



# Panther Paws



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## A Message from Sr. Lisa ...

"Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart....rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God..."

This passage, from the book of Joel, is taken from the 1st Reading for the Ash Wednesday mass, which is a call to repentance. Sometimes the word repentance is glossed over as being a big word to mean: stop major sinning. We hear it and say, oh yes, we must stop our ways but then go on about our way only to fall right back into it. A call to penance is more requires than the words just "stop it." In fact, how many of us really can stop what it is we are now in the habit of doing just because it is a special day on the calendar? The Lord understands this and calls us to begin a *time* of repentance. This time of repentance is a journey that requires us to make concerted efforts that are intended to bring us to conversion of heart.

St. Francis of Assisi was a man of the Gospel who spent his entire life doing penance....he was known to say often, even on his deathbed, "Let us begin again, for up until now we have done nothing." Francis most certainly accomplished much, but he knew that the journey to holiness required a daily attention to growing in love of our Lord. As human beings, we often slip into our rationalizations that justify, albeit too conveniently, our patterns of behavior that we know are really not according to the Gospel. We slip into a spiritual laziness where we carry out our religious practices with such roteness, that we are barely aware of what we are doing and why. We carry out things, only because that is what we have always done.

Our Lord calls us to wake up, to stir within ourselves the fire...we are being called to change our hearts, not "our garments." In other words, do not reduce your penance to merely exterior forms of sacrifice (giving up chocolate or sweets). In order to truly come to the meaning of penance/metanoia, we must change our hearts. This is done by prayer that is reflective, a daily attention to changing what it is that needs to be changed, and an honest dialogue before our Lord about our areas of growth (not a beating up or passing of judgment on ourselves...this serves no purpose other than attaining a strong urge to run away from this lashing).

Some of our areas of change are very simple, but not always so easy. It can be a change in the way we interact with others, reverencing them, appreciating them.... perhaps practicing humility (now there is a concept way lost) by admitting when we mess up and saying, "I am sorry,".... or perhaps giving of ourselves and time....and so on.

This is a moment of grace for all of us. I invite you to take time each day in the quiet, before our Lord, and ask Him to show you what He wants of you. If each one of us responds to His voice with one little kind act of love, imagine what change in the world there will be. If we take each of these forty days as a personal invitation from our Lord to enter more deeply into relationship with Him, imagine what the world will be like by Easter.

Peace on the journey.  
Sr. Lisa



## Virtue of the Month

The Virtue of the month for January 2010 is **Respect**. The following students were selected by their teachers as having displayed this virtue. Take the time to congratulate these children.

**K- SARAH FENSTERMACHER**

**1<sup>ST</sup> - JACKSON HOUSER**

**2<sup>ND</sup> - SOPHIA SIRKS**

**3<sup>RD</sup> - CLAUDIA HOUTZ**

**4<sup>TH</sup> - THOMAS ZELTINS**

**5<sup>TH</sup> - REGAN FLIEG**

**6<sup>TH</sup> - CHRISTIMARIE MANANDIC**

**7<sup>TH</sup> - TAYLOR DeMONTI**

**8<sup>TH</sup> - SHAUNA STEWARD**



## Operation Rice Bowl

Operation Rice Bowl begins this week. This Lenten season, Catholic Relief Services invites us to pray together, fast in solidarity with those who hunger, and give sacrificial contributions to those in need. Please return your cartons with your monetary contributions after Lent.

## From Mrs. Keenan's Desk.....



--21 Feb 10: Confirmation I Meeting, 6:45 pm

--22 Feb 10: PTO Meeting, 7 pm in the center. There will be lots of information given for upcoming events and ticket sales.

--25 Feb 10: Birthday Dress Down

--25 Feb 10: No Tutoring

--26 Feb 10: Interims and Can Goods Collection

## School PTO.....

### Old World Auction



Despite the weather's efforts to hamper our event, we have just received word that we can now host the Old World Auction and Dinner on Saturday, **6 March 2010**, 6:30 – 10:30 pm.

Thank you to all those guests who have already purchased their tickets and have been so patiently awaiting the new date.

The good news for those of you who might have missed the opportunity to buy a ticket the first time around is that we have TWENTY tickets left for sale. These are available on a first paid, first purchased basis only. Get them now, as we WILL be sold out! Ticket Order Form is available on Edline, at the School Office or at the Parish Office.

We have many fabulous donated items from the local community up for bid, as well as special items, such as Fr. DeMartino's Italian Dinner, Fr. Magat's Swing Lessons, Reserved Front Row Pew for Easter Mass and Christmas Midnight Mass, and so many more wonderful gifts for Easter and Mother's Day, Graduation and Father's Day!

For further information contact Lisa Morrison, [r\\_morrison7@comcast.net](mailto:r_morrison7@comcast.net) or 540-720-9784 or Katie Moloko, [katiemoloko@yahoo.com](mailto:katiemoloko@yahoo.com)

## Nurses Corner.....



It is so good to be back to school after the Blizzard of 2010! I hope everyone got a chance to play in the snow and get some exercise shoveling their way out of their homes. It's still cold out, so remember those winter coats, hats and gloves.

February is national Dental Health Month. Children should have dental checkups every 6 months. Remember to floss and brush twice a day to keep your teeth and gums healthy. Tap water from the public water system contains fluoride which has proven to help prevent cavities. If you drink only bottled water, you may not be getting the cavity reducing benefits of fluoride. Dentists recommend a fluoride rinse available at your grocery store if you only drink bottled water. Check out the "Health" section of the bulletin board in the school hallway for more ideas and facts about dental health.

Enjoy the beautiful snow God has given us and look forward to spring. Health and Happiness to all!

Lorri Connolly RN, BSN, School Nurse



**Can Goods Delivery**  
SWOY will be collecting can goods to feed the needy in our community. The drop off location for the Can Goods is in front of the school during morning carpool. The next drive is scheduled for 26 February 2010. For more information, please contact Shay Martello by phone at 703-927-9614 or by email at [shay\\_martello@commeng.com](mailto:shay_martello@commeng.com)

## School News....



### World Youth Day Info Meeting

World Youth Day is 15-21 August, 2011, in Madrid, Spain. Join us for an informational meeting on Tuesday, **23 February at 8:00 pm** in the Brent Room. The topics to discuss for this Diocesan Pilgrimage include: the basic pilgrimage agenda, fees, payment schedules, fundraisers, passport info, etc. Interested teens must be at least 16 years old by August 2011. Adult chaperones, who must be at least 25 years old by August 2011, are also invited to attend this meeting. For more info, contact [youthgroup@swoycc.org](mailto:youthgroup@swoycc.org) or 659-5705 ext 31.

### Flapjack Fundraiser for Tuition Assistance



Applebee's will host a Pancake Breakfast to raise funds for the SWOY Tuition Assistance Program. This meal includes: 2 pancakes, 2 sausage and a beverage ( coffee, tea or water).

Tickets will be sold at the Service and Stewardship Fair on February 21st in the Center or by contacting: Shay Martello (540) 720-3392 or [shay.martello@commeng.com](mailto:shay.martello@commeng.com). Tickets will also be available at the General PTO Meeting on February 22nd. We are still looking for more volunteers to help with this event. Are you in need of service hours...this is an excellent opportunity to give back to your community? Only requirement is 18 and older to be in the kitchen. All youth volunteers can work in the dining room.

The **Annual Saint Patrick's Day Celebration** is scheduled for Saturday, **13 March** from 6:00pm – 9:00pm. There will be food "Corned Beef and Soda Bread", live music, and prizes! Adult Tickets – 10.00, Youth Tickets – 5.00. Ticket Sales begin **21 February** at the Service and Stewardship Fair; Also look for sales on **22 February** at the General PTO Meeting and at all morning masses on Sundays until sold out.



Volunteers are needed for Friday evening, **12 March** to help with set-up and during the event to prepare plates. Both Adult and youth volunteers are needed. (This is a great event to receive "service hours"). If you are interested in buying tickets or helping out with this event, please contact: Ron Cox, 540-840-6127 or [trayletha@hughes.net](mailto:trayletha@hughes.net) or Shay Martello (540) 720-3392 or [shay.martello@commeng.com](mailto:shay.martello@commeng.com)

### Service and Stewardship Fair...

Have you ever wondered how to get more involved in your parish, school or PTO? The parish is having a **Service and Stewardship Fair** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, February 21st in the parish center. Stop by after Mass to see what ministries or organizations are available in our parish and school. There will be information about the different ministries and organizations and a representative will be there to answer any questions you may have. The School and PTO will have a table with lots of tickets items for sale for upcoming events and sign-ups for volunteer opportunities.