



Winter 2010

Our Lady of Lourdes School

A newsletter for the alumni, friends, and families of Our Lady of Lourdes School in New York City

Principal's Corner

Dear Friends,

With a comprehensive foreign language program immersing all of our students in new languages and cultures; with continual support from our Patrons, Donors, and Alumni; and with a strong school community comprised of vibrant students, lively educators and dedicated parents, Our Lady of Lourdes School has had an exciting year thus far.

This year marked the formation of a larger and more diverse choir whose appearances range from school gatherings to local events, the continuation of our extensive literacy initiatives, and innovative approaches to test preparation. In the pages of this season's newsletter you will see just how busy we have been.

Your support and active presence mean everything to us—we hope the following stories will inspire you to visit the scholastic haven you enable us to cultivate and sustain, and to actively partake in the many events we have to share with you!

Sincerely,
Cathy Hufnagel
Principal



The Romance Languages Spread at OLL!

OLL's students inhabit a multicultural city with a strong Italian culture. Thanks to a generous grant for an Italian teacher from the Italian American Committee on Education, OLL's lower grade students are now learning to speak and sing in Italian!

Last year, Italy's vibrant culture and rich history were brought to OLL by way of famed Italian monk and creator of traditional music notation, Gvido Arezzo. The school's art and music teacher incorporated donated computerized music-learning software into her classes. The software gently pushed students into Arezzo's realm by representing the solfeggio with symbols and colors that synthesize both concrete and abstract elements of music. Students have also come to recognize Gvido's influence in the hip hop, regaton, and bachata music they listen to each day, and are now learning

to express themselves and sing their own songs in Italian.

Italian teacher Mrs. Luciana Curti began teaching at OLL in early September and is already amazed with student progress—"The students have been practicing hard and improving daily. It is wonderful to see how far they have progressed from first learning how to introduce themselves with simple greetings and are now mastering idiomatic expressions and vocabulary."

**"Having my child teach me colors in Italian is priceless. By learning to embrace a new culture at this age, she will grow and develop into a true world citizen."
—Kindergarten Parent**

The presence of a new Romance language at OLL has further united our student body. Our language buddies program initiated last year now includes Italian in addition to Spanish. However, students of the younger grades are now teaching their older peers some phrases in Italian in exchange for the Spanish stories they read to them—Bravi Bambini!



Ms. Curti and the first graders use the SMART Board to interactively celebrate Italian language and culture.

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Celebrating Our Lady of Lourdes School Across Generations

It's said that distance makes the heart grow fonder, and the large turnout at Our Lady of Lourdes School's Second Alumni Reunion proved this to be the case for many of our active alumni. On October 22, eighty-three former OLL students traveled from far and wide, some from as far as Puerto Rico and California, to reminisce with their peers and mingle with the school's current administration, faculty and students. The day started with an address by Principal Hufnagel in which she remarked that "the sustainability of Our Lady of Lourdes School rests in the hands of our alumni. By climbing the steps to your old classrooms and remaining mindful of the positive effects your Catholic education had on your character, you will ensure OLL's strong presence in this community."

A wonderful day of fellowship and celebration, the Alumni Reunion hosted classes from 1954 and beyond, and featured a special reunion mass, many impromptu performances, and rich interactions between alumni and students. Most notable were the energies of the reunion's OLL Steering Committee whose organizing efforts

included eye-catching invitations and an original doo-wop song arranged especially for this day and performed by alumni and current students!

The day was one of honoring all those benefitting from Our Lady of Lourdes School in the past as well as in the present. Sentiments of appreciation, unity and fellowship flowed. The special reunion Mass was particularly memorable. Monsignor John Ruvo, assigned to the parish from 1957 to 1970, was the Chief Celebrant and Co-Homilist with OLL's current Pastor, Father Fabian Lopez. The lives of all former OLL students and supporters were remembered, and the bounties awaiting OLL's current students were welcomed.

The reunion left Aleysha, a seventh grader, member of the choir and aspiring lawyer, feeling inspired and excited for what her future holds. "It was nice to see students who were here fifty years ago hugging and laughing with each other. I really loved having an alumni sing doo-wop with the choir. Mr. Rivera, the singer, made me realize that if I ever become famous I will always come back to my school and give back to the place that helped me become the successful woman I will be."

We sincerely thank our alumni and the 2010 Reunion Committee for evoking such wonderful memories and for raising awareness of the school's present need for emergency scholarship funds. All proceeds from this event will go towards OLL Angels, the school's in-house Sponsor-a-Student Program.



Student-led tours fostered memorable interactions between students, and their Alumni mentors!

***"The Alumni Reunion filled me with hope. I now know that my friendships here will last forever!"
—Chanel,
Seventh grader***

Summer Fundraising Event Supports the Arts at OLL

While OLL's students and teachers spent the summer months relaxing after a busy school year, the school's Patrons and supporters at JP Morgan Chase, Silver Point and Sapient hosted their 5th Annual OLL Game Night. This annual fundraiser helps sustain OLL's beloved art and music programs and contributes to its emergency scholarship fund. This year's event boasted over seventy-five different competitors representing various firms throughout New York City. Newcomers from King Street, a New York City-based investment management firm, took home the gold. However, "the real winners," OLL Patron Bernadette Conway asserts, "will be the kids, as over 100 different people ended up contributing to the school."

The presence of art and music at OLL makes for a vibrant atmosphere and allows students to channel their talents and artistic passions. Sixth grader Ismerlyn looks forward to art class each day because, "it allows me to express myself in ways no other subjects do." She sincerely thanks all participants and organizers of this summer fundraiser for giving her the chance to "learn new techniques each day that I will use to fulfill my lifetime dream of becoming an artist. I am thankful for everyone who contributes to the art and music program because it teaches me and my friends how to express ourselves in new and exciting ways." Our Lady of Lourdes School is incredibly grateful to the efforts of Ms. Bernadette Conway of Sapient, Mr. Joseph Beggans and Mr. Alexander Bea of JP Morgan Chase, and to all other participating firms and supporters.

OLL Cheers for Mr. Michael Narvaez

Since joining the Patrons Program in 2005, Our Lady of Lourdes has been connected with many great partners and positive role models. One such donor, Mr. Michael Narvaez of JP Morgan Chase, initiated a unique fundraiser that left our scholastic community feeling inspired and hopeful—and slightly out of shape!

A former athlete and avid runner, Mr. Narvaez extended a personal triumph of running the ING New York City Marathon 2010 to benefit OLL's greater community. By calling on family members, friends, co-workers and other OLL Patrons, Mr. Narvaez turned his 26.2 mile journey through the five boroughs in early November into a remarkable fundraiser for OLL's emergency scholarship fund. This fund makes it possible to retain current students and families facing sudden economic and personal hardships. By linking the school to Crowdrise, an internet server sponsoring fundraising efforts for registered non-profit organizations and schools, Mr. Narvaez encouraged members of his inner-circle to contribute funds for every mile he pledged to run in hopes of raising \$3,750, a full year's tuition at OLL. Not only did Mr. Narvaez raise the desired

amount, he exceeded it and accordingly enabled children from six families to continue with their studies at OLL.

Mr. Narvaez first connected with OLL during a Career Day at JP Morgan in 2007, where he instantly connected with eighth grade students over their shared experiences from growing up in Harlem, Washington Heights and the Bronx. Students have since requested his appearance as OLL's honorary graduation speaker three times, and each eighth grade class looks forward to meeting him on Career Day.

Mr. Narvaez remains committed to supporting Catholic education. "It provided me with a safe and academically challenging environment that enabled me to flourish as a student and athlete. [In Catholic schools] I was able to not only flourish as a student but more importantly succeed as a person." Our Lady of Lourdes School is deeply touched by Mr. Narvaez' support and sincerely thanks him as well as donors Mr. Joseph Beggans, Mr. Alexander Bea and everyone else who contributed to Mr. Narvaez' unforgettable effort.

"Seeing Mr. Narvaez run a marathon for our school makes me feel that there is something really special about him. I am going to cheer for him on marathon day to thank him for supporting us—I hope he wins the race!"
—Brittany, sixth grader



Members of OLL's Track Team joined the crowd at the ING NYC Marathon to cheer for Mr. Narvaez!

OLL's Choir Celebrates Big Happenings



OLL's bold choir poses outside St. Patrick's Cathedral before their major debut!

OLL's talented choir wasted no time starting this year with a melodious bang! After catching the attention of a volunteer with Learning to Look, an art enrichment program offered to OLL, the students' were invited to sing at a wedding at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Knowing that this occasion needed to be extra special, the formerly all-female choir enlisted five new male members. The choir sang "Irish Blessing" and "Oh Happy Day" on Saturday, September 28th for Shannon and Timothy, daughter and son-in-law of Mrs. Julie Maloney of the Museum of Modern Art. Sixth grade choir member Deigna really enjoyed this experience. "Singing at a wedding Mass at St. Pat-

rick's Cathedral was amazing! I had never been to a wedding before, and making the bride's wish of having a children's choir sing at her wedding come true made me feel very happy for her!" OLL's Choir thanks their director Ms. Palomino, the bride and groom, and their family for this unforgettable opportunity and looks forward to singing at more wedding Masses to come!

"Singing in the school choir makes me feel like a star. I love sharing my love of music with others."
—Maria Isabel, sixth grader

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