

# Good News

2009  
Salem Catholic Schools Foundation *Fall*

## *President's Message*



Cailee Johnson and Katie Tuttle - Queen of Peace School



From left to right: Salem Catholic school administrators Hector Martinez, Stephen Lynch, Debilyn Janota, Charles Lee and Robert Weber.



Kevin L. Mannix,  
President

As you review this edition of the Good News, you can appreciate the dynamic energy which infuses our leaders in Catholic education.

Our articles in this edition feature interviews with three continuing leaders: Chuck Lee, President of Blanchet Catholic School, Bob Weber, Principal of Blanchet Catholic School and Debilyn Janota, Principal of Queen of Peace School. These leaders are well known

to our community, but these articles add additional insight about their vision and dedication as to Catholic education.

At the same time, we are treated to a briefing on the backgrounds of two new dynamic leaders in the Catholic education field: Hector Martinez, who is now at the helm as the new principal at St. Vincent de Paul School, and Stephen Lynch, the new principal at St. Joseph School. Both of these leaders, new to the Catholic schools scene, bring us their capabilities and perspectives. Hector Martinez has the perspective of someone at the beginning of his career in education, with the blessing of five years of experience coupled with solid family values, energy, enthusiasm, and creative approaches to providing our children with the best possible education.

Stephen Lynch has many years of experience in the business sector but is equally blessed with a devotion

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to Catholic education. He comes to us as a veteran of life, with many years of experience, but with fresh dedication and experience on the Catholic education front.

Both Hector and Stephen will give us an opportunity to continue to build Catholic education in the greater Salem community. It will be a pleasure to work with them in this mission.

At the same time, I invite you, dear reader, to join us in this mission. You may already be involved in Catholic education as a staff member or as a parent. Perhaps you are a grandparent to a child or children in Catholic schools. As such, have you visited your grandchild's school? If you have not, you will be surprised at the welcome mat which will be laid out for you. Our Catholic schools are reaching out to all generations to be involved in their activities and programs.

Remember, too, that you need not have any family connection to be welcomed in our Catholic schools. Everyone has a skill or capability which he or she can share. I encourage you to contact one or more of our Catholic schools and volunteer to help out. Our Catholic schools do not spend nearly as much as public schools, per capita, in terms of cash. We make up for the difference with volunteer support, family involvement, and a great deal of faith and passion for great education.

Yes, you are invited to be involved. And, if time is a concern, you can always make a financial contribution. Everything adds up.

Let's all join together and make this a great year for Catholic education – for our children and for our future.



Faculty and staff members from Salem's four Catholic schools gathered at Blanchet Catholic School to celebrate the start of the new school year. They enjoyed breakfast, a celebration of Mass with Father Heuberger, lunch and the opportunity to share stories with fellow Catholic school educators. This faculty and staff gathering is an annual event in recognition of the common goal of these schools to provide outstanding Catholic education for Mid Valley youth.

# St. Vincent de Paul School

Hector Martinez, Principal



## *Introducing Hector Martinez*

Hector Martinez's passion for education was inspired at a young age when he encountered several role models in teachers and coaches. These role models were Hispanic males who related to his upbringing and made him believe that he was "someone special." Mr. Martinez looked up to his teachers, the value of education, and began "investing in myself." He went on to become the first person in his family to graduate from high school and college.

Mr. Martinez received an enrichment scholarship and attended Eastern Oregon University (EOU) in La Grande where he majored in PE/Health with a minor in Bilingual and Hispanic studies. He met his wife, Michelle, at EOU where they completed their bachelor's degrees and earned their Master's in Teacher Education. Both Mr. Martinez and his wife were delighted to receive an "Outstanding Student Teacher" award while enrolled in their master's program.

For the past five years, Mr. Martinez worked as a PE/Health teacher at Henry Hill Elementary in Independence, Oregon. One of the highlights of his experience at Henry Hill was a project that resulted in a climbing wall being installed in the gym. One of his fellow teachers at Henry Hill told Mr. Martinez about a grant program that asked teachers, "What is your dream" for your school. His dream was adding a climbing wall to Henry Hill, since all the other elementary schools in Independence had this feature and it was something the children greatly enjoyed. Mr. Martinez took the lead and submitted a grant proposal for a custom climbing wall. He ultimately was funded \$15,000 to build a 10 ft. X 52 ft. magma relief climbing wall that is now the "biggest and best" in Independence.

Service on student support teams and district committees led Mr. Martinez to begin thinking about enhancing his leadership skills, and last year he completed his administrative credentials at Willamette University. The highlights of the Willamette program included meeting the administrative cohort, learning

about how to foster teamwork, building legal knowledge about aspects of school administration, and participating in mock interviews with experienced professionals.

Mr. Martinez's first months as principal at St. Vincent's have been busy and productive. He has been introduced to the St. Vincent's congregation, the leadership of the Salem Catholic parishes and schools, met with his staff and completed Called to Protect training. He recently interviewed candidates for a 3rd/4th grade teaching position and is excited to announce that Miss Gretchen Dewald, an experienced Catholic educator who previously taught in Siuslaw and at O'Hara Catholic School in Eugene, has been hired as the 3rd and 4th grade teacher.

"I am very glad that God's plan came together and has brought me to St. Vincent's," says Mr. Martinez. He is looking forward to being a very visible leader who is active in the community. Mr. Martinez will quickly get to know the St. Vincent's students since in addition to his administrative duties, he will also be teaching physical education. A generous donor has provided funds which have helped eliminate some of the financial barriers to enrollment, and Mr. Martinez's

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*Carol Nichols, Principal Hector Martinez and Annie Duffy prepare for the new school year.*

# St. Joseph School

Stephen Lynch, Principal

## *Introducing Stephen Lynch*



A leader's job, according to Stephen Lynch, is to "enable good people to do good work." This is a philosophy he has honed through a diverse career in education and corporate business.

Mr. Lynch received his BA from the University of Georgia and his MA in Irish literature from University College, Dublin. After graduating, he lived in Dublin for several years where he taught at the community college level.

After returning to the United States, Mr. Lynch began a successful career in health care administration, eventually serving as president of Healthnet – a large employee benefits firm. He and his wife recently returned to their home in Turner after living and working in Los Angeles for five years. Mr. Lynch has four children – two boys and two girls who are all grown and out of the house. One of his sons is a priest who lives in Italy, another is in the Marines. One daughter is a ski instructor who lives in Colorado, while the other is a writer and teacher.

After his retirement from corporate life, Mr. Lynch was looking for a job or volunteer opportunity that would allow him "to be intimately connected to a community." He is very active in his church, St. Thomas in Jefferson, but was also familiar with St. Joseph Church where his children had been involved in youth groups.

Mr. Lynch was attracted to the position at St. Joseph Church because of the positive relationship between the church and the parish school. He was impressed with the energy and vibrant leadership of Fr. Todd and is looking forward to being involved with "formation at the young grades." Elementary school is the perfect time for youth to explore, apply their questions, logic

and curiosity, and to grow their hearts," says Mr. Lynch.

He is looking forward to expanding the art, music and technology programs at St. Joseph, and finding unique learning opportunities. Mr. Lynch plans on involving parishioners in the school and asking them to use their unique gifts to enhance the curriculum.

"I want St. Joseph to be the best school in Oregon," says Mr. Lynch. He plans to engage staff, parishioners and parents to build upon what is already a strong Catholic elementary program. His style is to "listen, consider and then decide," says Mr. Lynch. He will spend much of his time during his first months on the job listening and talking to people both inside and outside of the school family. "I want to find out how St. Joseph is perceived and to demonstrate to people how this school puts faith into action," Mr. Lynch remarked.

New this fall to St. Joseph School is an additional kindergarten class, increased Spanish language instruction and third grade teacher, Joe Amsberry.

"This is going to be an exciting year. I believe in the art of the possible," says Mr. Lynch.



St. Joseph sixth graders work with their kindergarten "Buddies." Cristobal Ramos-Torres, Ripley Carson, Adrian Bayu Aji, Jeremiah Groh, Matthew Nash, Alexia Sigleer, Ryan Scanlan, Madyson Hellem and Simona Gutierrez.

# Queen of Peace School

Debilyn Janota, Principal

## *Blessed in Many Ways*

Principal Debilyn Janota returns for her sixteenth year with Queen of Peace School. "I realize how fortunate and blessed I am in being able to start my sixteenth year at Queen of Peace School. I have had the opportunity to work for two wonderful pastors, Father George Wolf and Father Tim Mockaitis, who have been good shepherds for all at Queen of Peace," she says. "This is not a job to me but my ministry, an opportunity to serve and answer God's call. I enjoy and am very thankful to have the chance to always be a teacher, and it is a great privilege for me to follow Jesus' (the Master Teacher's) footsteps. I wake up smiling and thanking God for bringing me to a place where teaching about Him thrives," comments Mrs. Janota. She enjoys meeting, greeting and getting to know families of Queen of Peace and the closeness and camaraderie of working side-by-side with staff, parishioners and others in making Queen of Peace a special place.

Mrs. Janota says that her inspiration comes when she walks around the school and is greeted with smiles. It also comes when she observes active teaching and learning by all the staff, students and families and when she sees veteran staff, parents and students helping and engaging those who are new to the school. "Being part of a vibrant parish and working with other ministries, sharing faith experiences and 'breaking bread' at joint liturgies inspires and validates my reason for being a part of Queen of Peace. The generosity of so many supporters in sharing their time, talents and treasures gives me inspiration that God is at work in each of us," says Mrs. Janota.

Queen of Peace School and parish are unique in that there is a welcoming, family atmosphere and feeling. "The phrase *'We are many parts but we are all one Body'* exemplifies our school's philosophy. Each child and family here brings a unique set of gifts and experiences," says Mrs. Janota. At Queen of Peace School, students and staff start every day in prayer, and they celebrate their successes and support others when needed. Smiles are shared freely and they work very hard in appreciating each other's gifts. "I have found that when I truly put my trust in the Lord, He is there

to guide, support and protect Queen of Peace and me," says Mrs. Janota.

With His many blessings, the new school year is off to a great start. Enrollment is up and new families continue to inquire about admission to the school. The most exciting news at Queen of Peace is the addition of a pre-kindergarten program. Eighteen students are enrolled in this full-day class, and each has brought a renewed sense of joy and wonder to the school. Queen of Peace is pleased to welcome three new staff members to its family. Elizabeth Fox is the new 2nd grade teacher, KoLynn Phillips is the new 4th grade teacher and Julie Dunning teaches Spanish in the morning and is the afternoon Pre-K aide.



Queen of Peace staff and students are deepening their commitment to being good stewards of the environment by working towards becoming a Green School and incorporating 'green' habits into their daily activities. The theme this year is "Going Green with God," and each grade is taking on a special green project. Parent Steve DePina is spearheading the effort and has become a Master Recycler after training at Marion County Environmental Services.

# Blanchet Catholic School

Charles E. Lee, President

## *Celebrating Fifteen Years!*

This fall Charles Lee, President, and Robert Weber, Principal, returned for their 13th year at Blanchet Catholic School and their 17th year working together as Catholic school colleagues. Prior to Blanchet, both were employed at Valley Catholic School in Beaverton.

Blanchet Catholic School is commemorating a significant milestone this school year – the celebration of the school’s 15th year of operation. When asked what he was the most proud of regarding the school’s history and successes, Mr. Lee responded, “Blanchet is viewed by the community as the best high school and best private school in Salem. That’s a big deal. We have grown from a school that served 110 students to a school that provides an excellent college prep education to 400 students from throughout the Mid Valley. Owning our facility and 22-acre campus free and clear provides us with security for the future.”

Principal Weber added, “Blanchet has expanded its offerings greatly over the years. We offer a full range of classes, including Advanced Placement and college credit courses, clubs and athletic programs. Our students take real pride in going to school at Blanchet. Our school is recognized in the community as an outstanding educational option for Mid Valley families.”

New at Blanchet this year is the school’s first class of 25 sixth graders taught by Blanchet alumna, Ms. Stephanie Razmus. The school opened its doors on September 8 after completion of grant-funded facility projects totaling more than \$150,000. Projects completed this summer include the addition of two new high school classrooms, continued renovation of the Wiegand Arts Center (new lighting, acoustic panels, ticket booth and more), the addition of two ActivBoards, painting of exterior siding and the purchase of 400 chairs that will be used for Masses, assemblies and the auction.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Weber have many reasons to be excited about the 2009-2010 school year. The board of directors has begun developing its next five-year plan

and determining a vision for Blanchet for the year 2015. They have welcomed back a very enthusiastic student body featuring outstanding talent in athletics and fine arts. The school continues to see very little turnover in its staff, and this year welcomes two new teachers, Mrs. Valerie Lemmon, whose specialty is science, and Mr. Robin Smith, a 2002 Blanchet graduate and Physical Education teacher. The school is ensuring that new students are integrated quickly into campus life by establishing a mentor program.

Another initiative this year is “continuing to enhance our relationship with our Catholic elementary schools and parishes,” says President Lee. “In 2002, we installed a Pastor’s Alcove in our lobby that pays tributes to our local pastors and parishes. We want to foster communication and further our bond with our parishes so that the Catholic community views Blanchet as a gathering place.”

Mr. Lee and Mr. Weber have a strong working relationship and appreciate Blanchet’s president and principal administrative structure that allows both of them to concentrate on their strengths. When asked to reflect on Mr. Weber’s strongest asset as an administrator, Mr. Lee said, “Bob has first class people skills. He relates extraordinarily well with kids and also communicates well with adults.” Mr. Weber appreciates that “Chuck is a visionary. He sees the big picture. He also has a great ability to find talent. People want to work with Mr. Lee.”



Mr. Lee meets with the students in Blanchet’s first sixth grade class.

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goal for enrollment is 129 students. He stated that “there is a lot of momentum and excitement about St. Vincent’s” and in addition to growing enrollment, the school leaders are working to make some important capital improvements to its facility in the coming year.

Mr. Martinez describes himself as a good communicator and listener who is focused on “developing leadership skills in others and helping to bridge communities.” He sees himself as a servant leader who wants to support and serve his staff and share responsibilities. His goals for the year are building capacity in others, developing leadership in the school family and supporting individuals through the transition of change.

“I want to see active participation in our school, be as dynamic as possible and help bring together a shared vision of our future to the school community,” says Mr. Martinez.



St. Vincent de Paul students Iesha Brown, Alex Garibay and Pika Araiza.

## Your Support of Salem Catholic Schools Foundation is an Investment in Catholic Education

The mission of Salem Catholic Schools Foundation is to manage and increase the Endowment Fund for Catholic education in Salem. Each year grants are given from the annual earnings of the Endowment to each of the four Salem Catholic schools in support of their programs, tuition assistance or special projects.

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