



ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"Teaching goodness, discipline and knowledge for over 150 years"

SPRING/SUMMER 2016

THEY DID IT! THE CLASS OF 2016 GRADUATES!

Congratulations to the Class of 2016! On Friday evening, June 10, 94 eighth-grade students graduated from St. Raymond Elementary School. Our pastor, Monsignor Graham, was the celebrant, along with the parish priests. The Graduation ceremony and the Graduates' Mass took place at St. Raymond Church. This year's Salutatorian was Jeanae Escobar and Valedictorian was Anjali Franklyn. In addition to the awarding of diplomas, awards for scholarship and excellence, as well as for subjects, were given out at the Graduation ceremony.

Two days before Graduation, a Dinner Dance was held for the graduates and their parents — an opportunity to thank parents for their sacrifices and provide a time to enjoy themselves. Recognition awards were given as well.



Here are just a few things about the Class of 2016 that make them special:

- 11 of our graduates have attended St. Raymond Elementary School since either Pre-K or Kindergarten.
- 16 of our graduates have had perfect attendance.
- 8 of our graduates are members of the Junior Honor Society.
- 7 of our graduates are altar servers.
- 99% of our graduates took the TACHS exam and 99% of those were accepted into Catholic high schools.
- Our graduating class was awarded more than \$75,000 in scholarships.

We are so proud of them. Congratulations to their parents for their sacrifices to provide their children with a Catholic education.



Photos by Chad Willemis, Dante School Pictures

Kudos to Our Basketball Teams for an Outstanding Year!

Once again, our Boys' and Girls' CYO Junior Varsity basketball teams had a great season. Under the leadership of Bridgette Guzman, St. Raymond's Director of Athletics, both teams ended the 2015-2016 season as winners. The Debs (5th and 6th Grade girls), who had a stellar year with an undefeated season, won the CYO School and Parish Divisions, and became the 2016 Bronx and Manhattan Champions. They also came in second place for the Downstate Division title.

The Boys' Varsity (7th and 8th Grades) also had an undefeated season. The Girls' Varsity (7th and 8th Grades) had a great year, making it to the Semi Finals and taking first place in the CYO School Division. The Tyros (5th and 6th Grade boys) and the Bantams (3rd and 4th Grade boys) both came in third place, and the Gidgets (3rd and 4th Grade girls) came in second place.

Ms. Guzman said, "Thank you to our coaches who did a great job inspiring our teams to do their best. And congratulations to them and to our students who worked hard to achieve their titles. St. Raymond's teams are the best they've ever been." Bravo, Ms. Guzman, coaching staff and all our players. You're the greatest!



Photos by Bridgette Guzman

Dear Alumni and Friends of St. Raymond Elementary School,

As we've ended another school year, I am proud to say it was a wonderful experience of religious education and academic formation for nearly 900 youngsters here in the Parkchester/Castle Hill area of the Bronx. We are not merely surviving — we are thriving!

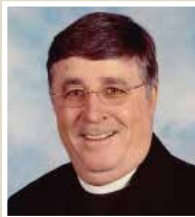
Our emphasis this past year was to meet with our parents to help them understand what was being taught in their children's religion classes. We met with each grade level on Sundays for a brief social, followed by an instruction period and questions and answers. Finally, the parents and their children attended the 12 noon Mass as a family. It was a fulfilling experience for me as pastor, as well as for our principal, Sister Patricia, and her staff of teachers and administrators. Our Sunday Mass attendance has increased. I think the message has gotten out that Catholic education is not only in the classroom during the week but includes prayer and worship on Sundays. We emphasized that parents are the first and foremost teachers of their children and I think the message was very well received!

St. Raymond Elementary School continues to be a parish-based school. That means that we are responsible for the finances and the financial well-being of the school. It also means that our principal and her staff of administrators enjoy a tremendous amount of independence in implementing school policy, programs and progress. There is very little bureaucracy at St. Raymond. Finally, our parish-based school prepares our children and their parents for the reception of the sacraments and our First Penance, Communion and Confirmation are parish celebrations. When our children are asked, "What is your parish?" they answer immediately, "St. Raymond."

We are very grateful for your support — your prayers and your donations — and we ask that you keep it up! We are grateful for the support that we receive from the Archdiocese in the form of grants and scholarships for a number of our children. We are grateful to the parish, which subsidizes our deficit. And, we are especially grateful to the staff of religious, priests, and lay men and women who are dedicated to providing a quality Catholic education. May God strengthen us in our work for His children.

Sincerely,

Monsignor John Graham
Pastor



Dear Alumni and Friends of St. Raymond's,

The school year started on a high note with Pope Francis's visit to New York but before we knew it, it was June. I'm grateful to report that we had a great year.

Educating our students in the Catholic faith is the reason our school exists. We try to follow Jesus, not only in what we say, but especially in what we do. Reaching out to others and helping those in need are ways that we live our Catholic faith throughout the year. Following Pope Francis's example, we created a Year of Mercy Tree on which our students posted their individual acts of mercy. During Catholic Schools Week, we collected more than 4,000 cans of food for local food pantries and held a Mass of Appreciation for members of the FDNY. In March, following a special assembly, we held a bake sale and a dress down day and raised more than \$3,000 for the Turner Syndrome Foundation.

Our faith formation and sacramental instruction programs remain strong. We are delighted to tell you that 62 students made their First Communion in April and 49 made their Confirmation in May. Ninety-two percent of our students passed the Archdiocesan Religion Exam. We are proud of our students and their commitment to the Catholic faith.

In addition to a rigorous academic program and a broad array of extracurricular activities, we offer larger and smaller events designed to challenge, inspire and celebrate our children. From an Honors class Career Day for science careers to a Dr. Seuss birthday celebration; from a Teddy Bear clinic to lessen children's anxiety at going to the doctor, to a visit from a pediatric dentist to promote good dental health, we strive to provide our students ample opportunities to expand their horizons, become well-rounded individuals and simply have fun. Our Parish Art Show and our Spring Show are two annual venues that showcase our children's talents, and our students participate in the science fair, religion challenge and spelling bee each year. A goal for the upcoming school year is to equip all our classes with iPads or Chromebooks. Your help in making this happen — financially, through contacts at foundations, etc. — would be greatly appreciated. Please contact us if you can help.

Some of you reading this newsletter are alumni. We're planning an alumni reunion for September and hope many of you will be able to come. See page 4 for details.

Thank you for your continued support. We wish you a safe, relaxing and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,
Patricia Brito, RJM
Principal



St. Raymond Elementary School Newsletter

Editor:
Elaine Nole, *Advancement Director*

Photos:
Elaine Nole
(unless otherwise indicated)

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KEEP IN TOUCH

Want to keep current on the latest happenings at St. Raymond Elementary School?



Join our email list and receive our monthly *E-News*.
Email alumni@straymondelementary.org and we'll add you to our list.



Like us on Facebook: **St. Raymond Elementary School, Bronx**



Visit our website at www.straymondelementary.org
for updates, and for current and archived issues of *E-News*.

SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTER ROUNDUP

St. Raymond Through the Seasons



Feeding Our Neighbors
Photo by Geri Baron



Pre-K3 Celebrates Dr. Seuss's Birthday



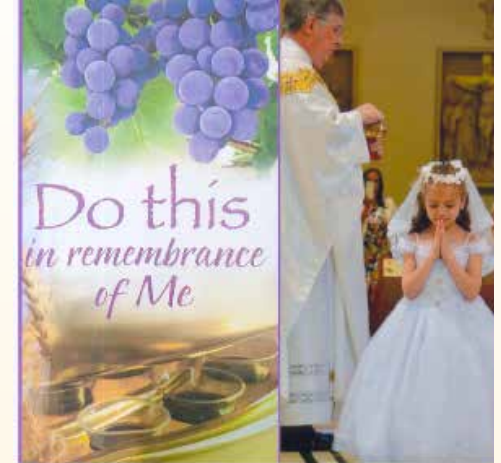
Spring Show
Elvis Sings



FDNY Mass of Appreciation
Photo by Geri Baron



McLean Ave. Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade



First Communion
Photo by Diana Rivera



Ring Day

Photos by Chad Willems,
Dante School Pictures



Parish Art Show

Class 4-204's Megan Spencer points to her artwork.



May Crowning



Science Fair



Turner Syndrome Assembly
Jenna Hernandez and Barbara Barbarite



Confirmation
Celebrant Archbishop Charles Palmer-Buckle

NOW MORE THAN EVER

ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUND



For the past couple of years, we have written about our Financial Assistance Fund in this and other publications. We've reached out to you because many of our parents and prospective parents need help paying their children's tuition. **Our tuition remains one of the lowest in the area; yet many parents struggle to pay it.** "Without a scholarship," said one of our parents, "I could not send my daughter to a good school. She received the best education at St. Raymond. Without the scholarship, I couldn't afford to send her here. I am so grateful." But the scholarships we provide can't keep up with the demand.

Can you help? If you and your siblings graduated from St. Raymond, can you pool your resources to donate a scholarship in your family's name? Can you and your alumni friends commit to a group goal of raising \$4,000* to pay for one year's tuition for one student in the upcoming academic year? We realize that some may only be able to donate a small amount but perhaps there might be others who can make up the difference. We will acknowledge donors via mail and at our Alumni Reunion on September 24. Below are suggested giving levels.

Anything you can do to help will be greatly appreciated. Every donation helps toward providing the lifelong gift of a St. Raymond Elementary School Catholic education.

LEVELS OF GIVING

- Catholic Educator \$3,780* (one year's tuition)
- Catholic Leader \$1,890 (half-year's tuition)
- Catholic Supporter \$945 (quarter-year's tuition)
- Catholic Booster \$378 (one month's tuition)

**All tuition figures are for the parishioner rate for Kindergarten through Grade 8 for the 2016-2017 academic year. The non-parishioner rate is \$4,450 so we're using \$4,000 as an approximate average.*

To make a contribution, mail a check to St. Raymond Elementary School,
Attention: Advancement Office, 2380 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462.
Please put "Financial Assistance Fund" in the memo line.

Donations can be made online through our credit card vendor. Go to www.NYCharities.org/app/straymondelementary/faf.
If you have any questions, please contact Elaine Nole in the Advancement Office, 718-597-3232 x2232.

Alumni Reunion Set for September 24

*Have you ever wondered what happened to the people you went to school with at St. Raymond's?
Here's your chance to find out.*

We are planning a reunion for alumni in all graduation years on **Saturday, September 24, 2016 from 1-5 p.m. at Enzo's of Williamsbridge Road in the Bronx.** Tickets are \$75.00 per person.

This is a chance for you to reconnect with old friends and catch up on what your classmates have been doing and enjoy good food in the center of Morris Park. Please share this information with any alumni who might be interested and feel free to post it on your Facebook page. For additional information and/or to purchase tickets, please call 718-597-3232 x2232 or email nole@straymondelementary.org.

We hope to see you there!

Moving Up Ceremonies for Pre-K3, UPK and Kindergarten

(continued from the previous page)

