



Newsletter

A New Year

We begin our 26th year of providing tuition assistance to those families who want to have their child educated in the tradition and environment of Catholic schools.

We are pleased to welcome **Joseph "Jay" Mastaj** as a member of our Steering Committee. Jay is a retired EMC executive who lives in Milford and is active in his parish and is the coach for the Milford girls' high school soccer team.

Karen Pelletier of Westminster has joined the Committee and will be the liaison at St. Bernard's Central Catholic High. Karen, a mother of three has been a volunteer at St. Bernard's for many years. She joins our other liaison members, **Dr. Francesco Cesareo** at St. Peter-Marian Central Catholic Junior/Senior High, **Joanne Ethier** at Holy Name Central Catholic Junior/Senior High and **Patricia Smith** at St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary.

At our last meeting the committee had a discussion on how to increase our funding. We agreed that our focus in the very near term will be to identify new initiatives to explore and implement. We ask that if you have any ideas to please contact us to share them with us as we continue to help us *Change A Life!*

If you are interested in learning more about our program please contact us to schedule a tour and lunch of one of our schools, or visit our website www.adopt-a-student.net or contact us at info@adopt-a-student.net.

We wish you and your families a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with health and happiness.

Robert R. Pape
Chairman

THE THIRD ANNUAL *CATHOLIC SCHOOLS HAVE TALENT SHOW* RAISED MONEY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND PROVED THAT ...

WE'VE GOT TALENT!

By Tanya Connor

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Faces displayed emotion – doleful countenances of singers of sad songs and sunny smiles of sure-footed dancers.

The 12 entertainers were students from the Diocese's four central Catholic schools: St. Peter Elementary, St. Peter-Marian Junior/Senior High and Holy Name Junior/Senior High, all in Worcester, and St. Bernard's High in Fitchburg.

They were competing in the third annual "Catholic Schools Have Talent" show, held Friday at Holy Name. Each of the schools had its own talent show and then sent the winners to Friday's show. Adopt-A-Student sponsors the fundraiser for its tuition assistance program.

There are other reasons for the show too.

"This event will showcase the talent that exists in our four Central Catholic schools and will provide an evening of enjoyment for you," promised the program booklet. "The dedication of our superintendent, headmasters, administrators and teachers to ensure that they maintain programs in their schools that allow students to develop their talents is admirable, when other schools struggle to maintain programs like these."

"It was a great way to support my school, St. Peter Central Catholic," Megan Dickie said of singing "You Raise Me Up." The eighth-grader, who placed second in last year's show, said she had fun and dedicated this year's performance to her grandparents and mother.

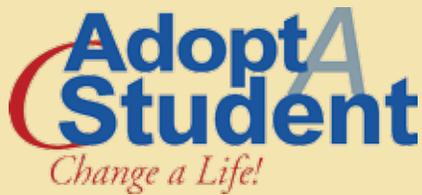
"It's been fun watching you the last three years," Mary Knight, midday host for 104.5 WXLO in Worcester, told Megan. "And, boy, you picked a hard song! ... Your voice is just beautiful!"

Ms. Knight was one of three judges who took turns critiquing contestants before choosing winners. Emcee

(continued on pg. 2)



ST. BERNARD'S DUO SYDNEY & CECILIA



Steering Committee

Mr. James A. Andreoli
 Mr. Joseph J. Bafaro
 Mr. Francesco Cesareo, Ph.D.
 Mr. Martin F. Connors, Jr.
 Atty. Peter J. Dawson
 Mr. William R. Driscoll
 Mr. Thomas E. Dunn
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 Mr. Sean M. McCue
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 Mr. John D. O'Connell
 Mr. Robert O'Connor
 Mr. Robert R. Pape
 Ms. Karen Pelletier
 Mr. Richard Riley
 Mr. Thomas Russell
 Ms. Patricia A. Smith

Our Mission

Adopt-A-Student provides scholarship awards to students whose families would otherwise be unable to send their children to Central Catholic Elementary and Secondary schools in the Diocese of Worcester. Scholarships are presented to students who are not only academically qualified, but specifically seek an education in the tradition and environment of Catholic schools, thus providing society with people of faith and strong moral values.



Dale LePage, host of WooTube on Charter TV 3 (Channel 193), had said they would judge according to skill, difficulty, ability, comfort level on stage and crowd response.

The trophy goes to St. Peter-Marian for the coming year, thanks to Alexandra Gago, a sophomore there, taking first place. She sang Elizaveta's "Meant," accompanying herself on the piano.

Second-place winners were a duo of St. Bernard's seniors – Cecilia Mercadante sang, accompanied by Sydney Esielionis on the piano.

Maiah Lester, a St. Peter's eighth-grader, placed third for her self-choreographed dance to Stevie Wonder's "Sir Duke Remix."

Each contestant got a gift certificate from a sponsoring business and winners were awarded an additional gift certificate, organizers said. Mr. LePage said Michael Tortora, the only male contestant, was absent due to strep throat, but should get his gift certificate as a get well card. He said he'd wanted to see the Holy Name senior's "comic routine."

"It was exciting," Alexandra Gago said of participating. "I've never performed in a multi-school talent show. I was sort of nervous, but not really."



ALEXA EVAGELOUS, ST. PETER-MARIAN



PRISCILLA PAINTSIL,
 ALEXA EVANGELOUS, ALI GAGO,
 ST. PETER-MARIAN

Did she think she'd win?

"I was hoping for it, but I wasn't expecting it," she replied, noting how good the other contestants were during rehearsals.

"That was fantastic!" Hank Stolz, of the Hank Stolz Experience on Charter TV 3 (Channel 193), critiqued her. He noted her hours of practice and outfit and asked what the song meant to her.

"I love the way it sounds ... the lyrics ... loss," Alexandra replied. "It really didn't matter in the first place. You can let it go."

Mr. Stolz indicated that Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" that Cecilia and Sydney performed was a challenge, since it's been used for many things by many people.

At the end of her energetic dance Maiah sprawled down on the stage and grinned at the audience.

"Yes, Girl, you just asked for it!" raved Monica R. O'Connell, a dancer, choreographer and adjunct professor of dance at Worcester State University. "Look at the steam on that stage! And your smile – it's gorgeous!"

"That was fierce, Girl!" "Judge" O'Connell told Rachel DeLapara, a St. Peter's sixth-grader, who danced to "Glam." "You were workin' it, Girl! Very nice job."

To Nicole Dube, a St. Peter's fifth-grader

who did a cheer routine to “Stingray,” she said: “I loved your routine! ... I loved it, Girl! Keep workin’ it.”

She told Nicole’s classmate Naima Masiki, who did an Irish Step Dance Medley, “I loved that your sounds were so strong and you hit all the accents.”

“The kids were great!” Ms. O’Connell told The Catholic Free Press. She marveled at the “wide variety” of talents, more than when she did talent shows consisting mainly of singing and excerpts from plays.

“I think you have an old soul,” Ms. Knight praised Priscilla Paintsil. Sam Cooke’s “A Change is Gonna Come,” which the St. Peter-Marian junior sang, isn’t a song one hears on the radio today, she said.

“It fit your voice really well,” she continued. “I felt like you really understood the lyrics.”

Ms. Knight raved to Alexandra Hanlon, a St. Bernard’s sophomore, “You didn’t have any sheet music in front of you” when playing on the piano “Linus and Lucy,” theme song of the Charlie Brown television show. She said she was picturing Charlie Brown running, and will think of Alexandra when she sees the show.

She said she loved how Alexia Evangelous, a St. Peter-Marian sophomore, brought up the tempo of Elton John’s “Your Song.”

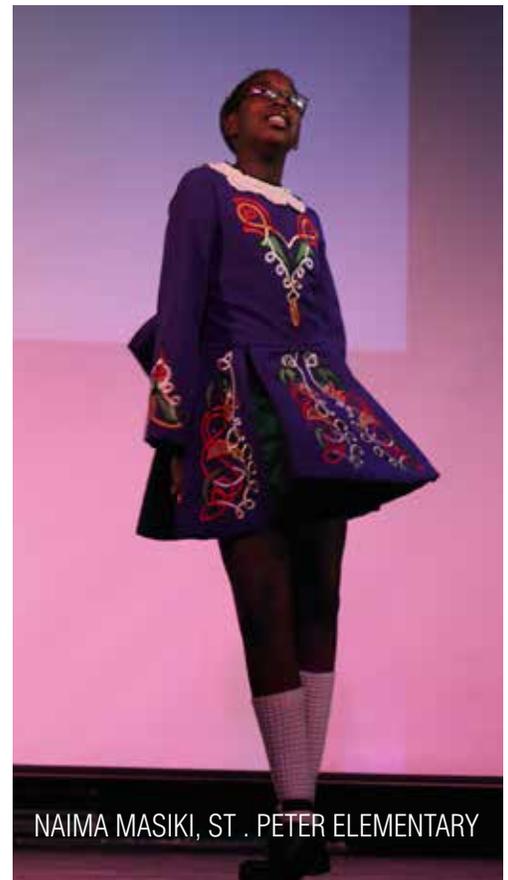
“You made his song your song,” she said. “It’s not easy to play the piano and sing at the same time. I thought it was a beautiful rendition of ‘Your Song.’”

Mr. Stolz praised Krystal Melendez, a Holy Name ninth-grader, for “the way in which you connected with the audience.” Krystal sang Sam Smith’s “Stay with Me” with emotion on her face.

William Driscoll, of the Adopt-A-Student steering committee, and Stephen Kaufman, of the diocesan Communications Office, directed and produced the show, which raised about \$3,500, according to Robert Pape, steering committee chairman. DVDs of the show can be purchased by e-mailing requests to tvmass@charter.net. ■



ALEX HANLON, ST. BERNARD'S



NAIMA MASIKI, ST. PETER ELEMENTARY



JUDGE DALE LEPAGE PRESENTING AWARDS



ENJOYING NEW ENGLAND'S LARGEST PIZZA BACKSTAGE

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Grace Clarke is one of nine in her family who have attended Catholic Schools

AAS Hi Grace. Let's start at the beginning. Why did you chose to pursue a Catholic education?

GRACE I was part of a Catholic school since kindergarten at St. Peter's so when I wanted to go to high school I wanted to continue. I like the community and that people are a lot more accepting here than at other schools. I know that it is just a little thing, but I took the SAT at a local public school and someone sneezed and no one said anything, no one. I know that it might just be a little thing like God bless you, but if that happened here, so many people would say something. So I was attracted to the community and the sense of belonging that exists. Plus, the academics really push you.

AAS What is your favorite aspect of SPM, what stands out to you the most?

GRACE I love the environment and smaller classes. We all know each other, the whole school celebrates each other. I love the football games, because so many of us all go out together. I feel like over the years we have grown closer, we are a lot tighter.

AAS You are involved in a lot of activities here: Camp Sunshine, Be Like Brit, Campus Ministry, raising money for shelters, Why Me Foundation, and other service activities. Why is community service so important to you?

Grace Clark '15

St. Peter-Marian Central Catholic High School

FOR THE CLARKS, CATHOLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION, IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

GRACE I wanted to do it, I can't just live for myself, I have to help others.

AAS You are also open about the importance of faith in your life. Can you talk about how faith has enhanced your education?

GRACE It is very important to me. It provides us with purpose, we need to know why we are here and not just what college are you going to.

AAS Would you like to offer any words to the Adopt-A-Student Program?

GRACE I thought about what I wanted to say, but I am not really sure. I know that I would not be able to be here if it was not for some generous people. I guess I just want to say thank you because I am so grateful for their generosity.

AAS Would you like to add anything else about your education here at SPM?

GRACE Yes, I love my teammates. The volleyball is a family and we do a lot of things together.

AAS In closing, I know that you come from a large family. How many of your brothers and sisters went to Catholic schools?

GRACE All nine Clarks went to Catholic schools.



ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES \$58,000!

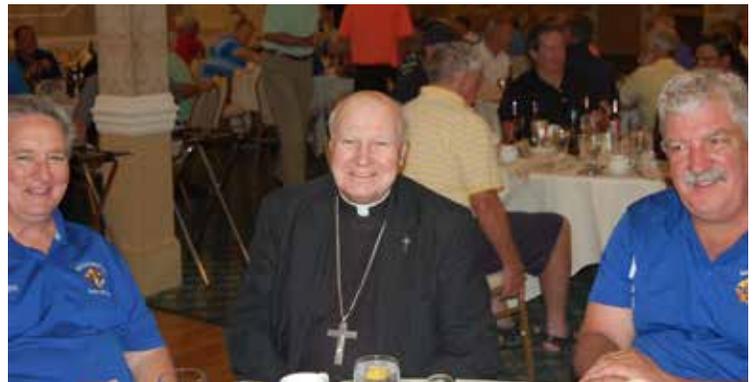
On August 25, 2014, we experienced another great day for golf as we celebrated our 25th Annual Golf Tournament. After a great lunch we had 102 golfers tee off and enjoy the beauty and challenge of Wachusett Country Club.

There was a brief reception, auctions and a delicious dinner.

We were fortunate to have Bishop McManus, Bishop Reilly and Bishop Rueger join us and demonstrate their support for the program.

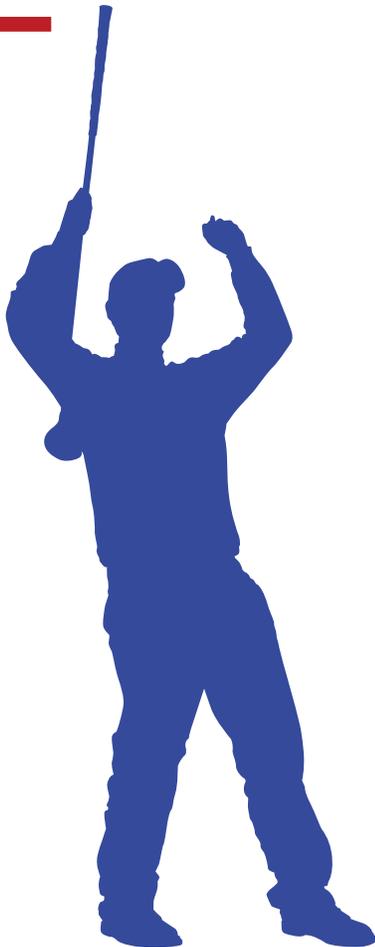
Our sponsors, players and prize donors (a complete list on page 6) provided \$58,000 which will provide many students with an opportunity to experience a values based education in our Worcester Diocesan Central Catholic Schools.

Over 25 years we have we have provided over \$3,200,000 to almost 1,200 students, and the need continues to grow. This tournament is one of our major fund raising events.



THANK YOU

YOUR
GENEROSITY
ENSURES THAT
WE CAN PROVIDE
SCHOLARSHIPS
TO DESERVING
STUDENTS
SEEKING A
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL
EDUCATION.



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Wachusett Country Club
Worcester Country Club

Gratitude is the Memory of the Heart

Thank you so much for all your help over the years! What a blessing it has been for our family.

Love,
The Clarks

I would like to express my gratitude for being a recipient of an Adopt-A-Student scholarship for the past three years. The financial help you have provided has been a blessing for my family and me. The education I have received at St. Peter-Marian will benefit me as I expand on that education for the next four years at Assumption College. Without your help, this wouldn't be a possibility for me.

Sincerely,
Michael Vayda



Wishing You A
Blessed Christmas &
A Happy New Year

Adopt-A-Student Scholars

Araceli J. Kollie
Lexie-Paige Boucher
Sperce Nath
Kawlyc Polard
Alyssa Wentworth
Maria Brown
Johanna Williams
Clariese Natal
Alexus Rondeau
Rebecca Blomst
Vylygh Craig
Christy Montrose
Carla Paul
Grace Clark
Eury Rosario
Shamar Monika Alexander
Simons
Maria Murphy
Anna Sald
Raquel Clark
Dorothy Gibbs
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Adriella Spina
Alic Cornish
Hovin Lopez
Katherine Wallace
Emily Greenst
Kodie Scott
Mimi Hoquearty
Eliana Rodriguez
Janet Coley
Malaki Brown
Joselyn Corigan
Hannah Liljegren
Alyson McKeon
Dayana Gonzalez
SANAA MAY
Kelsi Goodnow
Sam Maloney

SELECTION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Our Selection Committee chaired by John O'Connell worked into the early summer and finalized the selection of those who would have their scholarship renewed and those who would be new entrants into the program. After much deliberation **40 students received scholarships totaling \$178,625.** Unfortunately the committee was not able to satisfy all of the requests.

Adopt A Student

Change a Life!

Diocese of Worcester
49 Elm Street Worcester, MA 01609
508.929.4317
www.Adopt-A-Student.net



Inside this Issue

- We've Got Talent!
- Golf Tournament Recap
- Student Spotlight

 We are on Facebook, visit us and Like our page.



Details to follow in the new year

**Eighth Annual
Recognition Dinner**
March 26, 2015
Mechanics Hall

