



"The Sully Christian School, together with the Christian parents and Society, will provide a quality education that is based on the Word of God. We will equip our children, through God's grace, to be active members of God's Kingdom."

96
Years

From the Desk of Mrs. Hackert.....

I don't think I will ever lose my fascination with the wealth of information that is available on the Internet. I was looking for devotional ideas this past week and decided to click on a website from Denver Seminary. I began reading, and these words caught my eye: "This devotional is a gift from us to you. We pray that it will encourage, inspire, and challenge you. You can read it on your own or share it with your family."

After reading the entire devotional, I definitely experienced all three – encouragement, inspiration, and a challenge. I will certainly share this devotion with my own family, but I also wish to share it with my Sully Christian School family. May the words also encourage, inspire, and challenge you now, and in the coming year.

What Will You Give?

by Dr. Ronald D. Welch, Associate Professor of Counseling

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (Ephesians 5:23, KJV)

In O. Henry's classic story, "The Gift of the Magi," a young man and woman, deeply in love, give each other gifts from the heart at Christmas. The young woman sells her beautiful, long hair to pay for a chain for the man's prized watch. He sells the watch to pay for combs for her hair. The selfless acts of this young couple have touched many hearts since O. Henry penned the story in 1906.

In today's busy world, even at Yuletide, too many of us think first of ourselves and then of others. Paul's words in Ephesians 5:23 remind us that we are to "walk in love," just as Christ did in the sacrifice of His life for our salvation. Walking in love with those around us does not have to involve extensive time or financial commitment - it is not the size of the gift that Paul and O. Henry were referring to. It is the condition of the heart that matters.

What motivates you this Holiday season? Think about the gifts you spend so much money and time on. Is your intention to impress the receiver with the amazing gift you have chosen, or to sacrifice a part of yourself through the act of giving? Paul suggests that our Savior has provided the model of sacrifice and gift-giving that we are to follow.

Take some time to consider what you can truly give of yourself. Instead of rushing around to seven different stores to buy the "perfect" gift, spend some time with God to ask how He can use you to walk in love with those around you. Listen to Paul's words and make an offering of yourself to others in ways you have never done before.

This Christmas season, challenge yourself to give gifts of the heart, gifts of sacrifice and selflessness. Give the gift of the Magi, and marvel at what God can do when we truly give of ourselves in His Service.

1st & 2nd Grade Christmas Wisdom



Mrs. Lewis with the 1st and 2nd graders

CHRISTMAS IS...I asked the 1st and 2nd graders to tell me what Christmas means to them. What is it all about? What's the best part? One girl raised her hand and innocently asked, "Do you want us to be honest?" I answered, "YES. Please. Tell me what's really the best part; I don't want a made up answer that sounds good. I want to know what you really think."

I think it's really interesting that already in 1st and 2nd grades our children know the "right answer", but feel a little unsure or even guilty in admitting that they really do like the presents. Here are their "honest" answers:

"To me, Christmas is about celebrating Jesus birthday. My favorite part of Christmas is praying and singing happy birthday to Jesus and opening presents." *Shandra Truong*

"To me, Christmas is about helping my Dad put the Christmas tree up. My favorite part of Christmas is to open presents." *Sierra Pleima*

"To me, Christmas is about giving gifts and putting Christmas trees up. My favorite part of Christmas is making cookies, making Jello, and putting it in a Christmas tree pan." *Laci Keen*

"To me, Christmas is about spending time with family and having fun. My favorite part of Christmas is opening the presents and sharing them." *Colby DeVries*

"To me, Christmas is about Jesus' birthday. My favorite part of Christmas is when we open presents." *Kody Jansen*

"To me, Christmas is about when Jesus was born in a stable with Mary and Joseph. My favorite part of Christmas is opening presents with my family." *Cheyenne Collins*

"To me, Christmas is about having fun, putting up the Christmas tree, and giving presents to each other. My favorite part of Christmas is that we get to celebrate Jesus' birth." *Emma Pleima*

"To me, Christmas is about being with my family and also being with my cousins. My favorite part of Christmas is having fun with my mom and dad." *Ezekiel Vander Leest*

"To me, Christmas is about having fun together and getting to see my friends. My favorite part of Christmas is making cookies." *Ethan Wyma*

"To me, Christmas is about the birth of Christ. My favorite part of Christmas is receiving gifts and giving gifts." *Elijah Vos*

"To me, Christmas is about when Jesus was born. My favorite part of Christmas is going out and seeing my family at their houses." *Drew Van Soelen*

"To me, Christmas is about Jesus being born in a stable. My favorite part of Christmas is opening presents that Mom and Dad bought me and Kelly and Renae and Landon for Christmas." *Kara Van Wyk*

After I look over these honest answers, I am not sure what they have to be unsure of or feel guilty about. All of these things they have listed are amazing gifts from God. Spending time with family, memory-making traditions, getting gifts, giving presents...what wonderful things! But to me, the best part is that these children know why we get to spend time with our families; they know why they get and give gifts. They know the reason for this "most wonderful time of the year." It's Jesus. And he came to earth. For us. And they know it. Now that's a gift!

Mrs. Kristin Lewis

LOG-STO Update

The Legacy of Grace School Tuition Organization (LOG STO) is in need of \$90,000 by Dec.31, in order to fulfill the allotted state tax credits that we have to distribute. The funds donated are used for tuition assistance at area Christian Schools. Donation forms are available on the school website or by calling the school office. Thank you!

FUNDRAISING FOCUS

Thank you to the committees and everyone who helped with the Sully "Haulin' In Christmas" celebration. Over \$3,700 was raised from the community dinner and cookie walk. We especially want to extend our thanks to, not just our parents who helped, but also those within our community who consistently offer their kind support to our school by baking cookies, donating monies, food, and donating their time to our fundraising efforts. We could not do it without your support. To date, we have raised over \$20,700 through our fundraising activities. God's Blessings be with you all.

So what's next? ... Hostess Supper! One of our most fun activities of the year! This year's Hostess Supper is set for January 30th at 6:00 PM. We are so excited to welcome Karyn Brinkmeyer as our entertainment! Karyn is a singer/songwriter who calls Iowa home, but spends most of her time traveling the country bringing ministry and music together in concert. You can find out more about her on her website: www.karynbrinkmeyer.com. The Board is still deliberating over how the funds that will be raised at this year's Hostess Supper will be best used, but we will let you know as soon as it has been decided! If you would like to attend the Hostess Supper, please let us know by contacting Shawna Fopma, Candice Vos, or Karen Frischmeyer. All our supporters are warmly welcomed for this evening of celebration.

Don't Forget to Mark Your Calendars..... for a wonderful night of family fellowship! Food & Fun Night has been set for Saturday, March 6, 2010. More details to follow in upcoming Bits n' Pieces and Newsletters! Want to know what you can do to help? Contact Jodi De Vries to offer your support!

We have two snow days to make up. The Board has decided that they will be made up on January 4 and February 15.

Site Visit Update

The Site Visit Team Findings Report was received at our school on December 16. This written report is a follow-up to our accreditation site visit which was held on November 17 & 18. It is very positive and lists many strengths of Sully Christian School. We will be sharing excerpts from the report in articles in upcoming Newsletters.

Along with our strengths, the visiting team gave suggestions on other things for us to consider to enhance what we are already doing. The staff, Board, and Education Committee will consider those suggestions in the coming weeks and months. We are grateful for the recognition the team articulated concerning the vision, mission and goals of SCS! Unfortunately, there was one area of teacher licensure noncompliance. Mr. Roose, who has been at SCS for 18 years, is licensed in the area of secondary social studies and has an athletic director endorsement. That licensure (due to changing laws on middle school endorsements needed) is no longer valid to cover all areas that Mr. Roose has been teaching. These new requirements will require Mr. Roose to enroll in classes that will require a huge time commitment on his part to receive the necessary training and licensure for elementary/middle school. Please pray with and for Mr. Roose and his family as they make decisions and seek God's direction for the future.

Two other areas we will be working on are aligning professional development for staff members and restructuring some committees.

Calendar

December 23	3rd & 4th Grade Chapel 8:40 1:30 Dismissal - 2nd quarter ends
December 24-January 1	Christmas break
January 4	Back to school
January 5	Kindergarten starts Tuesdays
January 7	Basketball make up vs. L-S 3:50
January 11	Basketball vs. Ankeny (H) 4:00
January 12	Basketball vs. Peoria (H) 4:00
January 19	Basketball @ PC 4:15
January 25-29	ITBS Week
January 26	Basketball @ Oskaloosa 4:00
January 28	Basketball vs. ICA (H) 4:00
January 30	Hostess Supper
February 2	Basketball @ Peoria 4:00
February 24	2:30 dismissal -P/T Conf. evening
February 25	Parent/Teacher Conf. evening
February 26	No School

Iowa Core Curriculum Update

The Principals of our area Christian schools decided that an update on our schools' collective work on the Iowa Core Curriculum would be appropriate as we put the finishing touches on the first semester of the 09-10 school year. Last year Newton Christian, Oskaloosa Christian, Pella Christian Grade and High School, Peoria Christian, and Sully Christian formed the Iowa Core Curriculum Leadership Committee with representation from each area school. This committee's charter is to oversee the work of the Iowa Core Curriculum for schools. The first order of business is the development of an implementation plan by July of 2010. The implementation plan will address a continuous improvement process that our schools will adopt in the areas of community relationships, leadership, teacher professional development, curriculum alignment, and instructional assessments. Since the Iowa Core Curriculum is developed around a cycle of continuous improvement, this committee will monitor and adjust the plan as needed for the foreseeable future.

One accomplishment of the leadership group is the development of an Iowa Core Curriculum Vision Statement that is collectively shared by all the Boards of our Christian schools. The approved vision statement reads as follows: "The Christian Schools of South Central Iowa strive to provide rigorous academic programs rooted in God's infallible Word. As we prepare God's children for a life of service in His kingdom, we review various curricula to determine the best components for the task. The Iowa Core Curriculum has components that may assist us in accomplishing each school's respective mission. A leadership team has been established to review, recommend, and integrate components of the Iowa Core Curriculum that fit

appropriately into our Biblical Framework, which upholds the Truth of God's Word."

The Iowa Core Curriculum Leadership Committee requests your prayers as we work to fulfill the vision set forth by the Boards of our schools. We will continue to keep our constituency updated on our progress as information comes available.

Invitation from District V

Dear Christian Education Supporters:

Ray Vander Laan will be leading a 16 day tour of the Holy Land this coming summer, from June 4-19. There is room for 45 people to accompany him on this trip and most of these have been filled with Christian school teachers, staff members, and spouses. The District V Principal's Club has decided to open the application process to Christian education supporters to fill the remaining spots. There are specific physical challenges for this trip which include hiking from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. each day. The cost per applicant is approximately \$4,800. If more applicants are submitted than available, a "casting lots" procedure will be used.

Please contact Karen Hackert for more information concerning the application process and specific details. The application deadline is January 15. Perhaps you know other Christian education supporters who would be interested in this trip to the Holy Land. If so, be sure to spread the word.

The District V Principals

NOTE: The December Board Minutes were not available at the time of publication, so will be included in the January Newsletter.

SCS Wishlist

Some ideas for those who may wish to gift our school in specific ways:

1. \$ to purchase chair/desk slippers for Mrs. Lewis' classroom - cost: approx. \$30
2. ELMO Visual Presenters - cost: \$600-\$700 each (These are units that sit on a teacher's desk and can project any page from a book onto the wall for students to see.)
3. Defibrillator - cost: \$2,500 - \$3,000
4. 1st and 2nd grade level chapter books for Mrs. Lewis' classroom library

Prayer Warrior's Corner

1. Pray for good weather and for no more snow days to make up.
2. Pray for Mr. Roose in the decisions that lie ahead for him and his family.
3. Prayers of thanks for safety on the roads and for the good health of our students.

