



LAKER NEWS & NOTES



Nourishing the Human Spirit - Mind, Body and Soul - through Jesus Christ

September 2008

Volume 4, Issue 1

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www.lmclakers.org

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School Mass Schedules:

Elementary: 9:30, Tues. & Thurs.
Middle School: 8:00, Mon.
High School: 8:00, Wed.
Middle-High School: 8:00, Fri.

Mass times may vary due to Holy Days or changes in the academic schedule. Feel free to call to confirm times.

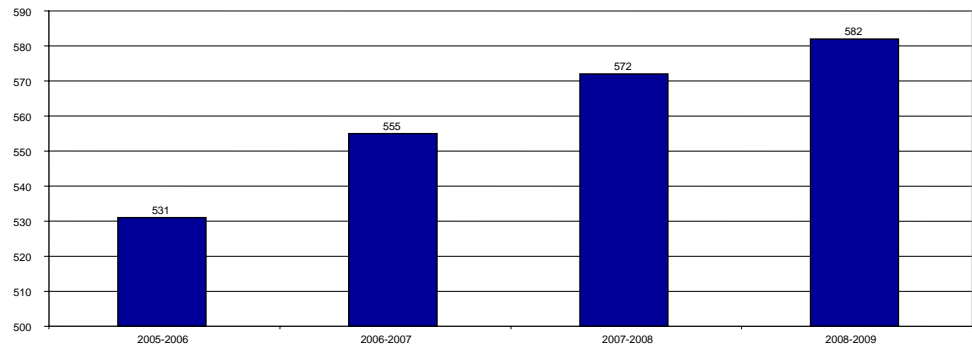
From Executive Director John Berlin

The 2008-2009 school year is off and running. I would like to thank all our LMC families and benefactors who have made the commitment to continue the century long tradition of Catholic education in Southwest Michigan. Without your support our schools could not exist; God Bless you for all you do!

This is going to be an important year for our schools. The Diocese is in the process of implementing a new strategic plan, and together with our Catholic Community Education Commission and the Pastors, we intend to update our Lake Michigan Catholic plan as well. This task always involves a great deal of work but it is ultimately satisfying as we identify priorities, and map a course that ensures we continue to serve the educational needs and strengthen the spiritual foundation of our students, and, by extension, our parishes.

I am pleased to report that our enrollment has once again grown for the third straight year. Below is a table illustrating our system enrollment over the previous three years. I am confident that our newest families will find a welcoming environment that fosters academic challenge and growth, and above all, *one that fully embraces our Catholic faith.*

Michigan Catholic Schools System Enrollment



I encourage parishioners to join us for Mass at LMC Middle-High or Elementary School—it is an affirming and energizing experience at either building. Please refer to our website, www.lmclakers.org, for the latest happenings at the schools. Finally, I would ask that you keep the schools, our faculty, staff and students in your prayers this school year.



5th Grade students of Mrs. Linda Fish and Mrs. Johnette Kurina prepare to process into the first Mass of the school year at LMES.

Left to right: Sami Schueneman, Quinn Kibler, Philip Damico, Olivia Clancy and Sarah Schueneman

Fund-Raising that Fits Your Lifestyle

Opportunities abound for friends of Lake Michigan Catholic Schools to support Catholic education by participating in many corporate giving and purchasing programs. Among our on-going programs are:

- SCRIP
- Market Day
- Innisbrook
- Campbell's UPCs
- GM Boxtops for Education
- Nestle's Pure Water labels
- Roger's Foodland receipts
- Martin's Dollars/Education
- Meijer Community Rewards
- Gordon Food Service

Other fund-raising events are scheduled throughout the year. Though the annual magazine sale has concluded, and the Walk for Catholic Education was held on September 26th, the Innisbrook sale is underway. Anyone wishing to purchase Innisbrook wrapping paper and gifts may contact any LMC student or the school offices.

Questions? Contact:

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269-429-0227, Ext. 15
or
cglendening@lmclakers.org

Laker Blue Tide Athletic Boosters

Supporting the student-athletes throughout Lake Michigan Catholic Schools is the primary focus of Blue Tide.

This summer, with the help of many generous donors and patrons, the Blue Tide Annual Golf Outing raised over \$37,000 to fund various projects.

Blue Tide president Tim Foley invites anyone who has an interest in athletics to attend the group's meetings, held at **7pm on the 2nd Thursday each month, at LMC Middle-High School.**

Professional Learning Communities: Building on the Foundation

This summer our teachers and administrators were busy learning! A new Professional Learning Communities Leadership Team was established to provide formally trained site-based leaders and facilitators among the Elementary, Middle and High school faculty. **Karen Petsovich** (Elementary representative), **Ginny Grove** (Middle School representative), **Laura Jasper-Stump** (High School representative), **Gerald Heath** (Administration) and **Janet Ordiway** (Curriculum & Instruction) attended a week-long "Professional Learning Communities at Work Institute" training seminar during June in Nashville, Tennessee.

This learning institute is designed to help educators implement the most promising strategies for improving their schools in substantive ways. Every aspect of the program offered specific, practical strategies to help educators apply the powerful concepts of the PLC model in our own school setting. The institute offered collective inquiry into best practices, reflection, renewal, networking, and planning for implementation. Our team of leaders came back energized and well informed to continue the work of the PLCs that we began last year, as well as establish new building level PLC work teams to address the individual learning needs of each of our students.

Each grade level and subject level team is also addressing one SMART goal this year, to measure student learning and improve instructional practices. The Administration is grateful for the dedication and efforts of our all of our faculty, and especially that of our new PLC Leadership Team. Mrs. Ordiway looks forward to the work that our PLC teams will engage in this year as we continue to move from teaching to learning, implementing research-based instructional methods, and the increasing academic success for our students.

Preschool Playground: " 'W-h-e-e-e-e' Love it."

Several years of committed fund-raising through our Market Day program, Laker F.U.N. special events, memorial donations, and a generous gift that matched individual donations, brought about the construction of the Preschool playground in early August. **Al Glendening** and **Bruce Binger** took on the tasks of site excavation and digging a surprising number of holes to support the structure. Parent volunteers and the Laker Varsity Boys' Soccer team, their energy stoked by plenty of food provided by **Subway of St. Joseph**, got their backs into the job of staging the site and constructing the playscape.



With an enrollment of over 60 children in our Preschool and Junior Kindergarten and another 53 in Kindergarten, the new playground earned an immediate stamp of approval from the children and their teachers.

Welcome to New Laker Staff Members



Mr. Jeffrey Ghering, HS Theology: Jeff earned a Bachelor's Degree in Theology from Ave Maria College, attended the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, Italy, and will finish the requirements for a License in Theology (S.T.L.) in 2009. He and his wife have a 16 month old son. Jeff is excited to join the LMC community to instruct and share the Catholic faith, and its role in contemporary life with his students.



Mr. Jason Baragar, HS Math: A graduate of Michigan Technological University in 2004 with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, Jason worked for Dow AgroSciences as an analytical biochemist before deciding that he could better serve the community as an educator. He completed the State of Michigan's requirements for secondary education in Chemistry and Mathematics this past spring at Michigan Tech, and begins his teaching career at LMC.



Mr. Doug Wall, HS Social Studies: After teaching and coaching in Pensacola, Florida, Doug is thrilled to be back home and teaching at Lake Michigan Catholic, instructing World History and Civics as well as being the student government sponsor. Doug graduated with a BS in Group Social Studies, and holds a History minor and Secondary Education certification from Grand Valley State University.



Mrs. Jennifer Trout, MS Math: A Central Michigan University graduate with a degree in Math education, Jennifer returns to teaching after taking a few years off raising her family. She taught at Buchanan Middle School for three years prior to that, and along with her return to the classroom at LMC, she is continuing her education at Western Michigan University with an emphasis on Middle Level Education.



Mrs. Jane Deaton, MS-HS Media Bay: Jane holds a BS in Chemistry and Math from Cumberland College, and worked for several years as an industrial chemist and laboratory automation consultant before taking time off to raise a family. Most recently, she has been working as a Librarian Assistant at the St. Joseph Public Library. Jane's duties include monitoring independent study and after-school homework room students in the Media Bay where students have access to computers and library resources. Jane and her husband, Bill, are the parents of two LMC students, and she is very excited to join the Laker staff.



Miss Amber McDonough, 2nd Grade: Amber, a member of Sts. John/Bernard Parish, joins our Elementary staff, teaching 2nd Grade. She is a 2007 graduate of Western Michigan University, holding a degree in Elementary Education. Possessing what seem to be unlimited energy and a non-stop smile, she's an excellent fit for her students and among the Laker staff.



Miss JimiLynn Meerman, ES Physical Education: A graduate of Grand Valley State University with a BS in Education and a Physical Education certification, JimiLynn has taken the helm at the Elementary, teaching the Junior Kindergarten through 5th Graders. She comes from a family of educators, and with her background and being a fine athlete in her own right, she is well prepared to instruct and model physical fitness and sportsmanship.



Mrs. Leslie Miller, Elementary Spanish: Well known in the LMC School and parish communities, Leslie joins the Elementary staff as our Spanish teacher, coming from LMC Middle School. Working with students in Grades K - 5, she has a much younger audience now but Leslie's warmth has made her classes a happily anticipated part of the children's days.

Laker Splashes

- Students **Chris Nickel** and **Elizabeth Gahan** along with **Jacob Lancaster** and **Jacob Wood** of St. Basil's in South Haven, attended World Youth Day this past July in Sydney, Australia.
- LMCHS hosted a mock disaster as part of the **TEEN CERT** (Citizen Emergency Response Team) training. After completing the program, ten students received their certifications.
- LMC Middle School students won the Highest Participation Award with 37 Lakers at the Lory's Place Run-Walk-Rock fund-raiser.

A Pat on the Back for our Parishes

Our congratulations go to Sts. John/Bernard Parish on receiving **Habitat for Humanity's "Group of the Year"** award for sending volunteers to work on local building sites one Saturday a month as well as for 2 full weeks per year for several years. Additionally, our pastors, Fr. Bill Jacobs and Msgr. Michael Osborn, offered the use of both LMC school buildings to house out-of-town groups. Their hospitality was gratefully accepted, and we look forward to having the Habitat crews with us again next summer.

In Memoriam: Elmer Jones

With the passing of long-time Troop #624 Scout Master Elmer Jones in July, the Boy Scouts of Lake Michigan Catholic Schools offer continued thanks for Mr. Jones' life and example. He left a proud legacy among the boys he guided, many to the Eagle rank, and we are grateful for his service to his Church, country, and Boy Scouting.



Twin-City Area Catholic School Fund

Did You Know...

The TCACSF conducts an annual fund appeal each year in which **90% of the proceeds are committed to providing financial assistance to students of LMC Schools?** The remaining 10% is invested in a permanent endowment to grow financial resources for the future.

Did You Know...

A gift to the **TCACSF at the Berrien Community Foundation** between now and year-end can result in a state tax credit worth up to 50% of the value of the gift ranging from \$200 for single donors, \$400 for married donors and \$10,000 for businesses.

Did You Know...

A portion of your estate can be **tithed to the TCACSF** as a means of continued support of LMC students and staff. We are happy to work with family attorneys and financial planners to make arrangements.

Please send your contribution to:

**TCACSF
P.O. Box 32
St. Joseph, MI 49085**

To learn more, contact:

**Pete Emmerson
Twin-City Area
Catholic School Fund
Email: tcacsf@comcast.net
Phone: (269) 861-3108**

Lakers Lead the Area on Michigan Merit Exam

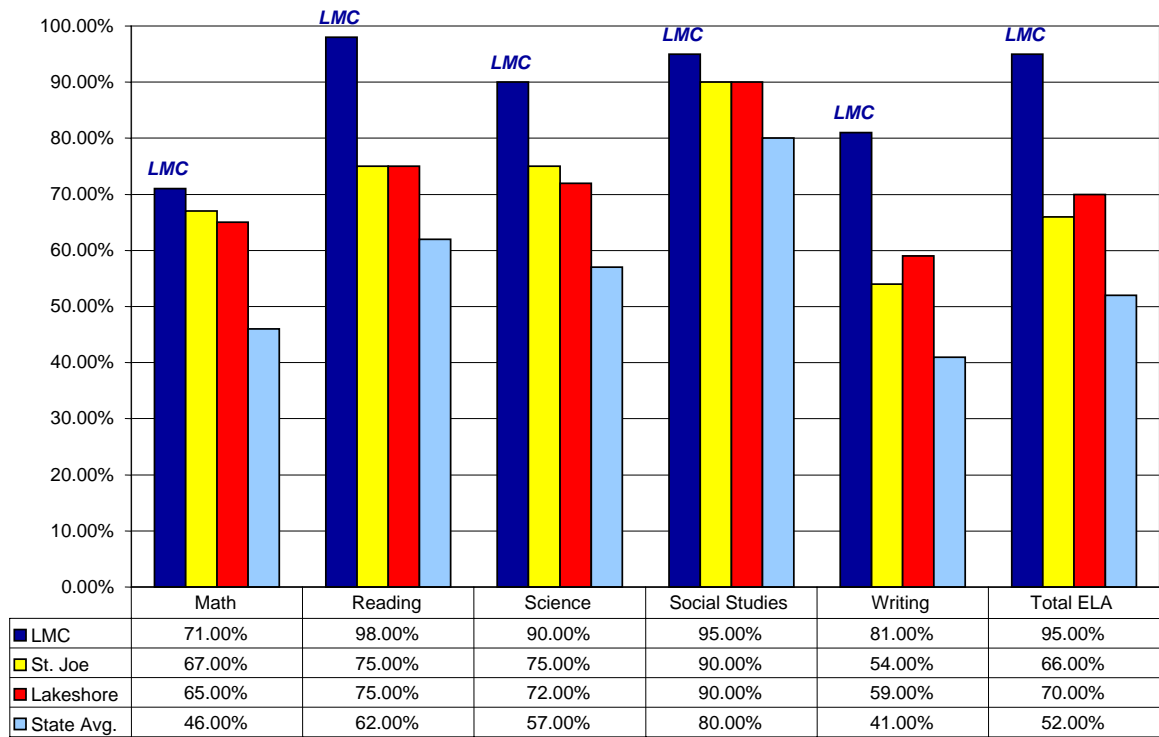
Scores for the Michigan Merit Examination (MME) that assesses students in Grade 11 based on Michigan high school curriculum standards were recently released. The test is administered each spring, and consists of three components:

- ACT Plus Writing® college entrance examination
- WorkKeys® job skills assessments in reading, mathematics, and "locating information"
- Michigan-developed assessments in mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies

The Class of 2009 performed very well on these assessments, leading the area in every category. Our school bases its core academic curriculum on the standards assessed in these tests, and the most recent MME scores indicate the proficiency of the LMC students in retaining and applying what they have learned, and affirms the quality of the instruction the students receive.

The graph below illustrates how our students fared compared to their counterparts at St. Joseph and Lakeshore as well as against state averages. Students who score a two or better on the Michigan portion of the test will qualify for the Promise Scholarship. Details on the scholarship are available in the High School Guidance Office.

Michigan Merit Exam – Class of 2009 Comparison



Excellence Defined

During the busy professional week that took place prior to the first day of school, the entire LMC staff received catechetical instruction from **Msgr. Michael Osborn** that emphasized the means and rationale of incorporating Catholic teaching in every subject, every day. Within his presentation, he said,

“Excellence is to be worthy of Heaven.”

What better goal can teachers have for themselves and their students?