



Aug 18-22

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Hello families!

The students had a great first week together and I enjoyed getting to know each of them more every day! I hope your child came home proud of their in-class learning, growing confidence in budding friendships, and hopefully an eagerness to come back this week. The students had so much fun at recess together this week, I wish you could have seen them all. They have created quite an imaginative world of dinosaurs, (although sometimes I think maybe dragons?), guarding eggs, trying to steal other eggs, all with St. George fighting the dragon/dinos? I am in awe of their creativity. The students are beginning to get acquainted with each other and their personalities, learning to repair confrontations as they come, comfort each other as they fall, and learn the dynamics of our new class community.

Our class celebrated mass with our prayer partner for the first time on the the feast of the Assumption on Friday. Each Kindergartener is partnered up with a 5th or 6th grade student who will help be a role model of active engagement and faithful behavior during daily masses throughout the year. Our class was so excited to meet their buddies and have already quickly come to recognize them all in the hall and lunchroom.

As we work through new skills/strategies, I try to explain some verbiage that I think may be helpful to elaborate on so that you as parents understand our class strategies. I apologize if it is redundant to some of you or sometimes adds length, but I often hear from parents that this is insightful for them. If you ever have questions or curiosity about things in the newsletter, please don't hesitate to reach out! Thank you. 😊

Blessings,
Melissa Larsen

Important Dates

Aug 20- Hot Lunch Begins*

Aug 22- Enthronement @ St. Patrick
after 8:30 mass*

Sept 1- Labor Day- No School

Sept 2- Curriculum Night

Sept 20- PSC Townhall Meeting

**Please see STA's school-wide Newsletter for more details about how to order Hot Lunch and more details about this Friday's Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Consecration of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



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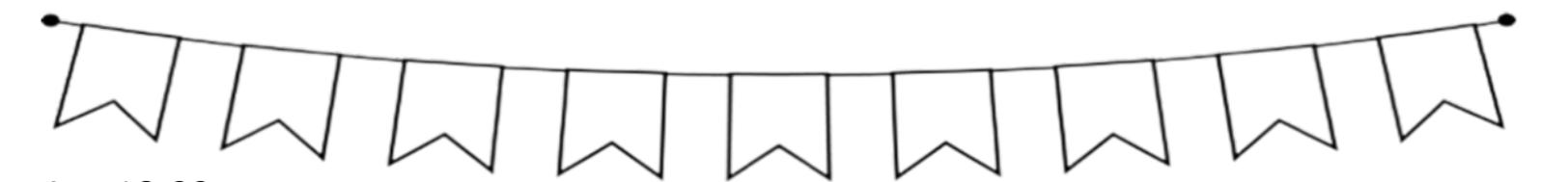
Math

This past week, our class learned the Right Start math song “Yellow is the Sun”. The children learned this song quickly and really enjoyed singing it throughout the week. I’m sure you might have heard them singing it a time or two at home as well. Our Kinder class focused on learning beginning concepts of “subitizing”. Subitizing is the somewhat simple but important skill of being able to look at a group of items and see how many are there, without individually counting the items. Sometimes, numbers are so small it is easy to see and know that a group has 3, 4, or even 5 items in it. As children see larger groups such as 7, or 8, we teach them skills of how to visually group those numbers in their head, (ultimately on their abacus as well) to be able to quickly realize how many are there, such as 5 and 2 more, as opposed to counting individually 1, 2, 3...

The class was introduced to many of our math tools such as Tally Stick Cards, Finger Cards, physical Tally Sticks, color blocks and on Friday we even explored our Number Balance for the first time. The students loved the number balance and I can’t wait to continue to have them explore with it to make some connections about how numbers work with each other. Our class played various “memory” styled math games with both the tally stick cards and the finger cards to sharpen their subitizing skills with classmates. I loved seeing the students work together with their first math games. We had many great sports and both fun and learning was had by all!

Religion

Our class attended mass almost every day last week and enjoyed having our first Catechesis of the Good Shepherd lesson with Miss Knight. I was impressed by both their reverence and curiosity about mass. We’ve started gathering after most masses to discuss what we have “noticed” during mass- whether it something Fr. Sal said that stood out to us, noticing his different vestments, different candles, adoration on Wednesdays, etc. As parents, I’m sure we’re all familiar with how incredibly observant this age group is, and their observations and curiosity have sparked such great conversation and discovery for the class already! Overall, we are working on the Sign of the Cross, making sure to touch the left shoulder before the right during “Holy Spirit”. We are also practicing praying the Our Father together as a class. It would be wonderful if you could please continue practicing praying this out loud with your child so they can build confidence to pray this out loud at mass as well. We also talked a lot about the Assumption of Mary on Friday and what makes that so unique and special.



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Literacy

As we started our Literacy Essentials curriculum this week, our class dove right into practicing phonemic awareness, learning our “best writing place”, and strengthening our finger dexterity. Phonemic awareness (PA) is the ability to distinguish sounds, typically auditorily/verbally, and manipulate the sounds in different ways. So this means the students are learning how to hear separated sounds and “blend” them into one smooth word, and also hear one full word and then “segment” the word into its separate sounds (and eventually count those sounds and identify how to write said sounds.) Phonemic awareness is also being able to isolate the first, middle, or last sound in words, distinguish the difference between spoken sounds, and verbally “chain” words. PA is a crucial area for students to practice and master prior to reading.

We also have been learning how to find our “best writing place/spot” which is basically having good posture and intentional paper placement. This looks like 2 feet on the floor, (or at least dangling in front under their desk space), back against their chair, head up, proper distance from the desk, and a slant to their paper. We as adults naturally slant our paper, notebooks, etc, as we all know it naturally aids in smooth and easy writing across the paper, since it allows our elbow to move more freely, etc, but it can be a very new concept to young students. We are also working on finger strengthening and dexterity. Literacy Essentials is very passionate, as am I, about teaching healthy writing habits early, and sometimes harping on them a little much, as it is so terribly difficult to fix or change habits as students get older and older. Please encourage your student to hold their pencil correctly by gently pinching their pencil, crayon, marker, between either their thumb and pointer finger or their thumb and their middle finger (the 3 ultimately work together), with a visible circle made by those fingers touching around their pencil.

Update on PE Uniform: After speaking with Principal Miller and the PE Teacher, Mrs. Berg, I learned that STA’s uniform guide requires all STA students to have PE uniform shorts for events like field trips and field days, even if that class doesn’t change clothes for PE. On PE days, our Kindergarten boys will not change their clothes or shoes at all, but girls can wear PE shorts under their jumpers in lieu of the typical biker shorts. Girls can take their jumpers off for PE if they are wearing the PE shorts already underneath their jumper.

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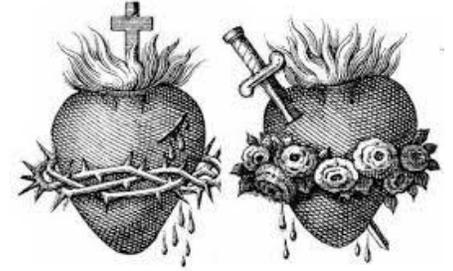
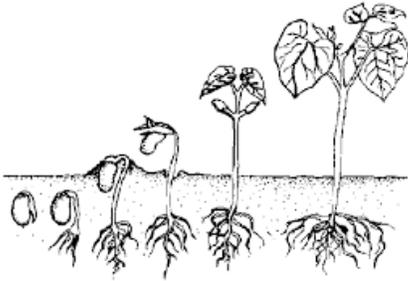
This week:

Enrichment theme:

Trees

Art:

Birch Forest by Gustav Klimt



Music:

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F Major, op. 68, "Pastoral": 1. Allegro ma non troppo

Math:

Intro to the Cotter Abacus

Patterning

Parallel Lines, planes, and making triangles

Literacy:

Continuing Phonemic Awareness

Intro to Handwriting

Start to learn "clock stroke" letters and letter formatting chart/terms

Practice "best writing place"

Science:

Continuing seeds, pivoting to more focus on trees

Religion:

Continue practicing proper hand and order of the Sign of the Cross

Practice Our Father

Learn about devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary