



ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"Teaching goodness, discipline and knowledge for over 150 years"

FALL/WINTER 2013-2014

ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING YEAR! ENROLLMENT INCREASES AGAIN!

It's hard to believe that we could break our own enrollment record but we did! We ended the 2012-2013 academic year with 852 students. When we opened our doors in September, it was with **962 students, an all-time high for St. Raymond Elementary School.** We welcomed students from Blessed Sacrament, St. Anthony and St. Mary Star of the Sea, Catholic schools that sadly closed in June, as well as some from public schools and those new to the area.

In addition to new students, we also added an 8th grade Honors class, a third 2nd grade class and a third 3rd grade class, and expanded our Italian program to include 5th grade. The following new faculty members joined us this year: Doris Tachinelli, Pre-K; Christine Altschuler, Grade 3; Rosina Lim, Grade 5; Josephine Casale, 5th through 7th grade Italian classes; and Anthony Puleo, Grade 8.

"We are elated to have once again broken our own record and to be able to welcome these students into the St. Raymond School family," said principal Sister Patricia Brito, RJM. "St. Raymond is now the largest Catholic elementary school in the Archdiocese of New York. While our numbers increased, we also increased our academic and extracurricular activities to better serve our students. We are truly a 24/7 campus. Call us to come and see us in action!"

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 17-18, 2013
CHRISTMAS SHOW

January 26-February 1
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

March 16
ST. PATRICK/ST. JOSEPH
CELEBRATION

March 23
PARISH ART SHOW

April 8
SPRING SHOW

VIP RECEPTION A HUGE SUCCESS ROOFTOP BLESSED AND FIVE HONOREES RECOGNIZED

This year's Parish-School VIP Reception was an unparalleled success. The day started with a beautiful Mass in which our Boy and Girl Scouts, altar servers, junior and bell choirs, band, cheerleaders and other students participated. In addition, thanks to Jack McArdle, Class of '62 and the District Deputy for the New York State Council of the Knights of Columbus, the Knights' Color Corps also participated.

Following Mass, Monsignor Graham blessed the new Rooftop Play Area. One of our honorees, James Honohan, Class of '67, was instrumental in kicking off the Rooftop Play Area construction with a generous donation.

After the Rooftop blessing was concluded, the VIP Reception officially began. We honored the following five outstanding individuals for their service and friendship to St. Raymond Elementary School and to the community at large: Lenny Caro, Bronx Chamber of Commerce President; Roseann Carotenuto, Regional Superintendent, Northeast Bronx, for the Archdiocese of New York; Florence M. Honohan, Longtime Parishioner; James Honohan, Class of '67; and Ray Negron, New York Yankees Consultant and Author.

For more details and photos, see the Special Edition VIP Reception E-News posted on our website, www.straymondelementary.org.



Sr. Patricia Brito with VIP Honorees holding their Citations from the Bronx Borough President (left to right): Roseann Carotenuto, James Honohan, Florence M. Honohan, Ray Negron and Lenny Caro.

Dear Alum and Friends
of St. Raymond Elementary School,

We are delighted to continue to send you good news about our elementary school here in the beloved Bronx.



Catholic education is alive and well in Parkchester, thanks to the incredible work and dedication of our principal, Sister Patricia Brito, RJM, and her assistant principals and faculty members.

The reason for our Catholic schools is to teach about Jesus and to pass on the Catholic faith. We do that with daily prayers, class Masses, school Masses (in the auditorium because the children will not fit into the church!), confessions, special services for the Blessed Mother and a variety of special outreach programs for the poor and needy. Our religion program is solid. We received Archdiocesan commendations for our religion scores at the end of the school year! We involve our families in a program called Family Faith Formation Sundays, which brings our parents together for socializing, adult religious instruction and a family Mass. Our parents are also encouraged to have their children baptized, if that was not previously done, and to attend our special meetings for sacramental preparation. We are a Catholic school and it is fun to be Catholic!

Please carefully read our newsletter and you will see all of the terrific programs and activities that are available to our children and their families here at St. Raymond Elementary School. Please say a prayer for us and come back for a visit. HAPPY HOLY DAYS TO YOU ALL!

Sincerely,

Monsignor John Graham
Pastor

St. Raymond Elementary School Newsletter

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Dear Alum and Friends of St. Raymond's,



Although 2013 is drawing to a close, we still have more than half of the school year ahead of us. Every year, it seems to go by faster and this year is no different. So much has happened since school opened in September. We amazed even ourselves by breaking yet another enrollment record this year! We built some new classrooms, added an eighth grade Honors Program, and kicked off a Math Initiative to improve our students' math scores. We continue Common Core professional development and are preparing for Interim Assessments. And it's only December! Yet, faith formation remains our strength and the core of our program. Our mission is not just to educate children but **to educate them in the Catholic faith**. Seventy five of our students made a commitment to prepare for Confirmation. This was witnessed by their parents and the parish community on Sunday, November 24.

Our students took the TACHS exam on November 8 to gain entrance into Catholic high school. Those results will come through in mid-January.

Monsignor Graham blessed our new Rooftop Play Area as part of a very successful Parish-School Reunion VIP Reception. But more is to be done in that area. We want to add a jungle gym and other playground equipment on the ground level near the new Rooftop. But it will require additional fundraising to make it a reality. If you are able to help, we would greatly appreciate your support for this project.

See the rest of the newsletter for our many Fall happenings.

To all of you, thank you for your support and continued faith in us. Best wishes to you and your loved ones for a Blessed Christmas and a New Year of peace, prosperity and good health.

Gratefully,

Patricia Brito, RJM
Principal

ROBOT VISIT POINTS TO NEED FOR STRENGTHENED STEM CURRICULUM



Our seventh and eighth graders had a chance to interact with a humanoid robot that visited our school in October.

NAO, a fully programmable robot manufactured by Teq, is capable of recognizing a large number of objects; can detect and recognize faces; can recognize speech; and can speak up to nine languages. Students enjoyed watching the lifelike robot move and hearing it speak.

The need for increased focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) is a priority at St. Raymond. Our visit from NAO convinced Sr. Patricia of the value of having a robot as part of our STEM curriculum. "We need to prepare our students not only for high school and college," said Sister, "but for the years beyond when they will be part of the labor force. We are currently seeking grants so that NAO can become the centerpiece of our STEM curriculum."

Depending upon the bundle chosen, the cost can range from \$21,000 to \$50,000. For more information about NAO, go to www.teq.com.

FIRST QUARTER ROUNDUP

The first quarter of the 2013-2014 academic year started off with a bang. These last few months we've had many chances to celebrate our faith in God, our love of learning, our commitment to our community, and our service to others.



Mass of the Holy Spirit

The entire school (except for our Pre-K students, who were still getting acclimated) attended the Mass of the Holy Spirit, the first Mass of the 2013-2014 school year.



Halloween Fun

Our students proudly show off their Halloween artwork.



Respect Life Assembly

Less than one month later, we hosted the Respect Life Assembly, which was sponsored by the Bronx Catholic Schools Office. Nearly 900 eighth graders from 21 Northeast Bronx Catholic schools assembled at St. Raymond for presentations on chastity from Generation Life.



All Saints' Day Mass

In costumes depicting their favorite saints — from St. Raymond to St. Patrick and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to St. Claudine Thévenet — our students processed into the auditorium as a parade of saints on November 1 for the All Saints' Day Mass.



Scholastic Book Fair

Books and more books! Our youngest to our oldest had a chance to visit the Scholastic Book Fair the week of October 21, to peruse and perchance to buy.



TriState Italian American Congress Scholarship

Seventh grader Vincent Magnaldi won a scholarship from the TriState Italian American Congress. His Eminence Cardinal Edward Egan was present for the award ceremony.



Dress Down Day

Kudos to students and staff who raised more than \$3,000 on Dress Down Day, October 25. We made donations to Maria Fareri Children's Hospital and to the Gill family, whose daughter Katie was tragically killed by a car at a church carnival in early October. We continue to remember the Gill family in our prayers.



Thanksgiving Mass

Pilgrims led the way into the auditorium for the Thanksgiving Mass, where the food baskets that Pre-K to Grade 5 had filled and decorated were placed on the stage. The children collected all the fixings for Thanksgiving dinner for local families in need during the Thanksgiving Food Drive. The baskets were distributed within the community after Mass.

ANNUAL DONOR HONOR ROLL

*St. Raymond Elementary School wishes to thank the following generous donors who made contributions from September 1, 2012 through August 31, 2013.**

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**If you made a donation in this time period but do not appear on this list, please accept our apologies. We made our best effort to include all donors.*

Looking for a special gift this Christmas season? Donate to the Rooftop Play Area in honor or in memory of a loved one.

LEVELS OF GIVING

Play Area Partners	\$25,000 Naming Opportunity
Friends of the Play Area	\$10,000 Naming Opportunity
Children's Helpers.....	\$5,000
Playmates	\$2,500
Play Area Supporters	\$1,000
Builders Club.....	\$250



All gifts will be recognized on a Giving Tree prominently placed on the Rooftop Play Area. Play Area Partners and Friends of the Play Area will also receive name recognition on a piece of playground equipment.

Make checks payable to St. Raymond Elementary School. Donations can be made online through our credit card vendor. **Go to www.NYCharities.org/app/straymondelementary.**

- MasterCard
 Visa
 American Express

My gift is in honor of/in memory of (circle one)

Please contact Elaine Nole at 718-597-3232 x2232 or nole@straymondelementary.org, if you have any questions.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Want to keep current on the latest happenings at St. Raymond Elementary School?



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You can also visit our website at www.straymondelementary.org for updates, and for current and archived issues of E-News.