

# Rise Up and Read



Principal: Sr. Francis Wystepek  
Pastor: Fr. Tino

Divine Mercy Catholic Academy  
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## Welcome Back!

Students at DMCA have started the 2023-2024 school year, and they are happy to be back! It is only the beginning of the year, but we hope for exciting, new opportunities for our students. At DMCA, the staff encourages the love of learning and being a part of the school community.

This year, we are welcoming back our DMCA newspaper *Rise Up and Read*. This year's newspaper staff is ambitious, as you can see by the work in this first issue. They will be covering all of the main events – to help provide families and friends an inside look at DMCA. Please stay on the lookout for our next issue (November-December).

Happy Reading!

## Newspaper Staff

### Sixth Grade

Isabella Guzman  
Lianna Lopez  
Michaela Phillips  
Aiden Terry

### Seventh Grade

Helena Fonseca  
Johannie Rodriguez  
Isabella Ramharak  
Joaquin Reyes  
Priscilla Sambhu

### Eighth Grade

Julianne DeGuzman  
Scarlett Melendez  
Amelia Marrero

### Moderators

Ms. Sandra DeMarco  
Mrs. Kristina Kenny

## Happy Feast Day, Sister Francis!

By Aiden Terry, Grade 6

On October 6th DMCA celebrated Sr. Francis's Feast Day, and the smile on her face showed that she was very happy and pleased.

The weeks before the special day, the students and teachers all worked together on ideas to make special gifts to shower Sister with. Students were selected to represent each grade from prekindergarten all through 8th grade. Grade by grade the class gifts were brought up to Sister. Everyone from the school was mesmerized by the original handmade presents.

Students from DMCA created posters designed with class names or pictures. Sixth graders constructed a white cross to give her. Donuts and star design posters, hearts with photos, each gift was just as creative as the last. Sister Francis looked very happy as photos were taken. DMCA appreciates our principal and all that she does every single day, year after year for us. Just like a phrase from one of the posters, "Sister Francis, you are hands down the best principal."





## *Celebration of 100 Years of Catholic Education*

*By Helena Fonseca and Priscilla Sambhu, Grade 7*

**O**n Saturday, October 14, 2023 DMCA celebrated 100 years of Catholic education. A mass at 11:30 AM was celebrated by Bishop Robert Brennan. After this mass, there was dinner and dancing at Villa Russo from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Many graduates from past years came together to celebrate the 100 years of Catholic Education at Nativity, St. Stanislaus, and Divine Mercy Catholic Academy. Our school building was built in 1922 and the first graduating class was in 1924. This school was originally called Nativity BVM. A few blocks away, St. Stanislaus opened its doors in 1925. For the next 80 years, students who lived in the neighborhood attended Nativity BVM and St. Stanislaus, where they achieved an excellent education and were helped to succeed in their futures. In 2007, St. Stans and Nativity BVM merged to become the now known Divine Mercy Catholic Academy.

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Ms. Victoria Alfano, went to the gala and exclaimed that it was wonderful. She said “Many of DMCA’s teachers were present including former teachers such as Mrs. Langone and Ms. K. They had a cocktail hour as well as dinner and dessert.” According to Ms. Alfano, the food was a delicious Italian meal. Before dinner, there were speeches presented by the honorees (alumni). There was also a speech given by Father Tino and Sister Francis who both attended the Gala. There was a raffle and one of the alumni from St. Stanislaus, who now lives in Pennsylvania, won. Everyone had a great time and enjoyed this celebration of 100 years of Catholic education in Ozone Park. Cheers to another 100 years!



## Hello, Buddy!

By Johannie Rodriguez, Grade 7

Student council this year would like to have more buddy days for our students. October 5th, buddies were assigned to the older and younger grades and they spent time together during lunch. They were able to talk and get acquainted. The teachers gave them a questionnaire to help them get to know one another. Then the older children helped the youngsters complete a math assignment.

The math activity was different for each of the classes, for example 1st grade had a bat math activity and 3rd had a color by numbers. The older student had to help the younger student complete the activity. 2<sup>nd</sup> and sixth grade worked on a math escape room. The students demonstrated cooperation as they worked to solve their problems. It was great to see our school work as a whole.

There will be more activities to come with our buddies, but it will not be spoiled here!



## Welcome to DMCA, Mrs. Nesbit!

By Joaquin Reyes, Grade 7

Have you ever wondered what new teachers think of our school? Mrs. Nesbit, the new 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher was asked what she thinks about DMCA, as it turns out she enjoys our school. She said, “The atmosphere in our school is supportive and progressive. Everyone is friendly. As a new teacher, everyone is caring, supportive and makes coming to work a good experience. We all share common goals.” There was not any negative experience that made her think poorly of the school.

Mrs. Nesbit loves to teach. She was encouraged to become a teacher to share information because she loves reading and talking. In her own words, “I have always loved reading and talking. Sharing information and learning new things are fun.” The reason she chose to teach here was because she was looking for a specific grade level and wanted it to be religious. She explained, “I was looking for a particular location, grade level, and small school (religious) setting. God allowed me to interview here and to be accepted.” Overall, Mrs. Nesbit enjoys our school and is happy to teach at DMCA. We would like to welcome her to Divine Mercy Catholic Academy!



## AH! IT'S A FIRE!

*By Isabella Ramharak, Grade 7*

**D**o you know about the dangers fire can cause in your everyday life? Well, that is why DMCA had firefighters visit our school to teach us about fire safety and help us see there are things we can do to prevent fires as well. Firefighters came to talk a bit about what we should do if we smell smoke and there is a fire in our house. Some of the younger grades were able to go outside after the fire safety talk to meet with EMTs and look inside an ambulance.

The firefighters stressed you should make sure a smoke detector is installed in your house (or several). This could save your life one day and notify you of a fire you might not be aware of. If you hear the smoke alarm, you should leave the house through your planned exit route. It is suggested to have a safe meeting spot in case you get separated from your family. The meeting spot should be at a safe distance away from your home. For example, a tree near your house; it is to ensure the safety of yourself and everyone. If you and your family are separated, do not go back in and look for them. It is a smarter option to wait for the fire department to come and rescue anyone that is left inside.

Next, never leave the house with candles, stoves, lighters, and even heaters on. Even if you are in the front of your house, a fire could still spread quickly. Candles and heaters could set fires if not put in a safe spot away from all flammable items around your house. When food is on the stove, turn the stove off to prevent burning both the food and your kitchen from burning. Keep all lighters and matches away from the reach of small children, they might think it is a cool toy to play with.

Fires can be scary but they do not have to be... if you have the knowledge on how to handle them/prevent them you will be safe. Students asked the firefighters a lot of questions and were able to get a good understanding of fire safety. Talk about it at home – it can save your life!

## Student Council Elections

*By Julianna DeGuzman and Amelia Marrero, Grade 8*

**A**fter campaign posters were created and speeches were delivered, student council elections took place on Friday, October 13th. DMCA's elected officers are Arya Singh (president), Hannah James (vice president), Aiden Terry (treasurer), and Alexander Roa (secretary). We also offer congratulations to the elected class representatives. It is hoped that their efforts will contribute to the school's excellence and assist our students in their educational and social pursuits. Students can be sure to expect fun activities and exciting events with the help of our student council.

Our president, Arya Singh expressed "I would like to help our school to be the best that it can be. I think the students would enjoy voting for activities to do with the money we raise." We are excited to see what events and activities the student council will implement in this 2023-2024 school year. Congratulations to all those elected to be a part of student council! Thank you, Ms. McAdam and Ms. Lynch!



Art/Writing collected and chosen by Isabella Guzman, Grade 6



By Vianka Liz and Katie Stephen, Grade 4



By Aarti Gokul, Grade 5

Short Story – By Gabriella Rosa, Grade 4  
Where Did They Go?

One day on Halloween, there were 3 kids. Alex, Ruby, and Abby. They were home alone wearing their costumes. Alex was a cat, Ruby was a dog, and Abby was a bunny. Since it was raining out, they could not go out trick or treating. They went to explore the house instead.

They started to go around the house. They found a mysterious box. They opened it. They found a note that said “On Halloween 2023 at 11:50 sharp something will happen.” The kids were scared, it was only 10:40. They had time to get out of the house.

They finally get to the door, but it was locked. They tried to unlock it, but it didn't work. It was 11:49. They had only one minute to find a way out!

It was 11:50 – the kids went missing – no one knows where they went!

The End

By Michaela Phillips, Grade 6

Horrific frights  
All come out at night  
Lurking around, all over town.  
Lurk, lurk, lurk.  
Out pops the frights,  
Witches and mice,  
Even bats and black cats.  
Evening comes, all will run.  
Night fall, be ready for the ball!

Thank you to all of our students who submitted artwork and writings for this month – it was hard just to choose a few!



By Lianna Lopez, Grade 6



By Josie Burgos, Grade 4



## Spooky Day is on its Way! Get Prepared for a Spooktacular Time.

*By Lianna Lopez and Michaela Phillips, Grade 6*

**O**n October 27th, the Parent Event Committee set up a scary good dance party for our school. Everyone was invited to come in costume and join the fun! It took place in the school basement and ran from 7-10pm. The dance was DJ'd by Anthony Gelo, a well-known DMCA parent. The dance party had a great turn out. Students were dancing and got to trick or treat in the spooky haunted house that the committee put together.

In addition, on Halloween the school participated in a parade. Parents and friends came to view an array of costumes. We also had a buddy activity for Halloween and trick or treating throughout the school. That meant candy, candy, and more candy. It would not have been possible without our generous family donations – so thank you for your continued support and generosity!

