

## Welcome

~ By Trace Dunton

In this issue of V.M.S press we, the students of the junior class, will write about the events of the months of November and December, from the Thanksgiving Liturgy to our own Christmas play. We also have many poems from our class! This is a great time for joy, so have fun reading this Christmas edition.

## Faraday Lecture

~ By Brynn Bodair and Bailey McIntyre

On November 18, 2008, the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students went to the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall in Pittsburgh for the presentation of many science experiments. The presenter was a science teacher named Mr. Bob M. Many experiments were shown in a non-stop order. A favorite one occurred when our presenter sucked in helium, making his voice become high pitched. Then he took in the gas [sulfur hexafluoride](#) making his voice very deep. Following this experiment was

an “explosive” presentation. Mr. Bob had three balloons filled with different gases. The first balloon was filled with oxygen, the second with hydrogen, and the third with a mix of hydrogen and oxygen. The first balloon made a moderate pop when lit. The second one made a louder sound, but the third was the winner because the oxygen caused an immediate combustion. Another interesting experiment involved a metal pipe, a cup, and heat. Once a metal tube was heated, it seemed as if you could “pour sound” into a cup when you turned the tube in an oblique position. It was actually the hot air rising and escaping from the tube, when turned in a vertical position, that made a sound similar to that produced by a horn. Hot air truly rises!

During another demonstration, he took a volunteer from the crowd and placed him in a black garbage bag and sucked all the air from the bag with a vacuum cleaner. This made the bag adhere tightly to the volunteer, so that we could see all the details of his body. Another trick involved an unopened Pepsi can that had been emptied by a volunteer who had poked two holes: one at the top and one at the bottom of its rounded lateral surface. Later, he readjusted the holes at a certain angle and suspended the can. When he blew air on the rounded surface of the can, it started spinning.

A different experiment was called the “methane mamba”. To make this work,

he slid a rubber stopper through a glass tube. Then he inserted the stopper securely into the mouth of a funnel made from the top half of a two liter plastic soda bottle. Next, he connected a hose to the glass tube. Finally, he placed soapy water in the funnel. Methane gas bubbled up through the funnel of soapy water and a buoyant column of suds grew gracefully upward like a large bubbly snake swaying elegantly in the air currents in the room. Igniting this methane mamba provided a rather charming effect. For the “crystal ball” experiment, Mr. Bob used a large bucket, dry ice, soap solution, and a paper towel. He dipped in the solution the folded towel which he slid across the top of the bucket filled with dry ice. A transparent film of soap covered the bucket. Slowly, a crystal ball made of CO<sub>2</sub> formed. Next, our scientist called two volunteers to the stage to have a race with plastic gallons of water. The winner had to empty the jug in the least amount of time. Then he personally raced with the winner. The competing child turned the plastic gallon upside down to pour out the water; however, Mr. Bob shook it with spiral motions which created “tornado-like” movement of air inside the container. This caused him to win the race.

After the Faraday Lecture, the students and teachers enjoyed lunch at Panera Bread. Hopefully, we will be able to demonstrate some of these experiments at a future V.M.S. Science Fair. Overall, the older children had a wonderful experience with the fantastic and awesome experiments presented at this year’s Faraday Lecture. Hopefully, we will get to enjoy more experiments next year.

## **The Thanksgiving Presentation**

~By Ricky Cavallo

On November 25<sup>th</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders gave the entire student body a power point presentation about Thanksgiving. At the beginning we had a quiz about the history of Thanksgiving. We later learned facts about the Pilgrims, about Indian Tribes who still celebrate Thanksgiving today, and how Thanksgiving became a holiday. We also learned about Thanksgiving traditions in the past and the present time. After that, we solved a word scramble about Thanksgiving. After the facts, we watched a film about the Pilgrims. We learned about the hardships and sicknesses they fought, and the story of Squanto. He was the last of his Indian Tribe, so he went to live with the Pilgrims. The Indians helped the Pilgrims survive, and these people later celebrated the first Thanksgiving. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders taught us a lot about Thanksgiving. Although we believed that we knew much about Thanksgiving, apparently, we didn’t even answer half of the questions correctly. We would not know as much about this holiday without their presentation.

projects the sound out of speakers hidden in the ceiling.

The sound system really helps the students who talk softly, because it picks up their voices and projects them loudly.

All the students love this new sound system, and hope it will help them improve this year's play.

## **Thanksgiving Liturgy**

~ By Michelle Karabin

On November 26, 2008 the Thanksgiving Liturgy was celebrated by Father Timothy Kruthaupt. The children in Sr. Juliana's class had the responsibility of preparing the Mass. Anna Billey and Stephen Kendrish were altar servers. The gospel was the well known story about the ten lepers cured by Jesus. Only one of them came back to thank Him after he was healed. During the homily, Father did a great job because he invited children of all ages to share their spiritual insights. By so doing, he captured the attention of even our three year old children. He talked about certain ways of thanking people around the holidays. The children of Sr. Juliana's class sang the responsorial psalm and the communion meditation song in Swahili, a commonly used language in western Africa. We all learned that we should be thankful for the unique blessings we have.

## **The New Sound System**

~ By Vayda Farino and Anna Billey

Our school just bought a new sound system for the Christmas play, "A Dickens of a Christmas". This new system, installed by Kingfish Entertainment, works with the help of six microphones hanging from the ceiling. These are then connected to a box which

## **The Christmas Play**

~By Sara Norton and Ben Pimental

This year's play was called "A Dickens of a Christmas". It took place on December 18-19, 2008. This play was a parody of the original Charles Dickens' novel "A Christmas Carol". The main characters were: Ross Michael (Ebenezer Scrooge), Brynn Bodair (The Ghost of Christmas Past), Austin Phelan (The Ghost of Christmas Present), Gabi Omatick (The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Be), Rickey Cavallo (Jacob Marley), Tyler Dunton (Bob Cratchit), Elise Ullery (Mrs. Cratchit), and Ben Pimental (Tiny Tim Cratchit).

This play was about a person named Ebenezer Scrooge. He was a clutching, covetous old man, who was haunted by his former business partner, Jacob Marley, and by three spirits. This happened so he could turn sorrow into happiness. At the end of the story, Scrooge becomes a very kind and giving person.

This play was directed by Mrs. Kathleen Frazier, who is our music teacher. Mrs. Frazier is very nice and organized. She assigned our parts even before school started. Mrs. Frazier chose a very nice play to present this year. She worked very hard

to show us how to interpret, act, and live the role of our characters.

## **The Christmas Liturgy**

~By Sarah Ward and Olivia Zambruno

The V.M.S. Christmas Liturgy was held on Dec. 23, 2008. The celebrant was Monsignor James Gaston. The students participating in the preparation of the Liturgy are from Sister Donatella's and Mrs. Cummins' class. They did a very good job on all the readings and the songs. The V.M.S. choir sang very well, so we were immersed in the holiday spirit with the Advent and Christmas songs they sang.

Monsignor Gaston, in his homily, talked about the true meaning of Christmas and why we celebrate December 25<sup>th</sup>. He really got everyone in the mood for Christmas.

After the liturgy, the first, second, and third year students of Sr. Donatella's class performed a small Christmas skit. It was about the coming of Baby Jesus. They worked hard at it and did very well. They truly conveyed to us the glorious message of Jesus' birth.

## **The Nativity Scene**

~By Ben Pimental

This year, the nativity scene displayed near the Good Shepherd entrance was kindly donated by a generous friend of the Sisters, Mrs. Madeleine Delallo. I talked to the students in my class and they said that it is very cool. Michelle Karabin even stated, " I like it, it is big and amazing." This nativity scene includes the beautiful figurines of Mary, Jesus, Joseph, a shepherd, the three wisemen and several sheep. To the Italian "presepio" Sr. Anna Maria added running water, Christmas music, and a small fire. So, on behalf of all the students at V. M. S., many thanks to Mrs. Delallo!

## **Christmas Wreaths**

~By Halle Blair and Vayda Farino

This year the fourth through sixth graders made Christmas wreaths with the help of Mrs. Dana Anderson, a V.M.S. parent. The wreaths were our Christmas project. Each wreath was made out of pine cones glued onto a twisted, circular grape vine. The students had to bring in their own

pine cones. They later glued natural and seasonal decorations onto the wreaths. Mrs. Anderson provided us with prepared grape vines, acorns, bows, mini ornaments, and many other festive decorations. This was a very fun project, although it took a couple of weeks to complete. Mrs. Anderson also helped Sr. Juliana's and Mrs. Kandra's class with the completion of pine cone Christmas trees. We thank Mrs. Anderson, and hope that she will help us again with future projects.

## **New Year's Eve**

~By Ross Michael and Dominick Monstrola

The time of the year in which we gather to stay up all night and celebrate the memories, good or bad, of the past year is known as New Year's Eve. As we usually do at the end of each year, we will gather with family and friends to remember amazing situations, and funny, happy, sad, exciting, and strange events of the past year. Of course, we all have to admit that watching the ball drop, fireworks going off, and counting down the last seconds is very exciting! Hearing the clatter of pots and pans is a noisy New Year's tradition. Last but not least, fireworks create amazing designs of lights, exhibiting a true celebration of joy and technological art!

New Year's Eve is no doubt fun and enjoyable. It's a pity that it only comes once a year.

## **Our Poetry Corner**

### **Christmas Poem**

~By Brynn Bodair

Three kings were traveling from afar,  
Guided by a magnificent star.  
Mary and Joseph walked to and fro,  
On a cold winter night filled with snow  
*Ref. Star so bright, fills the night,  
With God's blessed delight.*  
Who knew that the only Lord of all,  
Would be found in a poor and cold stall?  
Baby Jesus, lying in the hay,  
You are the reason for Christmas Day.

### **A Spectacular Birth**

~By Michelle Karabin

A bright shining star,  
High up in the sky,  
Led men from afar  
To see a babe lie.  
Incense, gold and myrrh  
They brought to the child  
Laid in a manger  
So sweet and so mild.  
Born in poverty,  
Yet of highly birth,  
He brings novelty  
Of true peace on earth.

## **Make Things Good**

~By Bailey McIntyre

During winter, I feel a little sad,  
That I can't do things with my own dad.  
I like to ride my bike in the sun,  
Or to skateboard on old Gorley's Run.  
I should just forget about those past things,  
And I should see what winter brings,  
Like singing Christmas carols down my street.  
Everybody will come! Hurry, grab a seat!  
I will try to enjoy Christmas this year,  
And wait... is that Santa that I hear?

## **Baby Jesus**

~By Halle Blair

Baby Jesus, the new born king,  
Came on earth to make our hearts sing.  
'Twas the first great Noel,  
In the land of Israel,  
He lay his head in the cold hay,  
It was such a wonderful day!

## **Christmas Day**

~By Eddie Kiliany

That very first Christmas day,  
A baby lay on soft hay.  
And even though he was a child,  
He saved us from sin, cruel and wild.

So on this great Christmas day,  
We should be loving and pray.  
Our deep sins he will surely forgive,  
So that we all may forever live.

## **Snow**

~By Jackie Pentecost

It's white  
And bright.  
It falls  
In balls.  
It dazzles  
And sparkles.  
It's light  
In flight.  
It comes  
And goes  
With joy  
And cheer.  
It's cold  
And bold.

## **Winter**

~By Cassandra Phelan

I will make a man out of snow.  
On the door I will hang a bow.  
The pile of snow will slowly die,  
But there is no reason to cry.  
For I know, it will soon come back,  
And Santa will bring his big sack.

## The Meaning of Christmas

~By Kacee McNight

Christmas is about when Baby Jesus was born,

Not about presents and popcorn.

It is a very special day,

When Baby Jesus laid in a manger full of hay.

Shepherds came from afar,

When they saw a bright star.

Three wisemen came from far away,

To give gifts to Baby Jesus on this day.

So have fun! It's alright.

Just remember the star that shone on this very special night.

## Santa

~By Anna Billey

Santa wears a red suit

And has shiny black boots.

Santa has a large sack,

And throws it over his back.

Santa has lots of elves,

That put toys upon shelves.

He lives in the North Pole,

I hope you don't get coal.

## The True Meaning of Christmas

~By Christiana Kandra

The true meaning of Christmas is not about a gift,

But it's about something that makes our souls lift.

It's about little Baby Jesus born in a stable,

And very well watched while lying in a cradle.

The little Baby Jesus meant to be,

A healer, who made a blind man see.

Come, with silver and gold on bended knees,

And worship Him for He has our salvation's keys.

"Come, and worship Him!" the angel said,

"Rise and get out of your shepherds' beds.

A baby king is born this very night,

He will be in a stable in bright sight."

He was there right in the stable,

They found Him in a wooden cradle.

So that's the true meaning of Christmas each year,

Why, Christmas is almost here!

## **A Winter Day**

~By Sarah Ward

I look up and see snowflakes falling down,  
Soon I will go for an ice skating round.  
The ground is covered with blankets of  
snow,  
I can feel very cold howling wind blow,  
When I close my eyes to sleep,  
I dream of the Christmas treats.  
Even though this day is done,  
Future holds even more fun.

## **A Christmas poem**

~By Dominick Monstrola

Christmas is joy and fun,  
To Jesus we all run.  
Baby Jesus was born on this day  
He slept in a manger filled with hay.  
Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem city,  
And all the innkeepers said no: what a pity!  
It was the year zero zero  
And now we have a new hero.  
Jesus bore a halo 'round his head  
King Herod knew He had to be dead.  
Three kings traveled from afar,  
While chasing a splendid star.  
Baby Jesus is the king of kings

He came down on the heaven's quiet wings.

## **Christmas Time**

~By Eric Kiliany

Christmas has many joyous times.  
Our Christmas poems have many rhymes.  
Baby Jesus was born on Christmas Day  
Lying in a manger with lots of hay.  
On Christmas day angels were singing,  
And many joyous bells were ringing.

## **Christmas Day**

~By Austin Phelan

Christmas day is full of cheer,  
It only comes once a year.  
Surprising presents I wish to see,  
I hope to find them waiting for me.  
I love to see my nice tree lit up,  
I wonder if Santa brought my pup.  
I love to eat my Christmas dinner,  
Of all the cooks mom is the winner!

## **Star**

~By Olivia Zambruno

The star is ever so bright,  
It lights up the pretty night.  
Above the manger is that star,  
That you can see from oh, so far.  
That star shines with all its might!  
It is a wonderful sight  
For the entire world to see.  
So, come all rejoice with me.

## **Prophecy Acrostic**

~By Ross Michael

**P**eople for Him worldwide.  
**R**edemption will be ours.  
**O**ur fate is in our hands.  
**P**raise his name for all eternity.  
**H**e comes to save us all from sin.  
**E**veryone will live with Him in paradise.  
**C**arry on with Him and you soon will be free!  
**Y**ou worship Him and He will answer you.

## **First Christmas Day**

~By Sidney Anderson

Three kings traveled from afar  
Following that great big star.  
Shepherds in a hurry left their sheep  
To go worship at Jesus' feet.

Mary, Joseph and all of them  
At a stable in Bethlehem.  
Mighty Herod tried to kill,  
But his plan did not fulfill.  
They fled to Egypt then came back:  
Herod had died of heart attack.  
Baby Jesus will come again,  
As always to forgive our sin.

## **Christmas Poem**

~By Trace Dunton

Jesus Christ is finally here,  
The three kings shout, "Jesus is near!"  
The people of Bethlehem run to the stable,  
There he lies so quiet, peaceful and unable.  
It is a day for rejoicing, so keep it in mind,  
And be sure you remember to always be so kind.

## **Christmas Day**

~By Tristian Nelson

Santa is coming soon.  
The sky is filled with Christmas tunes.  
'Tis too foggy tonight,  
But Santa is almost in sight.  
Children will jump fast into bed,

Not a tiny word to be said.

Santa Claus is coming with gifts

To bring to the wonderful kids.

## **Christmas**

~By Ricky Cavallo

Christmas is a very wonderful day,

Full of nice feelings we can hardly say

We may eat and play on Christmas this year,

And receive our toys in our house right here!

But it's not about getting a nice toy,

It is about a special Baby Boy,

He grew up to save the world one sad day,

When we think of him we sit and pray,

On Christmas we get presents from Santa and elves,

But we should never become greedy with ourselves,

Always remember who saved us from sin

And keep Christmas holy with all your kin!

~By Jake Hostetler

On Christmas day it is fun to play,

You must remember who was born in hay,

The good Savior who came with pure love,

Would later ascend to the skies above.

He gave his life for us to be free.

Oh Lord, Jesus, we shall not forget Thee.

## **Conclusion**

~By Jake Hostetler

We have reviewed several events in our winter edition of the VMS press: the field trip, the Thanksgiving Liturgy, the Christmas play, the Christmas Liturgy, and some wonderful poems. We now conclude our winter edition of the VMS press. We wish you a wonderful, safe, and blessed Christmas and a happy New Year!

***MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A  
HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE  
V.M.S. STUDENTS AND STAFF!***

## **Christmas Meaning**