



MARY HELP *of* CHRISTIANS ACADEMY

659 Belmont Avenue, North Haledon, NJ 07508 ♦ Phone: (973) 790-6200 ♦ FAX: (973) 790-6125 ♦ www.maryhelp.org

March 9, 2011

Dear Parents,

As we receive ashes today, the Catholic Church invites us to take a spiritual journey to the center of our being to discover God, the source of our inner freedom and conversion. The forty days of Lent remind us of the long biblical tradition:

- The flood in Genesis when it rained forty days and nights
- Elijah walking forty days and nights to the mountain of God, Mt. Horeb
- The forty years the Israelites wandered through the desert in order to reach the Promised Land
- And Jesus who spent forty days and nights in the desert before beginning his public ministry

The biblical desert is not so much a geographical place but a process of interior purification. Often we find ourselves fragile, broken and alienated from God and other people. Like Jesus, who went into the desert to be healed, during this Lent we are given the opportunity to go into the desert of our inner self and rediscover God's love.

On March 19th we also celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, Patron of Families. Jesus grew up in a family. It is within his family environment that he learned to speak, to pray, to love. By interacting with his parents, he became a man, he learned how to work, developed social skills, and discovered the religious traditions of his ancestors.

As we think of St. Joseph, it is impossible to separate him from his family, from Mary and Jesus. Thus celebrating St. Joseph becomes an opportunity for us to pursue our reflection on the emphasis that we place on the family, not only in our own life but also in our society.

In all types of society, the family nucleus is vitally important. It is within the family situation that a child learns basic skills that will enable her to deal with life. She's gradually initiated to language, culture, work, customs, and to the religion of her society. At home, she makes her first social contacts. She develops her sense of identity and learns to differentiate herself from others. Her parents teach her to love, to forgive, and to pray.

If we could understand the importance of the family, for ourselves and for our children, then family would become the focus of all our concerns.

Prayer to St. Joseph for Our Families

Dear St. Joseph, grant your special graces to our family. May our home be a place of peace, purity, love, labor, and faith. Protect and bless our family, those present and absent, living and dead. Through your intercession we pray for all families of the world, to guard the cradle of the newborn, the schools of the young and their vocations.

Blessed St. Joseph, holy guardian of Jesus and Mary, assist us by your prayers in all the necessities of life. Watch over our home that with you, Jesus and Mary, heaven may find our family unbroken. Amen!

Calendar Reminders

March

- 19 Cash ala Carte Dinner – Benefits MHCA Sports program
Feast of St. Joseph
- 30 College Night for Junior Class Parents at 7pm in lecture hall

April

- 1 Noon Dismissal – Faculty Meeting
- 6 PTG Meeting – 7pm
Quarter 3 Report Cards
Winter Sports Awards
- 21 Noon Dismissal – Easter Vacation begins
 - Classes Resume on Monday, May 2nd

As Quarter 3 continues we look ahead to this year's production "*The Wizard of Oz*". Under the direction of Mrs. Megalos and, with the support of teachers, parents and volunteers, the students are preparing a theatrical performance comparable to Broadway!

Congratulations to all our Seniors who have begun to receive their college acceptances. To date they have been offered over *3.3 million dollars* in college academic scholarships!

I am happy to announce that we currently have 100 Freshmen accepted for the scholastic year 2011-2012. I wish to thank our parents who have been referring families to our Middle School and High School programs. **Please remember that each MHCA family who recommends a new family will receive a \$500 tuition deduction for 2011-2012.**

I recognize that times are hard financially right now but the greatest gift we can give to our children is an education. At Mary Help we remain committed to prepare our students for college and the workplace with a life-long commitment to faith, education, leadership, and service. We will continue to work with all our families throughout the new scholastic year to ensure that financial obligations remain affordable and payments can be made according to need. Our students are currently meeting with the guidance department to select courses for 2011- 2012. Please re-register your daughter as soon as possible to ensure that she is able to get the classes she wants next year, especially those limited to a particular class size.

Please be assured of the Sisters prayers for your families throughout the Lenten Season.

Sr. Kim

