

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## Alumni News

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2015

*A newsletter published for parents, alumni and friends of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School*

7500 Pearl Street, Bethesda MD 20814 • (301) 654-5376  
www.bethesda-lourdes.org • alumni@bethesda-lourdes.org

## From the Principal's Desk

As I sit down to write this welcome letter, the children of Lourdes are preparing to attend Stations of the Cross, as they do each week during Lent. The snow has interrupted school too many times this year, and we are happy to be back for a five-day week! (Well, some of us are happy.) Our Catholic Schools Week Open House had to be postponed due to snow, but the rest of the week was great fun. Fittingly, we kicked off the week with two Sunday Masses attended by Lourdes students, faculty, staff, parents, friends and parishioners. Before the final benediction, two of our 7th Graders shared their heartfelt words and feelings about Lourdes with the congregation. Quinn Loftus, whose great-grandparents were parishioners at Lourdes, said "It is here that we learn to care for each other and to share in the joy of what makes Lourdes special. Here, I feel a sense of belonging and safety." And Beatrice Ieronimo, a Lourdes student since she was three years old, said "Going to an amazing school like Our Lady of Lourdes has made me a better person, and I am so thankful for the people I encounter there. They have shown me how to be a reflection of God through their own example."

Listening to our young people speak about Lourdes, I'm reminded of how fortunate we are to be a part of the community. I have been here for ten years, and over those years my faith has been tested and strengthened over and over again. When my sons were deployed, and I couldn't sleep at night, a Lourdes child gave me a rosary. It became a touchstone for me during those long nights. When I heard the children of Lourdes pray for my dear friend who was suffering so badly with cancer, my heart almost overflowed. When I could go and sit with her during her chemo treatment, I told her stories of her Lourdes students and her Lourdes colleagues. I knew those stories actually made her feel a little better. A couple of weeks ago when I saw a sixth grade boy and his Pre-K brother heading over to church with their teacher to light a candle for a family member who had died, I knew that they would never forget that moment. I am convinced, after these ten years that Our Lady truly does watch over us here at Lourdes and I'm pretty sure she is pleased with what she sees.

God Bless,



Patricia McGann, Principal



Photo by Freed Photography



# Alumni Come Home to Lourdes



On the cold, rainy November evening before Thanksgiving, forty Lourdes alumni gathered for our Young Alumni Get-Together. On this same evening, our Vice Principal, Mr. Long, expected the arrival of an 18-wheeler truck filled with trees for the first Lourdes Christmas tree and wreath sale. As 20-30-year old alumni filed into the school and greeted their fellow classmates with high fives and hugs, the enormous truck pulled up to the gate. Without hesitation, a group of young alumni voluntarily donned work gloves, headed back out into the cold and joined a few of our middle and high schoolers to unload trees and wreaths from the truck.

---

*“Not only has Lourdes prepared me for the rigors of high school academics and sports, but it also has been one of the most close knit communities in which I have been involved.” – Ken Foo, Class of 2008*

---

Long after the alumni get-together had ended, there were still 15-20 young men out on the field working hard. These young people were back “home”, doing whatever it was we needed them to do, because they were taught very young to help out when help was needed.

Our alumni embody the Lourdes legacy and a vision of the kind of people our current students will be. All of our alumni are a testament to the hard work, sacrifices, values and lessons they learned at Lourdes as children walking these hallways. Having our wonderful alumni return to Lourdes and re-connecting with so many alumni around the country made us realize that we are given the gift of these Lourdes students – past and present, young and old – and we are grateful.

We are so proud of our 8th Grader John Paul Lavalley who was the First Place Winner in the 2015 Maryland Right to Life Essay Contest for Grades 7-9! His good friend and classmate Gabriella Capizzi placed second. You can read their personal and moving essays on our school website at [www.bethesda-lourdes.org](http://www.bethesda-lourdes.org).

## Ready, Set, Bid!

On February 7, Lourdes families, faculty, staff and friends came together for a lively night at the 2nd Annual Lion's Oar Silent Auction and Fundraiser. The theme was "Winter Wonderland" but the atmosphere inside Bethesda's Barking Dog Bar & Grill was warm and inviting.

With over 100 people in attendance, phones in hand and eyes glued to the iPads around the bidding stations, the action was fast and furious! Some of the amazing auction items up for bid included a round of golf at Congressional County Club, Washington Nationals tickets (with accompanying parking pass!), a 2-night stay at Casesar's Palace in Las Vegas with 2 tickets to Jersey Boys and an official NFL football signed by Hall-of-Fame running back Emmitt Smith.

It was wonderful to see our community come together, have fun and give so generously to Our Lady of Lourdes. In all, over \$20,000 was raised and will be used to make structural improvements to our 73-year-old school and update the technology inside our classrooms.

## Statue Dedication To Honor the Sisters of Saint Francis

The Sisters of Saint Francis taught in our school from the first day the school opened in 1941 until the early 1980's. Their dedication to the children of Lourdes and to Catholic education is unparalleled. Over the years, 93 Sisters lived in the convent, and taught and cared for the children of Our Lady of Lourdes School. In June we will dedicate a bronze statue of a Sister of Saint Francis, which will be placed in the front of the school. There will be a plaque placed on the wall of the school building with the names of all of the Sisters of Saint Francis who served our school and parish.

As soon as we have a firm date for the arrival and installation of the statue, we will contact our alumni. We hope that you will be able to join us for the dedication ceremony and a reception following. If you are unable to attend, perhaps you will be able to send a letter or an email that we can present to the Sisters on that day.

## Alumni Notes

**Janet Brown Gean**, Class of 1959, writes: "My mother, Dorothy Plitt Brown was very active in the school and cafeteria. She made my sister and I the first navy blue jumper with white peter pan collar blouse and we walked from room to room to model them. So exciting. In kindergarten, I was selected to walk beside the May Queen. Our mothers made our dresses. My memories of Lourdes are very special. The 40 hour traditional Mass, singing in the Choir with Mrs. Mann on the organ

(she played at my wedding), waiting in the tunnel if there was bad weather for Mass, all the dear nuns, Monsignor Fisher, Father Wummer and Warton and of course, Sister Emma. First Fridays were my favorite - honey dipped donuts after Mass."

**Nancy and Perry Browning**, both from the Class of 1952, write: "We met in the 3rd grade at Lourdes and graduated together in 1952; Nancy went on to Immaculata and Perry went to St. John's. After we graduated in 1956 we both went on to college, after graduating we got married in 1960. Now 54 years later we live half time in Vermont and the other half in FL. We have five children and 11 grandchildren."



*Lourdes 3rd Grade Class, 1946.*

## Upcoming Events

- May 14, 2015 – Muffins for Moms and Grandmothers and May Procession
- June 4, 2015 – 8th Grade Graduation Mass and Family Reception
- June 2015 – Dedication of the statue to honor the Sisters of Saint Francis

*All are invited! Please call the school at 301-654-5376 for more information.*

## Stay Connected

Follow alumni events and news on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/OLOLAlumni](http://www.facebook.com/OLOLAlumni).

Visit [www.bethesda-lourdes.org/alumni/updates](http://www.bethesda-lourdes.org/alumni/updates) and send us your updated contact information for our alumni database. Thank you!