

# THE SENTINEL

MARCH 2023



**BLACK & WHITE:**  
**Talented cast brings**  
**One Act Play to life**  
page 10

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER



## Dear Holy Family Community,

God bless you and your families during this Lenten season. Our magazine format is now on a quarterly schedule as we pushed out the first two issues before and during the holiday season. Our goal is to provide timely summaries of events, current information, and a few items to consider for upcoming events. There are so many activities that are part of our daily program that it is difficult to highlight them all each quarter. Please check out our website and social media posts as they are more reflective of daily and weekly events.

For this March issue, we highlight our One Act Play, *The Neglected Husband's Sewing Club*. They were honored when chosen as the top performing arts group in the region which qualified them to move on to the state competition.

First, many thanks to the faculty who facilitated, coached, mentored, produced, and directed this show. The hours put into a show are countless, the care and concern they provided for the students were unlimited, the push and pull to bring out their best performance was full of patience, and the life lessons learned are priceless.

Secondly, the students who brought the show to life on and off stage are amazing. The growth in their performance was impressive and the quality of their show at the high-stakes competition was spectacular. Their dedication was impressive.

Thirdly, the parents and loved ones demonstrated true love and support for their children and their passion. They are the unsung heroes, as all parents are, who change their schedules to fit the needs of their child's schedule. The only thing more difficult than performing live is being a parent sitting in the seat watching it all unfold.

Now here is the "rest of the story." All of these traits are what we hold dear at our beloved school – care, concern, patience, growth, quality, dedication, love, and support. Of course, everything is tied together with "faith" in God and faith in each other. There also were a few other traits that I must note. Last year's show was also outstanding. It was so well done visually and tapped into many emotions. It did not "win" top ranking, but it was deserving, and I know all involved were heartbroken. Instead of giving up, making excuses, or playing it safe, they regrouped and refocused. That is why I am so happy and proud of them for stepping back onto the ledge and taking another leap of faith. So, the traits of perseverance, resiliency, hope, and courage were also part of this group's journey. They represented who we are, and what we are about at Holy Family Catholic School. Well done and congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Cullen".

TIM CULLEN | PRESIDENT







## DID YOU KNOW?

Holy Family Catholic School fifth graders have been participating in Camp Kappe for many years. This annual experience is considered a key part of our students' heart, mind, body, and soul development as they spend several days off campus, away from home, discovering and learning concepts in science, and also, the importance of team building. For some, it may be their first time away from family. For all, it is something they will remember the rest of their lives.





# ASHES TO ASHES

## Students begin Lent on Ash Wednesday

The Lenten season is officially underway with Mass celebrated on Ash Wednesday, February 21, for St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School and Holy Family Catholic School students, parents, faculty, and staff at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, leaving standing-room-only.

The celebrant, Father Kyle Nesrsta from St. William Catholic Church, was assisted by Deacon Mark Fair from St. Vincent de Paul. Following the homily, the ashes were blessed in front of the congregation before they were distributed by clergy, students, and teachers.

In a January letter to the Faithful meant to inspire our Lenten journey, Pope Francis offers Catholics words of wisdom to sustain all during the 40-day walk with Christ. “The Lenten journey of penance and the journey of the Synod alike have as their goal a transfiguration, both personal and ecclesial. A transformation that, in both cases, has its model in the Transfiguration of Jesus and is achieved by the grace of his paschal mystery. So that this transfiguration may become a reality in us this year, I would like to propose two “paths” to follow in order to ascend the mountain together with Jesus



and, with him, to attain the goal,” wrote the Holy Father.

He continued, “The first path has to do with the command that God the Father addresses to the disciples on Mount Tabor as they contemplate Jesus transfigured. The voice from the cloud says:







“Listen to him” (Mt 17:5). The first proposal, then, is very clear: we need to listen to Jesus. Lent is a time of grace to the extent that we listen to him as he speaks to us. And how does he speak to us? First, in the word of God, which the Church offers us in the liturgy. May that word not fall on deaf ears; if we cannot always attend Mass, let us study its daily biblical readings, even with the help of the internet. In addition to the Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us through our brothers and sisters, especially in the faces and the stories of those who are in need. Let me say something else, which is quite important for the synodal process: listening to Christ often takes place in listening to our brothers and sisters in the Church. Such mutual listening in some phases is the primary goal, but it remains always indispensable in the method and style of a synodal Church.”

The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. The ashes are christened with Holy Water and are scented by exposure to incense. While the ashes symbolize penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts.

His Divine mercy is of utmost importance during the season of Lent, and the Church calls on us to seek that mercy during the entire Lenten season with reflection, prayer, and penance.





# Families host NET missionaries during storm

Regardless of Holy Family Catholic School (HFCS) having a NET Retreat scheduled for our sixth, seventh, and eighth-grade students during Catholic Schools Week, God must have had other plans for the teams and the host families.

The NET Retreat, organized by HFCS Religion teacher Sister Teresa Benedicta, had to be canceled due to the Austin ice storm which shut down our schools for much of Catholic Schools Week. This meant that the NET Ministry Team, comprised of young adults from eight various states, had to hunker down with their hosts: the Dobson, Kreidler, and Higdon families.

The missionaries held an impromptu retreat for the neighbors at the Dobson's home. "Our week was full of board games, video games, movies, praise and worship sessions, and wonderful fellowship," said parent Alexis Dobson. "It was such a blessing to learn and listen to these women who have dedicated a year of their lives to share their love of the Gospel. This was such a special time for us, and a time of refreshment for them as well."

Kevin Kreidler and his family hosted three young men from California, New Hampshire, and Minnesota, and apparently one didn't mind the ice and cold. "Issac, from New Hampshire, wore shorts all week as he found the weather to be, 'not that cold,'" said Kreidler. "This cracked me up. I am from Ohio, but I've become very soft - that week was very cold! The missionaries also gave a mini-retreat for a few seventh-grade boys."

The Higdon Family says they made the best of the icy situation and held a small in-home sixth-grade



retreat for about 10 girls. "We made the most of our experience playing games, cooking, baking, playing guitar, and praise and worship. As the weather worsened and school was canceled, we decided to host a mini-retreat for 6th-grade girls. We had about 10 join us in our home," said Mrs. Higdon.

Sister Teresa Benedicta was just as disappointed about the cancellation of the retreat; however, she reminds us all who is in charge of this life and all the opportunities we have been given. "I know the rescheduled retreats—whether they occur in this school year or the next—will be extra special because they will be in God's timing. It is good to remember that the Lord ultimately sets the schedule for us all," said Sister Benedicta.

*Clockwise from above: The Kreidler family hosted three missionaries; the Dobsons spent much time playing board games; the Higdon families held an impromptu retreat for 10 sixth-grade girls.*





# All Life Matters

## Angels 4 Life joined thousands at the Texas Rally for Life

Twenty-four Holy Family Catholic School (HFCS) students, families, and teachers joined thousands of Texans at the State Capital for the annual Texas Rally for Life on January 28, largely because they say the fight for life is not over.

HFCS Angels 4 Life club advisor and fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. April Morley, was joined by Mrs. Michelle Lillie and Sister Teresa Benedicta, for a local pilgrimage showing support for the laws that Texas has put in place to protect the preborn and support mothers with young children.

One seventh-grade student shared thoughts about the experience saying, “The day started with Mass at St. Louis, celebrated by Bishop Mike Sis of San Angelo,” said Maggie H. “I am more convinced than ever that abortion is wrong and violent and should stop happening.”

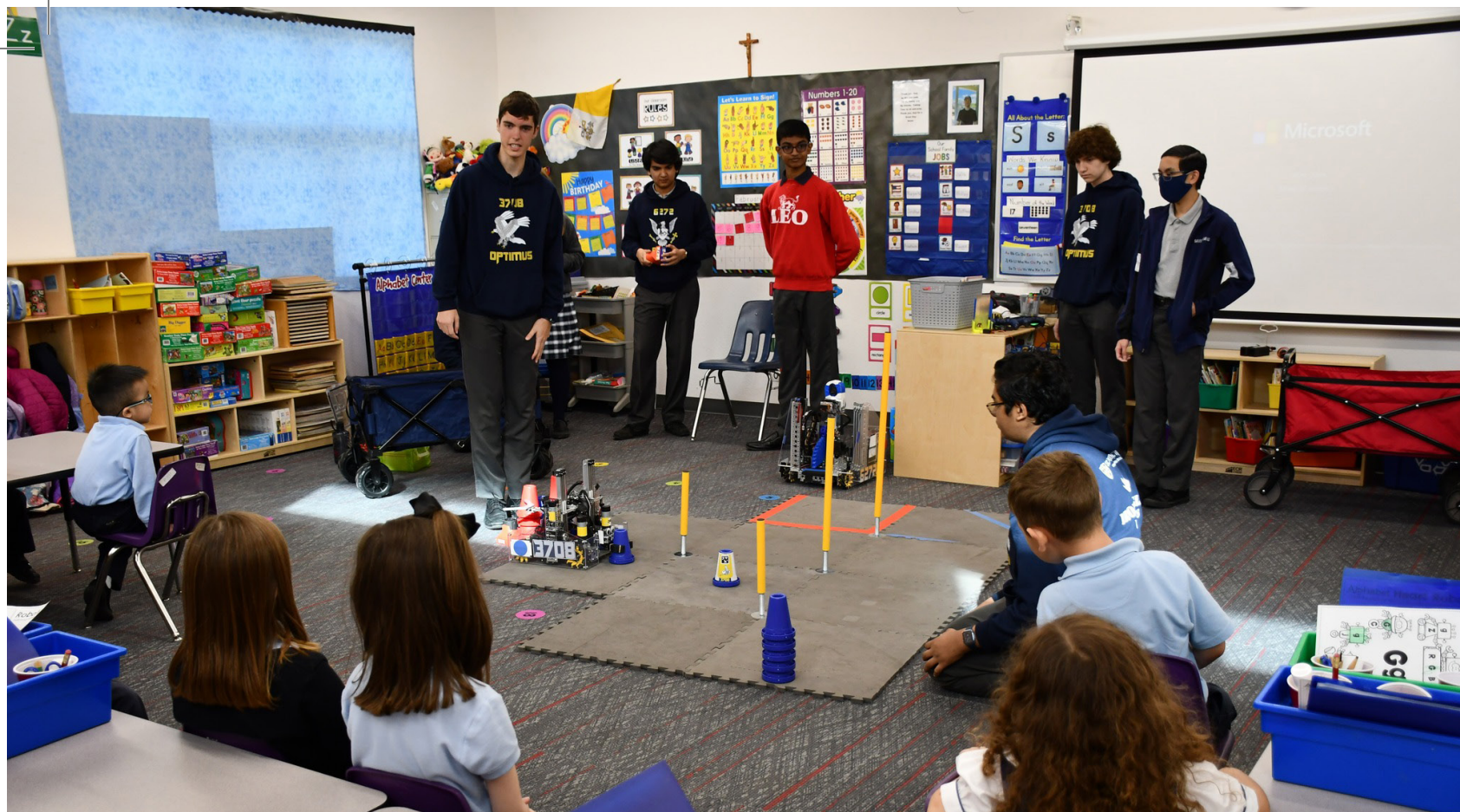
After the Rally, students were able to visit several booths sponsored by various pro-life organizations and hear speeches from pro-life leaders. “It was a powerful day!” said Maggie H.

Angels 4 Life is a pro-life student club at Holy Family. The club was founded in the Spring of 2022 by a group of 8th-grade students who believe that all life matters from “womb to tomb.”

This year, the club expanded to include 7th grade as well and there are now 26 members. The club meets after school on the 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesdays of each month.







## Savio Iron Eagles share love of robotics with Pre-K

**H**oly Family Pre-K students in Mrs. Pafumi's class were treated to a special visit from the Iron Eagles Robotics Team from St. Dominic Savio who brought two of their most successful creations to perform for the wide-eyed learners.

The Iron Eagles team showed the students how the robots were made, and then let them try to make them move using the controls. The students

asked very good questions and seemed to be very comfortable around the robots.

Many thanks to the students, Mrs. Sylvia Wood, St. Dominic Savio Technology Department Chair, and Mr. Juan Flores, Savio's Engineering and Robotics Instructor, who took the time to bring their students to Holy Family for this enlightening technology lesson.





# Caring for God's Creation

## Students use creativity, critical thinking in the sciences

**T**his quarter, the 5th and 6th-grade students are working hard and using their critical thinking skills as they delve into the world of the natural sciences.

The 5th grade's critical thinking skills were tested as they were tasked with finding and retrieving hidden water in their surroundings. Students used the engineering model to plan and build devices that could extract hidden water from various sources such as from the air or plants.

As they encountered problems, they were encouraged to investigate those challenges and then redesign, rebuild, or reinvent possible solutions. Even the smallest drop of water was celebrated as students began to see their devices yielding results. This lesson became the introduction to the Meteorology unit.

Currently, our 5th graders are being trained on collecting data for NASA's GLOBE program, an international citizen science program that allows students to participate in data collection and contribute meaningfully to NASA's and our understanding of the global environment. Students are learning how to identify the types of clouds, use longitude and latitude coordinates, and how to collect data from the tools in our weather station, such as the barometer and hygrometer.

Explorations with 6th-grade students began as they took their first foraging lesson in the half-mile wooded trail around Holy Family's play space. Students were given a Holy Family field guide that helped them identify native, non-native, and invasive plant and bird species on our campus. They then hiked the trails and learned about the plant and bird species in our area. They also began practicing identifying birds by their calls and physical features as well as how to catalog their findings for citizen science research.

This lesson became the introduction to future lessons on environmental sustainability and how



to become good stewards of God's creation. Over the course of several weeks, students explored topics such as climate change, ecotourism, fossil and alternative fuels, aquaponics, and sustainable architecture. They also began to investigate ways in which young people can make a positive difference in our environment. They started by first researching famous youth climate activists and then by taking on their own passion projects such as encouraging composting, picking up trash around campus, or planning activities to raise awareness such as the Trashion Fashion show for Earth Day.

As winter fades, the 6th-grade students are returning to the garden. In conjunction with our geology unit, students learned about the soil composition. They learned how to test the soil for minerals and how to fix lacking minerals in the soil in an environmentally friendly way. After researching and planning what to grow in the garden, students will begin to plant their fruits and vegetables which will become our anchor point for future lessons in botany, the carbon and nitrogen cycle, and much more!





# Bravo!

## Play wows audiences, finishes second at State

### IS IT POSSIBLE TO TAKE

an old radio and TV show from the 1940s and make it appealing to students born nearly 70 years later? The answer is clearly “YES!” with the success of Holy Family’s One Act Play, *Ethel and Albert: The Neglected Husband’s Sewing Club*.

Mrs. Jeanne Lyman, HFCS Fifth - Sixth Grade History Instructor and the director of the One Act Play for the last 13 years, successfully introduced, and engaged the cast and crew so mindfully that each character bought into their roles and developed each one with great enthusiasm.

“I was so excited to perform this play and decided to take it to another level, making it look like a black and white TV show by painting the set, the props, and the actors in greyscale,” said Lyman,

who purchased the correct make-up and had many volunteer moms to paint the actors.

The premise of the show, which was performed in greyscale, includes Ethel and her married friends who are too busy with bridge clubs and bazaars to sew on buttons and mend rips in clothing. This forces Albert to create the neglected husband’s sewing club. The men think they are funny discussing hairstyles and nail color, but the joke backfires, and the ladies come out as the winners.

Students performed one evening show for the general audience on Thursday, February 9, and two additional shows for grade-level classes on Friday, February 10. The cast performed the play for the One Act Play Competition held at St. Michaels Academy on Saturday, February 18. The state competition was held on March 7 with the students





coming in second place.

“A show like this requires an extremely talented cast to keep the energy up and the jokes alive,” said Lyman. “We also needed an exceptionally responsible crew to paint the set, props, and the people to work the lights and sound! We’ve had the perfect group for a wonderful show - I’m so proud of how this group brought this awesome play to life!”

The Private Lives of Ethel and Albert was created by Peg Lynch, who scripted and portrayed Ethel. The series first aired on local Minnesota radio in the early 1940s before a run on NBC and ABC from May 29, 1944, to August 28, 1950.



## CAST & CREW

Ethel - Cecilia Cogwin

Albert - Nate Dobson

Grace - Caleigh Pish

George - Nate King

Joe - Yuri Morales

Dottie - Laina Pereira

Fred - Carlin Hanford

Edith - Carly Jane Mackowski

Mr. Brown - Luke Helal/ Danny Sabo

Mr. Smith - Nathan Scully

Mrs. Brown - Anne Sophie Muleiro

Friends in front of curtain - Ana Sofia Cogwin, Jake Andrews, Holly Smith, Alfonso Esquivel

Stage Manager: Gabi Urtado

Lights: AJ Winkeler

Sound: Luukas Landen

Stage Right: Brooke Brinegar

Stage Left: Bridget Brinegar

Hair & Make-up: Holly Smith, Violet Andrews, Brooke Brinegar, Bridget Brinegar, Daniela Castillon

Understudies: Holly Smith, Daniela Castillon, Violet Andrews, Danny Sabo, Alfonso Esquivel





## CELEBRATING WITH BISHOP JOE S. VÁSQUEZ

On March 1, the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Austin hosted the St. Thomas Aquinas Mass, a special celebration which honors middle school students for their leadership and service to the community. Holy Family congratulates our four National Merit scholars, Nate D., Alayna O., Sydney G. and Sophie J.



## Outdoor Stations of the Cross provides prayer opportunity

The Angels 4 Life Club members lead Mrs. Morley's 4th graders in praying a special Stations of the Cross for Life, based on the scriptural Stations of the Cross from Pope St. John Paul II, incorporating

special prayers written by the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities. For the next few weeks, different club members will be praying with different classes in grades 4 - 6 each day.





# Blue Angels Athletics

HFCS Basketball teams finish strong this CAPPs season



Congratulations to Holy Family Catholic School 2022-2023 Blue Angels basketball teams who worked hard and improved tremendously throughout this CAPPs season.

Our younger teams practiced hard and never gave up. Improvement was the key and they showed that in every game.

The 7/8 teams showed that practice and hard work from their earlier years pay off.

Our 7/8 6A girls had a 5-3 winning record, and 7/8 6A, and 4A boys both finished 4-4.

Congratulations to the 7/8 6A boys - pictured above - for their strong second-place CAPPs tournament finish.



## GO EAGLES!

Cheerleaders perform during the rescheduled Spirit Rally.







## Annual Gala celebrates, supports Holy Family

Smiles and glitz were on full display for a night of dinner and dancing at the annual Holy Family Heart of Angels Gala on Saturday, February 11 at the Renaissance Hotel Austin.

An important fundraiser for Holy Family, at least 265 individuals, couples, clergy, and religious joined faculty and staff for a night of music, fun, food, and live and silent auctions.

The event, organized by the Office of Advancement Director Gina Kerley, event coordinator Evie Cascarano, and event chair, Lauren Rogers, was supported by very generous sponsors,

families, and businesses who donated items for the auctions, such as a diamond cross necklace, a beach or ski trip, and the famous in-home Italian dinner donated by the school's president, Mr. Tim Cullen and his wife, Paula.

Just before bidding began for the Italian dinner, Mr. Cullen serenaded the audience with his own rendition of "That's Amore!"

Attendees were thanked for previous commitments to Fund-a-Need, which is an annual specific goal to raise money for a particular request. Previous



needs included a pavilion, sound, and lighting for the stage, green space on the Holy Family property, new technology tools, and a kiln, which was installed





in the new Wisdom building for art projects.

This year, faculty and staff are the recipients of your Fund-a-Need generosity, which will include professional development, curriculum resources, supplies, and additional financial support for our teachers. To date, \$91,000 has been raised for the 2023 Fund-a-Need.

“The evening was a true testament to how strong our community is and how much each of us is committed to the educational experience of EVERY student that crosses our doors,” said Kerley, who also expressed appreciation for the sponsors.

Students volunteered from St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School to sell raffle tickets and “Heads or Tails” blinking hearts for Austin FC tickets. Their assistance was greatly appreciated.

Students, families, and teachers all step up during Gala season with beautiful classroom projects and baskets, which are



part of the silent auction each year. They offered personalized prayer boxes, hand-painted birdhouses, the All-Saints Book, and Sister Mary Avila’s Cross Collage Art.

“The Gala is the largest fundraising event we have each year, but it is also the perfect opportunity to celebrate our school and come together as a community,” said Kerley.

Kerley, along with her husband Kevin and Mrs. Cascarano, were joined by event chair Lauren Rogers and her husband Brent to unload many boxes into the hotel for the event. When asked what she would do for the Superbowl held the very next day following the Gala, she quipped, “Sleeping!”

*Clockwise from opposite page, top: Tim Cullen serenades the audience; student Yuri Morales speaks to the audience; Mr. & Mrs. Juhlke with Fr. Dean; Many of the HFCS teachers supported by Fund-A-Need*

## Gala Sponsors

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### Virtues

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The Hodge Team

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Mary Jo Kilburn



## A Special Thanks:

Thank you to our amazing gala committee, especially Lauren Rogers, this year's Event Chair.

We would also like to thank the numerous event day parent volunteers as well as the Savio students who helped make the evening a memorable one!



# SILVER ANGELS

## Fernando & Beatriz Rey support HFCS, their grandchildren

In taking a closer look at two Holy Family Catholic School Silver Angels, Fernando, and Beatriz Rey, you'd never guess that they have been married for 58 years, have six grandchildren, and as for one of them, developed hundreds of thousands of images of the moon for NASA.



Fernando Rey, along with his wife Bea, who is also the Silver Angels Committee chair, are grandparents of four Holy Family students and one St. Dominic Savio student.

Before retirement, Mr. Rey was a lab technician and photographer in Bogota, Colombia, whose main work in the 1960s was to shoot and develop photographs to be used in making new maps of Bolivia and Colombia.

"It was challenging because we took our photographs from airplanes, then developed 8x8 prints to produce the new maps," said Mr. Rey.

He was later hired by a company in New York that was contracted to photograph and develop 450,000 photographs of the moon, so NASA could effectively explore it.

"It was a very exciting job," said Mr. Rey. "We started with developing 50 rolls of film a day, before

jumping up to 500 roles each day."

One of the most exciting discoveries by Mr. Rey was uncovering the film process known as solarization. In photography, solarization is the effect of tone reversal observed in cases of extreme overexposure of the photographic film in the camera. Most likely, the effect was first observed in scenery photographs including the sun.

The couple moved to the Austin area to support their grandchildren, which includes providing valuable Silver Angel assistance to the Holy Family Parent's Association and helping with many events for Holy Family Catholic School.

Please consider volunteering with the Silver Angels. For more information, contact Parent Association President Alexis Dobson.



## SILVER ANGELS SHOW SUPPORT THROUGH:

- **Coffee and Kleenex**
- **Grandparents Day**
- **Book Fair**
- **Eat n' Treat**
- **Run with the Angels**

The Silver Angels cooked more than

# 800

hot dogs for Eat n' Treat this year!

## DID YOU KNOW?



# WHY WE GIVE

## Dennon, HFCS Parents

First and foremost, as parents of four children, we believe it is our primary responsibility to educate our children, and our responsibility alone. It is also our vocation to be the best parents that God wants us to be for our children. In deciding on where to send our children for formal schooling, we place a high priority on ensuring our children experience more consistent exposure to our Catholic faith and values than if they attended a public school. For us, having our children attend Holy Family Catholic School helps to extend what we strive to teach in the home.



Neither Margit nor I are from the Austin area. We have moved a number of times over the years, but we have decided that the Austin area is now our home and a huge reason for that is the community and friendships we have developed through Holy Family Catholic School and our home parish of St. Vincent de Paul. We are incredibly fortunate to have met so many wonderful people and families. We truly cherish the ability to share in the challenges of being parents in this day and age with close friends going through the same things, knowing there is great support for anything we may need. We've seen countless examples of how the Holy Family parent community and the St. Vincent de Paul parish community rally to support one another in times of need and also know how to really have fun together. I consistently share stories about our community and how special it is with my friends and family in other parts of the country where the sense of community and commitment to the Catholic faith is trending in a different direction. In this respect, Margit and I count our

blessings every day.

I am the product of Catholic schools and Margit's public school system in Germany included religion classes (instruction for Catholic or Lutheran faiths). I look back fondly on my own educational experience and would not change it for the world, and we hope for something similar for our kids. We also recognize that there are incredible challenges to the sustainability of Catholic schools and the Church. Margit and I are proud to commit whatever we can to our community at Holy Family Catholic School because we know we have something truly unique and special here. We are incredibly grateful for the school's administration, staff, and faculty for their choice of an institutional vocation to support our collective responsibility as parents in this challenge of education and forming our children according to our Catholic values and faith. Our school's administration, staff, and faculty have many choices in their own careers but have decided to work and serve here and deserve our support and gratitude.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MARCH 24

Parent/Teacher  
Conferences  
Early Dismissal

## MARCH 25

**Taste of Savio**  
10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Savio  
All 5th-8th grade  
students are invited to  
experience Savio in a  
fun-filled event led by  
students, faculty & staff.

## MARCH 25

Blue Angel Boutique  
9:00-10:30 a.m.

## APRIL 4

Chrism Mass

## APRIL 6

Holy Thursday  
Early Dismissal

## APRIL 7

Good Friday No School

## APRIL 10

No School

## APRIL 11

Blue Angel Boutique  
4:00-5:00 p.m.

## APRIL 13

Progress Reports

## APRIL 25

Spirit Night at Santa  
Catarina

## APRIL 28

Middle School Dance

## MAY 5

Run with the Angels

## MAY 23

Grade 8 Promotion  
Ceremony

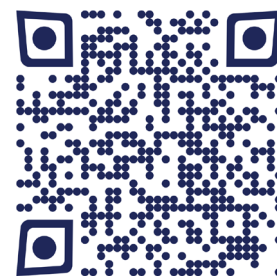
## MAY 24

Field Day

## MAY 26

Last Day of School

Scan to see more  
events on the  
school calendar:



Holy Family  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



**NEW STUDENT/FAMILY WELCOME!**

4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
April 18, 2023

*We look forward to hosting our newest Blue Angels!*

For more information on Holy Family Catholic School  
contact Grace Everett - [geverett@holyfamilycs.org](mailto:geverett@holyfamilycs.org).



# THANK YOU!

## Angel Fund 2022-2023



*A Fund Supporting the Students  
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## EMBRACING TRADITION

Students Alice B., Nate K., Gail C., Jorge C., and Caidyn G. display the icons they created in Sister Teresa Benedicta's 8th grade class. Through the project, students learned that icons are not simply artwork, but are sacred images used in religious devotion. Caidyn shared, "Similarly to singing a hymn, making an icon was a form of prayer through art. By representing and worshiping God through icon writing, I represented and worshiped God as I would by praying on my knees."