

**Principal's Newsletter**  
**January 30, 2015**

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning."

**Albert Einstein**

As of this week we begin the second semester. It must be every student's goal to improve as the year moves on, to build on accomplishments from the previous quarter. As in the first quarter, report cards are once again available via email. Our Parent Teacher Interview session will be held on **Thursday, February 5th, from 6:00 to 8:00pm.**

**COURSE REGISTRATION FOR 2015-2016**

Since our return from Christmas vacation, students have been involved in getting advisement for courses for next year. Course registration began on Thursday, 29 January, and will continue through Wednesday, 4 February. Students will select their classes through their Power School accounts. If students have not yet met with their guidance counselors, they should do so right away. Parents and guardians with questions about course selection can call their child's guidance counselor or Mr. Castellano, at ext. 209.

**Peace in Action Week**

Continuing our St. Francis Pledge to live out our Franciscan values, our SFP community is focusing on our value: Be living Instruments of Peace. Guided by FYM and Brother James, our Franciscan Mission Coordinator, we are pledging Minutes for Peace through minutes of silence, minutes of prayer for peace, minutes bringing peace to others through positive actions, and minutes diverting negativity and criticism into positive thoughts and solutions. Our Peace Pole in the West Lobby is a daily reminder to bring all nations and cultures together. May Peace Prevail on the Earth.

**January Highlights:**

**Science Research**

This year 11 students in our senior class entered the Intel Science Talent Search. Two members, Natalie Correa and Ariana Gopal, were named national Intel Science Talent Search Semifinalists. Additionally, more than half of the entrants were recognized with Intel "Badges" for outstanding research initiative and the quality of their papers. The Intel Science Talent Search is a national competition, receiving thousands of applicants every year. Of the applicants, only 300 students are selected as Semifinalists. Only 3 students were recognized as Semifinalists in Queens, two coming from Prep.



Additionally, these 11 students have also entered their work in the New York City Science and Engineering Fair (NYCSEF). They have all been invited to present their work in the preliminary round of the competition on March 1st at City College of New York. Finalists will be invited back to compete at the Museum of National History on March 24th.

#### **Alumni Visitation Day:**

This annual event is all about one generation of Prepsters helping another. It features recent Prep grads who are currently enrolled in college, those who are just in the beginning stages of their careers, and some who are already well-established in their profession. Each participant shared stories of their "journey" from the hallways of St. Francis Prep and the choices they made along the way. They shared their experiences and wisdom on a wide variety of topics, ranging from where and what to study to practical advice on how to advance in one's chosen career and profession. After the presentations, participants answered questions from students. It was a wonderfully productive and spirited day. Thanks to all who participated!

Read about it on FaceBook [HERE](#)

#### **Poetry Out Loud:**

Our two school winners for the annual Poetry Out Loud competition will be going to the NYC Finals at the Katie Murphy Amphitheatre at the Fashion Institute of Technology on February 5, 2015, at 6 p.m.

Our 1st place winner, junior Maggie Capozzoli-Cavota, and sophomore Yasmeen Qureshi will compete against dozens of other students to see if they can win and make it to the State Finals in Syracuse on March 9th. Maggie will be reciting "Broken Promises," by David Kirby, and "It Was Not Death, For I Stood Up," by Emily Dickinson, while Yasmeen will be reciting "Caged Bird," by Maya Angelou, and "Friendship After Love," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. They must be prepared with a 3rd poem committed to memory in case a tie-breaker is needed. We are very proud of their hard work and their unique dedication to the dying practice of learning a poem for life. Special thanks to Mr.

Hafker who organized the event and the faculty members who served as judges: Ms. Lynch, Mr. Marino, Mr. Paccione, and Ms. Prohaska.



Junior Maggie Capozzoli-Cavota was named Queens Teen Poet Laureate 2015. Maggie submitted a collection of poems for consideration to the Fresh Meadows Poet Society Teen Poetry Contest. She was awarded this title on Saturday, December 20th, at the Forest Hills Library by Dr. George H. Northrup, Chair of the Poetry Judging Committee. Maggie also received a \$100 check for her poem, "Conversations with You."

#### **Speech and Debate team:**

From January 24th - 25th, the Duns Scotus Speech, Debate, and Student Congress team participated in a National tournament at Columbia University. For juniors Cassidy Perard, Jillian Spence, Isaiah Godoy, and Ojani Walthrust, sophomore Yasmeen Qureshi, and 9th grader Kayla McBride, the competition was their first time competing on the National competition circuit. Cassidy Perard and Jillian Spence were semifinalists, finishing 10th overall. Isaiah Godoy and Ojani Walthrust also reached the final round of competition in Student Congress; Ojani Walthrust finished in 12th place and Godoy finished in 7th.



The competition made the team feel amazing. All students worked hard and supported one another with great respect and are now clearly a force to be reckoned with by all nationally competitive speech and debate teams. We are all very proud of these students for their fantastic work and commitment. Thank you to the moderators: Ms. Brizicky, Mr. Armano, and Mrs. Haussermann.

#### **Track and Field:**

On January 24th and 25th, the boys' track and field team competed in the Brooklyn-Queens Championship. The team placed second on all three levels: Varsity, Sophomore, and Freshman. Congratulations!



At the track and field City Championship, the girls 4 x 800 relay team of Nora Flores, Konstantina Salales, Bianca Rey, and Christina Prosper came in first place.



#### **Boys Basketball:**

Shane Herrity scored his 1,000 career point on Friday, January 23rd, against Xaverian. He will be presented with a commemorative ball at the Molloy game on January 30th. Congratulations! On Saturday, December 27, the Boy's Varsity Basketball Team hosted a 7th grade tournament in honor of Tom Stith. Tom Stith was one of the greatest players to ever wear a Prep jersey and is often considered one of the best to ever play in the CHSAA. He scored over 2,000 points, received a scholarship to St. Bonaventure, and was the #2 draft pick of the NY Knicks. Many of his family members who were in town for the holidays were able to attend and present awards to the participating players. Teams from Sacred Heart, Our Lady of Victory, Our Lady of Lourdes, SSJA, NY Challengers, Our Lady of Hope, and Our Lady of Snows all participated.

#### **Art Department:**

On Thursday, January 7th, the Saint Francis Prep Art Department had "A Day at the Met." Mrs. Buccino's Drawing class, Mr. Salmin's Drawing class, and Mr. Biondolillo's Advanced Studio Art 1 class, accompanied by Father Bill, left for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in three SFP school busses. It was a thrilling day! In keeping with our art department theme of the year, Turn of the Century Parisian Art, the students had a private tour of The Art of France at the Met.



They had the chance to look at art including Rodin's sculptures, the Impressionist Painting Galleries, and the art and rooms from Parisian Palaces. Students spent the afternoon sketching the Parisian art at the museum. We had lunch in the American Art Wing and concluded with photos on the steps of the museum. Teachers and students agreed that it was indeed a special day!



Prep MUNC VIII:

The SFP Model United Nations Conference was held here on Saturday, January 10th, with over 160 students participating from 10 schools. Another successful Prep MUNC! Thanks to Mr. Jardines for his organization and leadership.

#### **Snow Club:**

Another fun and successful Snow Club outing to Plattekill Mountain took place on Sunday, January 25th, chaperoned by Mr. Wagner and Ms. Donovan.



#### **Music Department:**

On Tuesday, January 13th, students, faculty, and staff from St. Francis Preparatory School had the opportunity to reconnect with a profound part of their past: a collection of nearly 800-year-old documents that relate to St. Francis of Assisi. These documents, which include original writings of one of the world's most popular saints and Papal documents concerning him, were painstakingly restored and sent to New York City to be displayed as part of the exhibit, "Friar Francis: Traces, Words, Images at Brooklyn Borough Hall." The United Nations and Brooklyn Borough Hall were the only two places the documents were exhibited.

Brother Leonard Conway, O.S.F., President of St. Francis Prep and himself a Franciscan brother, received an invitation from St. Francis College in early December for Prep students to be involved in the exhibit and for Prep's student musicians to perform for Brooklyn's Borough President, the Superior General of the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn, and the Provost of St. Francis College, among others. This was clearly a once in a lifetime opportunity for Prep's young people, especially since these documents have not left Italy in over 700 years. Perhaps even more important, given Prep's diversity and its increasing number of International students, these documents embody a unifying factor for students who represent a myriad of heritages and faiths.

On a cold January afternoon, Brother Leonard, a number of Franciscan Brothers, school administrators, students involved in the school's Franciscan Youth Movement, and Prep's Chamber Choir and Chamber Orchestra returned to Brooklyn (the school spent its first 116 years in Brooklyn) to reconnect with someone very special to all of them: the school's namesake and patron, St. Francis of Assisi.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams and Brother William Boslet, O.S.F., Superior General of the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn, spoke of the peace and humility that Francis represents even today,

particularly in the wake of so many recent tragedies, and how he is still, centuries after his death, a role model. For the young musicians of St. Francis Prep, performing took a back seat to the gravity of the event and the spirit of Francis. Senior violinist Catherine Byrne described her experience as interesting, especially since many of her studies this year have related to Medieval manuscripts and the life of Francis. To have the opportunity to see up close what she had learned about in class was particularly special. For senior violinist Chazz Winston, getting to see documents contemporary to Francis helped him understand that the history of Prep is not just the history of the school, but goes back centuries. He went on to say that what today's Franciscan Brothers stand for is represented in these documents. Prep's longtime Chairperson of Music Dr. Robert Corbino, who teaches a great deal of Medieval music in his History of Music class, spoke not only to the quality of the restoration, but to the beauty of the manuscripts and illuminations. Most significant for Dr. Corbino was the fact that Francis held a number of these documents in his hands.

The documents are now safely back in Italy, but the impact that Francis, God's "little poor one," had on a diverse group, older and younger, Catholic or not, from a Queens high school will last a lifetime.

[St. Francis Scrolls HERE](#)

Also this week, Prep's beginner student will have the opportunity to shine in a concert featuring their efforts this year. The performance is Friday, January 30th, at 7:30PM in Prep's Bro. Ralph Clifford Memorial Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 general admission and available at the door.

#### **Key Club:**

The Key Club recently visited the Ronald McDonald House. When a child is diagnosed with a serious illness, families face emotional distress, financial strains, and many other devastating consequences. In addition to attending to the complicated medical needs of their children, families struggle to remain together, maintain their jobs, care for other children or family members, keep up with medical and out-of-pocket expenses, and address the psychosocial effects on their children. Because of Ronald McDonald House Charities, families are not forced to spend their days and nights in a crowded waiting room or in the isolation of expensive hotel rooms. Instead, they come "home" to our Houses and Family Room and find a friendly face, a home-cooked meal, a comfortable bed, a hot shower, and a calming place to rejuvenate. Instead of focusing on other worries, families can be near to and provide comfort for their medically fragile child, which studies have shown can have a positive effect on the child's recovery. Students had a great time interacting with, cooking and serving brunch for the people who currently reside there.



### Science Department:

As a second quarter project, the Regents Chemistry students were given the task of creating a crystal using only their knowledge of chemistry. In Ms Gammello's class, they also had to use their imagination to create an infomercial and represent their product in a science fair setting during class. All of the students created great crystals, but there could be only one winner. The overall winners were Jared Ocasio and Maria Carlucci with their recreation of Jack on top of the hill in "A Nightmare Before Christmas."



### English Department:

On January 28th, a group of 60 students from Ms. Prohaska's classes and several members of the English Department attended a matinee performance of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time. The Broadway play is an adaptation of Mark Haddon's best-selling novel, which the students had read and discussed in their English 10 Honors course. The trip was a success, the play was great, and the whole afternoon was a welcome excursion after the previous day's blizzard! As they say, "the show must go on!"

