

THE VALIANT

Our Lady of Victory Elementary Alumni Newsletter

Volume 1, August 1, 2017



A Note from Carolyn Kraus:

Dear Our Lady of Victory Alum,

Welcome to the very first edition of our new Alumni newsletter, "The Valiant." We hope this newsletter will help you stay informed of how we live out our mission of Catholic identity, and enhance excellence in academics - with an emphasis on service to others as a way of life. Always remember, our legacy includes YOU! You are living examples of all that we have taught (and teach) here at Our Lady of Victory School. Thank you for the many ways you are contributing to our school. We are not only proud to say you are our graduates; we are honored to say many of you have chosen OLV for your children and grandchildren.

As a first year principal here at OLV, this was my year to watch, look, and listen in order to make decisions about new programs that will make our school even better than it already is. This year, I instituted a homework incentive program for our students called, "Breakfast of Champions." Students who completed all of their homework, and handed it in on time, received a breakfast of pancakes and sausage made by Sister Ellen and me. We had more than 80 students receive this

award each quarter. Let me tell you, Sister Ellen is the best pancake flipper around!

On May 19th we inducted 12 members into the first chapter of the Junior National Honor's Society at our school. They were accepted based on not only their grades, but their abilities to portray good character, citizenship, leadership, and service to others.



The Father Baker Service Club was added to our program list. With the example of Father Baker in mind, the children brainstormed ideas of how they would work to help those in need. We also successfully ran our first Reading Incentive Program for our primary grades called, "Reading Rodeo." The students were challenged to read 75 books in order to become a

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The Start of Something Great!



full-fledged buckaroo and earn their cowboy/cowgirl outfit for the Rodeo. We had more than 55 primary grade students reach that goal! Many others came very close.

We are a full STREAM school. The STREAM program provides 21st Century learning experiences and focuses on Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math. This program brings critical thinking back into education as students become involved in hands on projects throughout the school year. OLV will continue our STREAM program offerings. This year our students had a wealth of opportunities to test their skills at robotics,



engineering, building bridges and buildings with straws and Legos, learning the life cycles via hatching chickens and butterflies, and so much more. This coming year we will also add accelerated math and science courses to the curriculum.

I look forward to our next newsletter with new updates and information about our school. Our doors are always open to you, so please feel free to visit us any time. While you may have been a student for a few years here, know that you are part of our OLV family for life!

May God's peace and blessings be with you always,

Mrs. Carolyn Kraus

At OLV Elementary, we value our Catholic Identity:

The Church's mission includes inviting young people to a relationship with Jesus Christ or deepening an already existing relationship with him. As always, Christ is the first teacher in all of our classrooms. Here at OLV, our Catholic Identity is one of our top priorities. We make it a priority to keep our Catholic Identity strong throughout the year. For example, our students attend mass twice a week, sing in the school choir, and receive the sacrament of Reconciliation four times a year.

Moving forward, we will carry on this guiding principle as each class will design, organize, and carry out a school service project of their choosing. Our seventh and eighth graders will also be required to complete a number of service hours in order to graduate.

Furthering this mindset, our children study a virtue each month and a Saint. From those activities, we hand out character trait awards, which are given out on the first Friday of every month to students who exemplify the virtue of that month.

Educating children in the Catholic faith is very important in forming good habits. We consider this vital to OLV's mission and central to molding the leaders of tomorrow.

Remember When ... Reactions of Alumni when asked at the 120th All-Class Reunion

- *Crystal Beach*
- *Class Trips*
- *Leo Newton*
- *Kindness of the Sisters of St. Joseph*
- *May Crowning*



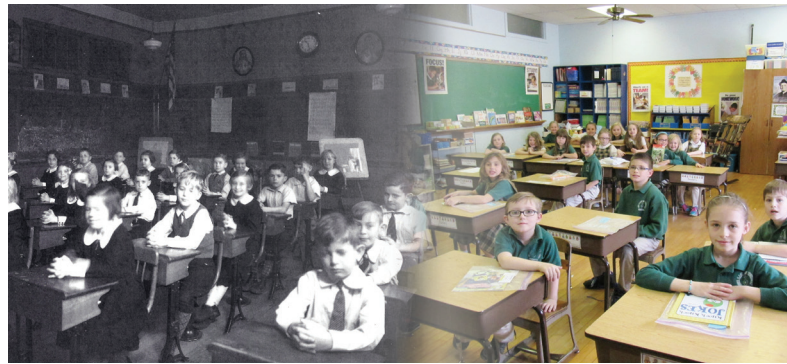


Alumni Relations Sister Ellen O'Keefe:

Many of you already know me from my 48 years associated with OLV School. I'm Sister Ellen O'Keefe and I'm the Director of Special Programs at OLV Elementary School. This newly conceived function

includes keeping our alumni abreast of school happenings. So, it is refreshing that I'm addressing you in our newly created alumni newsletter.

I hope you had the good fortune of attending the "OLV All-Year School Reunion," which was held in July of 2016. It began with Mass in the Basilica and was followed by comradery and good food at the school. I'd like to thank all that planned and organized this meaningful event.



While I won't take much more of your time, please feel free to stop in any time to see our children and programs. You are as much a part of OLV School as our current students and we would love to have you reconnect with us. If I can address any of your questions, I will be happy to do so. Please also send us any news or announcements you would like posted on our website (ourladyofvictoryelementary.org) or highlighted in this newsletter.

Sister Ellen

Marketing and Enrollment at Our Lady of Victory School

Effective marketing is essential to our school's success in today's competitive education environment. We are working diligently to highlight what makes Our Lady of Victory School stand out from all of the rest. There are many things that set us apart from the rest of the Catholic schools in Buffalo. Our biggest WOW factor in marketing our school is the fact that it was founded by Father Nelson H. Baker; a very special man who we pray may one day become a saint. What an honor it will be to say you graduated from OLV when that happens!

In December, principals and pastors in the Diocese of Buffalo had an extraordinary chance to meet with marketing expert, Frank Donaldson, to learn the ABC's of effective Catholic School Development for the 21st century. OLV was in attendance. In order to continuously grow our school, we were taught the importance of identifying a vision and the gifts of individuals who embrace the future success of our school. Here at OLV, we are working hard to do just that as we form a marketing committee of teachers, parents, and administrators to help grow our school. We have had two successful Open Houses, our kindergarten is filling up quickly, and 98 percent of our existing families have committed to returning. Please spread the word to all you know about the wonderful experiences you had at OLV. And, tell those you know how your education helped you succeed in life! It takes a village to keep a school growing throughout the years and ours is filled with success story after success story.



If you wish to continue the mission of OLV Elementary School, or know anyone that may enjoy the newsletter, please reach out to Carolyn Kraus at (716) 828-9434 or ckraus@ourladyofvictory.org.



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Rev. Msgr. Paul J.E. Burkard, *President, Our Lady of Victory Institutions*
Carolyn M. Kraus, *Principal*



A message from Father Paul:

Dear Members of Our Lady of Victory Elementary School family:

Our Lady of Victory Elementary School has more than a one hundred and twenty year history. Imagine the number of girls and boys who entered the doors of our school throughout those years. Our all-year reunion last year was received with great enthusiasm by more than 300 alums and their families. Many more wanted to attend but couldn't. As pastor of Our Lady of Victory Basilica parish, I couldn't be prouder of our school. It is a very real extension of Father Baker's ministry to children, and under his protection, I pray, it will continue his legacy for many more years to come. You are still an important part of our school family. Know of our prayers for you and for all your loved ones. Please pray for our current students, their families and our extensive parish family. May Our Lady of Victory and Father Nelson Baker watch over you always.

Msgr. Paul Burkard