makes a Jesuit School Jesuit?* Specifically, the committee zeroed in on the last bulleted application point in norm #4 (providing ongoing support and fellowship for students and staff members in the daily living of the Gospel message) and the third bulleted application point in norm #8 (extensive orientation and ongoing formation in Jesuit education and Ignatian spirituality for Board members and school personnel). The committee felt that these two application points provided opportunities for growth in our programs in terms of the development of follow-up activities in the areas of spiritual/service programs for our students, as well as Ignatian formation programs for our Board and faculty. The committee views this process as a genuine opportunity for growth and sees several parallels to issues raised in our new strategic plan.

Prep's Board of Trustees gave its approval to the assessment plan at their September 14 meeting. Subsequently, focus groups were conducted this semester with parents, alumni, students, and faculty. The discussion at the focus group sessions centered on the two specific application points mentioned earlier. Under each point, both areas of strength (things we do well) and areas for growth (things we could do or do better) were discussed. In addition, the theme of this year's Trustee Day in December centered around these points.

The steering committee reviewed the input from the focus groups at a meeting on November 16. At that meeting, the committee decided upon three areas of growth for each of the two items. In the next semester, the committee will begin to develop brief action plans for each of these six items. (The six items are printed on page 2 of this newsletter).

At the May 16 meeting of the Board of Trustees, the steering committee will seek the Board's approval for the final version of the self-study. The committee, in concert with the Province Assistant, will formulate a schedule for the school visitation, as well as coordinate all of the practical arrangements connected with such a visit.

As we continue our unique mission as a Jesuit high school in Northeastern Pennsylvania in this new year, we are cognizant of and grateful for all the assistance that parents give us in carrying out this mission. And so as we begin 2012, we thank you and extend to you and your families best wishes for many blessings throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Marx
Principal

Sustaining Agreement Self-Study

Below are the two application points from *What Makes a Jesuit School Jesuit?* which we will work on as part of our sustaining agreement with the Society of Jesus. These provide opportunities for growth in our programs in terms of the development of follow-up activities in the areas of spiritual/service programs for our students, as well as Ignatian formation programs for our Board and faculty.

- 1. “Scranton Prep encourages organizations that provide ongoing support and fellowship for students and staff members in the daily living of the Gospel message. In particular, Jesuit schools establish faith-based groups such as Christian Life Communities.” (Norm #4)**

Areas for growth/things we could do, or do better, in the above area:

- Follow-up programs/groups for Kairos retreat.
- Follow up programs for service groups.
- Annual event in which Jesuit identity of Prep is celebrated.

- 2. “Board members and school personnel receive an extensive orientation and ongoing formation in the traditions and mission of the school, Jesuit education, and Ignatian spirituality.” (Norm #8)**

Areas for growth/things we could do, or do better, in the above area:

- More systematic, on-going formation in Ignatian spirituality of new board members beyond their orientation.
- More systematic, on-going formation in Ignatian spirituality of faculty beyond their orientation and/or retreat. This will include formal mentoring of new faculty by veteran faculty in the areas of mission, Jesuit education, and Ignatian spirituality.
- More formation opportunities in Ignatian spirituality for coaches.

Course Selection Process To Begin For Next School Year

The important process of student course selection for next year will begin in early February. Each class year will have an assembly where students will learn about their course requirements and options for next year. Students will be bringing home forms explaining the process. They will receive a list of required courses and the electives that they may choose. Please discuss these options carefully with your son or daughter. Guidance counselors will assist each student with this process and will be happy to answer any of your questions. Once you and your child have selected the courses he/she wishes to take, please sign the form and return it. Please keep in mind that changing courses once your child has signed up is often very difficult and sometimes impossible. Students requesting honors and advanced placement courses must meet criteria set by academic departments for inclusion in these courses. In the spring each student will receive a finalized list of courses, and you will be asked to verify that the courses are correct.

Junior Parent Evening of Information - Wednesday, February 1

On Wednesday evening, February 1 at 7 p.m., the guidance department will hold its junior parent evening of information. Parents will learn about important aspects of the college process for juniors and upcoming events including information on the college fair on April 3.

Midyear Exam Information

Tuesday, January 17	8:15 - English 10:00 - Modern Language
Wednesday, January 18	8:15 - Math 10:00 - Religion
Thursday, January 19	8:15 - Science 10:00 - Social Studies <u>except</u> AP European History
Friday, January 20	8:15 - Latin / Greek / AP Biology 10:00 - Myth & Epic / AP European History / AP Art History
Monday, January 23	8:15 - Make-up exams 10:00 - Make-up exams

Exams are ninety minutes in length. Students may leave the exam after sixty minutes if they have finished. Students report only at times for which they have exams scheduled. There are no classes after exams. Students may leave after the completion of their exams for the day. On days students have two exams, they are **not** permitted to leave the building between exams. Also on days students are scheduled for two exams, they must take **both** exams. Make-up exam day is for illnesses only. Students may not miss exams for vacations or college visits. Districts that provide busing have been notified that dismissal is 11:35.

In the event of a two-hour delay due to weather conditions during exam week, the first exam will begin at 10:15 and dismissal after the second exam will be 1:35. In the event of school closing for one or more days, the order in which exams are taken remains the same. If school were to be closed on Wednesday, exams scheduled for Wednesday would move to Thursday. Monday, January 23 is exam make-up day for students who are absent for a scheduled exam. If there are no snow cancellations during the week, then students who do not miss any of their scheduled exams do not need to report to school on Monday, January 23.

In the event that Scranton Prep needs to convey more information about delays or cancellations than is possible through the information provided on television and radio, we will do that through announcements on our phone system and on our Websites scrantonprep.com and scrantonprep.net

Prep's College Day and College Fair Set for April 3

Tuesday, April 3, is College Day for Prep juniors. Beginning at 12:50, juniors will attend sessions devoted to the college selection process. This program affords juniors an opportunity to meet in small groups with admission counselors from many colleges and universities. In the evening there will be a "college fair" for parents and students. Parents are encouraged to attend this informative program at the school from 7 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. College representatives will be on hand to provide information and answer your questions. There will be special sessions that evening on the college admissions process and financial aid.

Upcoming Events

January 16.....	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day— no classes
January 17-23.....	Midyear Exams
January 24.....	Second Semester Begins
February 1.....	Guidance Department's Junior Parent Evening of Information
February 7.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
February 7-10.....	Kairos Retreat
February 20.....	Presidents' Day - no classes
February 22.....	Ash Wednesday - school liturgy
March 1.....	Parent / Teacher Conferences at 7 p.m.
March 6.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
March 6-9.....	Kairos Retreat
March 23.....	Third Quarter Ends
March 24.....	Prep Auction
April 3.....	Faculty Meeting -12:50 dismissal except juniors; College Day for juniors begins at 12:50
April 4.....	Easter Break begins after classes
April 16.....	Classes Resume
April 20-22 & 27-29.....	Scranton Prep Players Present <i>Bye Bye Birdie</i>
May 2.....	Junior Day of Recollection
May 6.....	Senior/Parent Social at St. Mary's Center
May 7-18.....	A.P. Exams
May 8.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
May 15.....	National Honor Society Induction Assembly

Prep Auction Goes Green!

The Auction 2012 committee is excited to announce that the "All That Glitters" Auction will **go wireless**. No more crowded bid tables or racing across the room to make a final bid. The night of the Auction each guest will receive upon registering a hand-held device preloaded with every silent auction gift, including a brief description and picture of the item, the value, bid increments, and the donor.

Guests can browse the auction display area, as well as view the gifts on the hand-held device. With the wireless device, you can bid on an item **from anywhere, at anytime** during the event. You can also create your own watch list. You will receive **instant outbid alerts** and **instant notification of items won**. Checkout and payment will also be streamlined.

Homeroom solicitation for auction gifts will begin this month. Parents who have not yet donated an item will receive letters requesting a gift or monetary donation of \$40.00. Each homeroom will be assigned a gift theme.

The success of the auction greatly depends on the variety and quality of the gifts that are offered on the auction block. If you have access to tickets for sporting events, perhaps you would consider donating them, as they are always a popular item. Arrangements can be made to have large or unusual items picked up by contacting the Development Office at 941-7743. Current parents Chris McGarry and Rose Buynak are chairing the event.

Invitations will be mailed to all current parents in late February.

Don't miss out on the fun!
Mark Your Calendars!
"All That Glitters"
Scranton Prep Auction 2012
March 24, 2012
St. Francis Xavier Center