

The Bear Facts

Vision, Faith, and a School

I am more convinced today than ever before that Holy Family School is here today because of two words, **VISION and FAITH**. In the early 1980's, there was talk around the Parish about building a school at Holy Family. Many of the longtime parishioners were against it, arguing that it would bring disruption and competition for use of facilities. Others were more open and felt that maybe it would be a good source of evangelization and a way to support the growing families of our neighborhood.

At this time, my personal faith journey was taking wings because I had just completed a year of study in RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) and had become a Catholic. I remember talking to a priest, Fr. Dare Morgan, S.J., at our graduation ceremony in our parish's Community Center. I was telling him that I felt like there was little for me to offer our church, being such a newcomer to the faith and having little experience in the Catholic religion. He put his arm on my shoulder and said, "Be patient, and when the Lord has something for you to do he will call you."



About a month later, the announcement came. Fr. Tom Foster, S.J., then Pastor of our church, announced that Holy Family Parish would explore the possibility of opening an elementary school. If approved, it would be the first school built in our Diocese in over twenty years. It seemed that the Superintendent of Schools determined that there was a need for a new Catholic elementary school because of the population growth in the South San Jose area.

Then, in 1985, Fr. Morgan's prediction came true. After the announcement at Mass, while walking out of church, I made a comment to a friend regarding the proposed school. He suggested that I attend a meeting the following week to share my thoughts with a group of parishioners who had been called together by the Pastor. The first School Board (Educational Center Advisory Committee) was formed, and I was asked to serve as Chairman. As I think back over the past 21 years, the wisdom of Fr. Dare's words has never left my mind. I can hear his soft voice in my ear as though it were yesterday. At the time, I certainly did not realize or appreciate the gravity of what I had been called to do. I have since come to appreciate many lessons about **VISION and FAITH**.



The School Board stood at the edge of the parking lot staring at the weed field that would some day become a school. We quickly formed ideas and gained a sense of direction. We needed to coordinate with the Diocese to get direction and discuss funding. We needed to hire a principal who would then develop curriculum, hire faculty, and help design the buildings. We needed to get the support of the parish community, surrounding neighbors, locate funding.....the list was endless. At times, we felt overwhelmed with so much to do and so little experience in how to accomplish the many tasks before us. We felt like we were explorers going places that had not been traveled before.

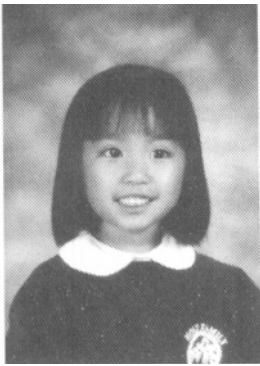
In 1986, the school opened at Holy Family with kindergarten through fifth grade. One grade was added to the school each year and the Educational Center graduated its first eighth grade in 1990. In the early 1990's, the Ed Center was expanded and the Parish became involved with the building of "Santa Familia," an affordable housing complex with 79 living units and a gymnasium shared by the parish, school, and housing complex.

In 1995 the school reached full capacity with 660 students and approximately 400 additional children were involved in the catechetical programs. In 2000 it was deemed prudent to build a new Junior High building instead of seismically upgrading the classroom trailers. Construction began in 2003 and in 2004 students and teachers moved into the new building housing state-of-the-art computer and science labs, library, and junior high classrooms. All of this because of TWO WORDS: **VISION and FAITH**.

- Marvin Lewis, Educational Center Advisory Council, 1985-1987

Ten Worthwhile and Fun Years at Holy Family School

When I began school at Holy Family, I was just a normal little preschooler—scared of the big kids, excited that I could *finally* go to school. Going to school was such an excitement that I wished it could take place every day of the week. I looked forward to every solitary aspect of it, ardent to learn, and ready for anything



that came my way. Even at such a young age, I had high hopes and big dreams that I knew I wanted to accomplish

when I “grew up.” I wanted to be a leader. I wanted to play the piano. I even wanted a yellow Volkswagen Beetle. But most of all, I wanted to shine. I wanted to be different. Holy Family was the perfect place for me. It would promote my high-set goals, enhance my academics, and, all the while, help me develop my spiritual faith.

My parents spent a great deal of time searching for a school that was not only academically prestigious but also religiously influential as well. It was a rigorous task, and they individually assessed the majority of schools available in the area. The public schools in my neighborhood were, in actuality,

very impressive, although my parents quickly overlooked them because of the absence of religious teaching. Holy Family was the school they finally chose, and I was enrolled in preschool.

Holy Family provided a staff of well-qualified teachers who were concerned with my academics along with my well-being and safety.

They tried their best to make learning an exhilarating experience and gave me opportunities to freely express my own opinions on various topics. They encouraged sociability, but were strict when they needed to be. Every one of the teachers has individually and positively influenced me.

Holy Family additionally offered so many activities for me to participate in. There was the children’s choir, Girl Scouts, altar serving, lecturing, volleyball, basketball, Student Council, chess club—the massive variety makes it nearly impossible to list! These activities provided an entertaining environment, while ex-



posing me to new ideas and initiatives.

Attending Holy Family has been such an amazing experience for me. There have



been ups and downs, but nothing can be absolutely perfect. Holy Family has molded me into a versatile person, ready to contemplate the many aspects of life. My spiritual faith has developed as I participated in various religious activities and became an altar server, lector, and Eucharistic Minister. My friendship with God has matured, and I strongly feel like I have become closer to Him. I have gradually grown from a little preschooler to a resourceful eighth grader. I even look forward to attending a Catholic high school, having Presentation preferably in mind. Nevertheless, I still hold some of the same big dreams that I had as toddler. I *still* want to be a leader. I *still* want to be a great pianist. I *still* want to shine. In addition, I *still* would not mind that yellow Volkswagen Beetle.

- Monica Nguyen, HF '07

Our Alumni Shine!

1993

- ☆ Perhaps playing on HF's Basketball Teams influenced **Micaela Terry's** future - she has been an Athletic Trainer at Valley Christian High School for the past 5 years.

1996

- ☆ After double majoring in Social Justice and Psychology at St. Mary's College of California and earning a Master's Degree in Social Work from San Jose State University, **Marie Canete** is now working as a Dependency Investigator for Santa Clara County.
- ☆ After working with fellow AmeriCorps members for a year to address critical needs in communities, **David Fatemi** is now majoring in Psychology at Sonoma State.
- ☆ Graduating from Sonoma State last year, **Colin Kelly** works with hardware in Synopsis' IT Department.
- ☆ Graduating from UC Davis, **Stephen Terry** is pursuing his career as a pharmaceutical rep.



Marie Canete

1997

- ☆ Miss 2006 California visited this year's parish festival - our very own **Marissa Mecir!**
- ☆ "The Edge," Holy Family Parish's vibrant Middle School Youth Ministry Program, and "Spirit

and Truth," the parish's new program for Young Adults, resonate with the passion **Lindsey Scherer**, Coordinator of Middle School & Young Adults, pours into her job when she's not busy with her studies at Santa Clara University.

- ☆ Playing a momma in Broadway by the Bay's production of "Fiddler on the Roof," **Christine Schisano** has also appeared in Renegade Theater's "Bill of (W)Rights" and "Sideway Stories from Wayside School" while hosting Intel Museum tours. She credits Holy Family School's choir and school plays, particularly the opportunity to act in the 8th grade production of "The Mouse Trap" directed by Mrs. Selinske for exposing her to the joy of performance.

1998

- ☆ Somehow **Andrew Brown**, Holy Family Parish's Coordinator of Youth Ministry, finds time for his studies at Santa Clara University when the majority of his time and zeal are directed toward "LIFE TEEN," the parish's dynamic high school ministry program.
- ☆ Majoring in Kinesiology/Physical Education, **Tara Lebherz**, a Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society member at San Jose State (4.0 G.P.A.), will graduate next year.



Marissa Mecir

Memories of Friendship and Community

"After moving away for college and meeting new people, I always remember the friendships that were built in my 9 years at Holy Family School. There is no better feeling than coming back to Holy Family, a place of community and love." Tara Lebherz ('98)

Attention Alumni:

Please e-mail info@hfsj.org to let us know about your experiences and adventures since graduating from Holy Family. If you have moved, please send us your new address, phone number, and e-mail address so we can let you know about upcoming events, reunions, etc.

☆ Co-team Captain of the Air Force Academy's swim team, **Colleen Smith** continued the competitive swimming she's loved since her HF days to become a three-time academic All-Mountain West Conference selection, ranking eighth in Air Force Academy history in the 4000 IM (4.35.24) and tenth in the 200 IM (2.09.93) before graduating last June.



Colleen Smith

☆ Putting the excellent educational foundation she received here at HF to good use, **Amanda Terry** graduated from UC Davis and is now a medical student at Tufts School of Medicine.

☆ Continuing the dedication he applied to his studies here at HF, **Damien Troutman** graduated this year with honors from Marymount Loyola University.

1999

☆ Swim Instructor & Lifeguard at the Y, working at the Santa Clara Fairgrounds Motorcross Track, and teaching private swim lessons during her "vacations," **Sara Lavoie** is planning to work just as hard in school pursuing a major in Construction Management and a minor in Architecture.

2000

☆ While working as a Counter Terrorism Research Analyst in Homeland Security, **Ashley Howell** keeps up with her studies in Public Policy at the University of Southern California.

☆ Majoring in Business Marketing at San Jose State University, **Tyler Swasey** finds time from his studies and his job at Albertson's to enjoy sports, wakeboarding, snowboarding, and fishing.

2001

☆ Continuing acting and dancing as she loved to do during her years at HF, **Heather Kenyon** is pursuing a degree in Theatre, and a minor in Dance at Sacramento State University.

☆ Cal Hi Sports' CCS Softball Player of the Year, First Team all CCS, and WCAL Softball MVP, **Samantha Ricketts** has moved from Mitty on a softball scholarship to the University of Okla-

homa. With nursing as her goal, Samantha is majoring in Health Sciences, was named to the All Midwest Region Team, finished in the top 10 of the conference in individual batting, hits & RBI's, and was the lone freshman in the Big 12 Conference to earn First Team honors.

☆ Currently a student at Expression College for Digital Arts in Emeryville, **Steven Pinheiro** is making his passion his profession in the field of Sound Engineering. He is on call for his sixth year as a member of the California Explorer Search and Rescue Team, and has been a technology consultant for Pioneer High School.

2002

☆ Having graduated from Bellarmine, **Matt Bejar** is majoring in Psychology at Gonzaga University.

☆ Awarded a scholarship from Country Woman's Club of Campbell, **Elizabeth Moreno** is beginning her college years at Stanislaus State University.

☆ At Mitty High School, **Richard Ricketts** received CCS First Team honors in football and was named WCAL Defensive Lineman of the Year. Recruited by the Air Force Academy Prep School to play football, Richard is majoring in Business Management.

☆ Earning the Sister Thecla Scholarship Award at Presentation, **Megan Swasey** is pursuing her passion by majoring in Elementary Education at San Jose State University.

2004 & 2005

☆ Playing on Mitty's basketball and softball teams, **Stephanie** ('04) and **Keilani** ('05) **Ricketts** also play and travel with the San Jose Sting, a competitive softball team.

Calling all Alumni

We encourage you to donate each year to your grammar school – the foundation of your education – one dollar per year since you graduated. Proceeds will go toward our Alumni Fund to help you with reunions and toward helping current and future students enjoy the same quality education that has helped you to move forward in your life. An envelope is enclosed with this newsletter for your convenience.

Holy Family Community Celebrates

The apron worn by Bishop McGrath as he flipped burgers summed up the occasion: “Twenty years of educating tomorrow’s responsible leaders.” Nearly 500 people joined the bishop in a prayer service and barbecue; people who were instrumental in the beginnings of the school, all four principals, current and past school families and staff, and parishioners. Each was reminded of the school’s purpose as the angelic voices of the school’s choir filled the church with “I will praise you, Lord,” and Student Council Co-President Micaela Asercion explained how the school’s originating committee used the Gospel of Matthew, 5:14-16, as their guide to form students who would make their light shine so that others would praise God when they saw the good that the students did.



Audrey Munoz, the school’s first principal, took everyone on a trip down memory lane as she talked about the spirit-filled people whose talent, ability, and tireless effort fulfilled Fr. Tom Foster’s faith and vision of a school that would complement the strong faith community of Holy Family Parish. She had the audience chuckling as she talked about teaching creatively and setting up classrooms in the auditorium when textbooks and portable buildings did not arrive on schedule, and drying out rain-soaked teaching material when the buildings finally arrived, but without roofs.



From the beginning Holy Family School strove to develop the “whole” child, spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. At the school’s first assembly, Audrey Munoz cut an apple open to show the students the natural star inside, sharing with them that the school would help them find the star quality inside each of them. This star quality shone in the next two speakers as Lindsey Scherer and Andrew Brown, graduates of the school and currently the parish’s Youth and Young Adults Ministers, stood as examples and witnesses to the fruits of Holy Family School. Lindsey shared how all Holy Family students are challenged to attain academic excellence, integrity, leadership, teamwork, community, and most importantly, a love for God through their Roman Catholic Faith. Andrew spoke of how he looks into the pews on Sundays to see Holy Family alumni continuing their spiritual journeys through the parish’s LIFE TEEN program to become the next generation of beacons of Christ’s light in the world.

Father Matthew Stanley, pastor, shared how Catholic education shines the light of Christ on the many complexities of human life, and that the school came about because the parish community valued a life-long influence on leaders of the Church and society. Peg and Staff Grady testified to this strong influence as they spoke of their three children who are graduates of the school. Peg shared how she feels parents give their children roots and wings, and holds Holy Family School in the bottom of her heart for the roots it gave her children, allowing them to fly.

The school continues to graduate students as persons of faith, life-long leaders, and responsible citizens, who, according to Audrey Munoz, have an innate need to be a part of something of great meaning guided by the words of the Prophet Micah to “Act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God.”



—Carolyn Canete, Development Director & parent of Marie, '96, Mattie, '98, Nicole, '00, and Steven, '04

the School's 20th Anniversary





Holy Family School

4850 Pearl Avenue

San Jose, CA 95136

“RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED”

Non Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

San Jose, CA

Permit No. 1322

Holy Family School is a parish school rich in the tradition of Catholic education and committed to academic excellence. Our mission is to foster and to support the development of Catholic faith and identity while nurturing the whole child. In partnership with family, educators, and the whole parish community; we strive to promote the spiritual, intellectual, and social development of our students.

Printed on Recycled Paper

Believe and Achieve

Please remember Holy Family School in your estate plan, such as a will, trust, annuity, or life insurance policy. Our IRS nonprofit identification number is 94-2734503. For further information, call (408) 978-1378, or e-mail info@hfsj.org.

Thank you and God bless you!



Calendar of Events

November 21, 9 – 11 a.m.
November 27 – December 8
December 2, 8:30 – 11 a.m.
December 13, 6 – 8 p.m.
December 7 – 10
December 19, 7 p.m.
January – March
January 28, 11:15 a.m.
January 28, 1 – 3 p.m.
January 31, 5 – 7 p.m.
February 7,8,14,15, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Grandparents’ Day
Adopt-a-Family Drive
Breakfast with Santa
Food Sorting at Second Harvest Food Bank
5th & 6th Grade Basketball Tournament
Christmas Program
Homemade Dinners for the Homeless
Catholic Schools’ Week Mass
Prospective Families’ Open House
Science Fair/Open House for Current Families
Prospective Families Tours

February 15 – 18
March 18, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
March 19 - 23
March 31, 6 p.m.
April 24, 7 p.m.
April 25
April 26, 7 p.m.
May 3, 6 p.m.
May 14 & 15, 7 p.m.
May 17
May 24, 7 p.m.
May 30, 7 p.m.

8th Grade Basketball Tournament
Art Vista – Student Art Show
Scholastic Book Fair
Enchanted Evening Dinner Dance and Auction
Spring Program
Jog-a-Thon
New Parent Orientation
Talent Show
Eighth Grade Performance of Ten Little Indians
International Day
Awards Night
Baccalaureate Mass