As the tradition goes at Holy Family Academy, HFA families and faculty members gathered at Lafayette Park on the West side of Manchester for the Academy “Getting to Know You” Family Picnic. It was a gorgeous summer day, with plenty of sunshine, and a great flurry of activity as students played organized games along with the perennial favorites of Frisbee and soccer. The face painting table manned by HFA students was another popular spot at the picnic again this year. The family picnic is a wonderful opportunity for the “new” HFA families to meet and chat with the “old” families, and also for the new students to spend some time getting to know their new classmates. After the opening prayer, the faculty members were introduced, as were the classes that they are teaching this year. Everyone, including the faculty and administration, were thrilled that the first week of school began one week later than usual, due to the newly approved calendar. The first day of school this year was Wednesday, September 1st, which gave everyone one extra week for school preparations and last minute details that needed to get accomplished! With a full class of fifteen students in 7th grade, and three additional students in other grades, the total student count is 71 students this year. Holy Family Academy could be called a “regional” school, since it not only serves families from the cities of Manchester and Concord, but it also serves families from fourteen surrounding towns — from Hopkinton to Nashua, and Goffstown to Exeter. Even after ten years of being in existence, Holy Family Academy is still relatively unknown to many New Hampshire families. This year we hope to spread the “good news” about Holy Family Academy by singing our way into the hearts of many Catholics in various parishes in our Diocese who still do not know about our school!

On September 19th, the Academy Choir, under the direction of faculty member Miss Anne Rennie, sang for the opening of the year Mass of the Holy Spirit at Ste. Marie Church. Fr. Marc Montminy, a founder and Spiritual Director of the Academy, heard the Board of Trustees’ and HFA Staff’s public Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity to the Catholic Church. This ceremony is one that is done on a yearly basis and is a beautiful witness of our Catholic faith, one that demonstrates to its families and the public that “the school adheres to the Catholic faith as set forth in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and other documents of the Magisterium” (NAPCIS, Criterion 1; Section A).

As much as the students of Holy Family Academy enjoy being Catholic, they greatly enjoy being athletic as well! The HFA Griffins co-ed Soccer Team, coached by faculty member, Mr. Michael Kelleher has a 4-0 record so far this season. The Griffins play against other small school teams in the local area. Since there are so many HFA students who are interested in playing soccer, two HFA Dads have volunteered their time to coach a JV soccer team this fall. Thank you, Coach Dave and Mike!

For the second consecutive year, Fr. Andrew Beauregard, and Fr. Joseph Medio, Franciscans of the Primitive Observance, led the HFA student retreat on Wednesday, September 29th, on the Feast of the Archangels. The day began with the 8:00 A.M. Mass and continued with a series of three talks, small sharing group activities, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. The spiritual theme for the retreat was John 4:7-15, which is the school’s spiritual theme for this academic year. When Jesus meets the Samaritan woman at the well, He offers her “living water”, the kind of water that will quench her deepest thirst and give her eternal life. God is thirsting for us and He desires that we thirst for Him. There will be many opportunities this year for our students to grow intellectually and also in virtue and holiness. We are looking forward to a great academic year, one filled with special blessings from the Lord. God is going to give us His “living water”, the gift of His own Spirit if we are only open to receiving the gift.

“The water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John 4:14b
New But Familiar:
First Impressions of HFA

Interim Dean of Faculty and Academics, Mark Gillis, offers his first impression of Holy Family Academy

Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* opens with an oft-quoted and intriguing sentence: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” I’m surprised no one has used this sentence as the basis for a new reality show. ABC would be overwhelmed by families vying to appear on “America’s Most Delightful and Depressing Home Videos.” Whatever Tolstoy’s insight reveals about family life, I think it also applies to schools teaching in the Catholic tradition, especially the part about the “happy” ones being “alike.”

When I first visited Holy Family Academy in the spring of 2010, I encountered a school that was new to me yet at the same time familiar. I recognized the students and faculty—though I had never met most of them before. The students were happy, diligent, and respectful; the teachers were knowledgeable, dynamic, and dedicated. The Socratic discussions in the classrooms were lively exchanges governed by a close reading of the text. In short, I experienced the joy, hope, and intellectual rigor that permeate any school where Christ is King.

The kinship HFA enjoys with the other “happy” schools teaching in the Catholic tradition and colleges becomes clear by considering typical “day in the life of HFA.” On a Friday in October, for example, the HFA students translated Latin passages from the Vulgate Bible and Vergil’s *Aeneid*, discussed *Beowulf* and *Coriolanus*, calculated the trajectory of a marble rolled down a ramp and into the air, did trigonometric memory drills, and debated whether ignorance affects the morality of a human act—and that was all before lunch!

After lunch the choir—all the students and all the faculty—broke into four sections to practice Handel’s “And the Glory of the Lord” for the upcoming Advent concert. Then, we all gathered for a school-wide poetry session during which fourteen brave souls took turns standing before their friends recited from memory poems by Shakespeare, Lewis Carroll, and William Blake.

Later in the afternoon, when torrential rains cancelled the outdoor gym period, we improvised a variety of activities and offered them—cruise ship style—in different locations around the school. In one classroom we pushed the furniture aside and Miss Cross taught the students ballroom dancing, two other classrooms were reserved for board games and chess, and the basement was designated for calisthenics.

The days at HFA end where they begin: in the chapel, where we sing, pray, and hear the Word of God as a community. We often sing the *Salve Regina*—and perhaps a school’s ability to belt out Latin hymns from the Church’s musical treasury is one the distinguishing traits of a “happy” school teaching in the Catholic tradition.

My two months at Holy Family Academy have strengthened my first impression that HFA is a wonderful place for boys and girls to become Catholic young men and women. The students are reading great authors, translating classic texts, singing glorious music, and socializing in wholesome activities that do not cost money or involve a television.

It inspires hope to know that America is dotted with “happy” schools teaching in the Catholic tradition and colleges like Holy Family Academy, institutions born “from the heart of the Church” (*From the Heart of the Church* is the title of John Paul II’s document on Catholic Universities). These schools are pockets of Catholicism and bearers of Western civilization, much like the thousand of monasteries built and preserved Catholic Europe. These monasteries became hubs of civilization and Catholic life for the people around. I believe Holy Family and her “sister” schools around the state and country will contribute greatly to the preservation and renewal of Catholic culture in America. I am delighted to be part of this happy family.
The faculty enjoys a light moment during their annual four days of Faculty Development. This was followed by a day-long retreat led by Fr. Richard Dion which included Mass, time for personal reflection and a Holy Hour.

Fr. Boucher preaching during the celebration of Mass at the base of Mt. Kearsarge, an annual tradition which concluded with a hike up the mountain.

Getting to Know You Annual Family Picnic:

Lots of concentration on this student’s face as she makes her way to the finish line, hopefully without dropping the egg she is carefully carrying.

These hikers are happy, having made it to the top of the mountain.

Yes, I want to help Holy Family Academy to continue its' work of forming and educating young men and women who will make a difference in our world! Here is my tax-deductible gift:

Name: _____________________________________________________________ E-mail ________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________________________ ST: _______ Zip: _____________ Phone:_______________________

Amount of Gift: _______________ One time: ________ Number of Installments: ________

Please send monthly envelopes: ____________

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Manchester, NH 03104
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Why Do We Memorize Poetry?

By Ellen Turner — Faculty

Simply put, if you immerse your mind and imagination in beautiful sounds, words, images and ideas, your faculties will first imitate all that beauty, and then begin to produce some on its own. You become that with which you surround yourself, and as real poetry is full of truth, beauty and goodness, we ought to sink ourselves into it.

In her book "The Harp and the Laurel Wreath", Laura Berquist writes, “We should foster in our children a love of the beautiful and true and a corresponding distaste for what is ugly and false” (8). When we are children, imitation of the beautiful or of the ugly comes naturally, sometimes with embarrassing results for our parents, and yes, even sometimes for our teachers. If we really want to love the beautiful, we must imitate the beautiful. This is where poetry comes in. “Poetry is one of the forms of the beautiful that is relatively accessible to children” (Ibid). An appreciation for the patterns and sounds of beautiful words, and a knowledge of the way to put them together, becomes almost second nature to the minds steeped in poetry.

All of this helps us to understand why we need poetry in our formative childhood years. But what about our older students? There comes a time when, delightful as nursery rhymes and humorous children’s poems might be, they cease to push the intellect to its full potential. And yet, having been nurtured on poetic rhythms and lovely sounds, it would be devastating to leave them all behind. Luckily for you older students, poets did not stop at the level of Mother Goose compositions. We have our A.A. Milnes and Lewis Carrolls, but we also have poets like John Donne and William Shakespeare. With the tools of poetic comprehension gained by your study and memorization of children’s rhymes, you can begin to access the higher and complex truths found in more advanced poetry.

This accession does not always happen right away, however. In the same way that you might sing a song twenty times before you realize what the lyrics mean, you can say a poem over and over again, delighted with the mere sounds of it, and suddenly, the music of the words begins to mean something beautiful and real and deep. Poetry is a form of music, and it acts on and effects the imagination and emotions the same way that music can and does. It draws us in superficially at first, and later we can move onto an appreciation of its deeper meanings. In more advanced poetry, those real meanings are philosophical and even theological questions and answers. When we begin to ask those questions, as all men should and must, what better way to start than with the music of poetry? For we few lucky ones, it will be a music to which our ears have become accustomed, in which our hearts have long delighted, and our minds have learned to love.

So, in case any of you did have any variations on the question “Why on earth are we memorizing and reciting so much poetry all of sudden?”, I hope that any and all of those variations, in at least in some way, have been answered here.

Student Poetry

The assignment was to write a poem at least 10 lines long, on a topic of the students' choosing, in the style of the laisses (particular verse form) of the Song of Roland. Laisses are each 10 syllables long, and each line ends with a similar but not necessarily identical vowel sound.

Grace Williams (2015)

Awakening quickly I hear a sound
A soft sort of crying and rather loud.
Now everything is silent all around.
There is Mom’s door, again I hear that sound.
I knock softly, Mom says, “Come,” in I bound.
Gasp, I see in her arms a bundle.
In it lies a baby, my joy doubles.
Mom gives her to me; she is so warm, soft, small, and fragile; now quiet as a mouse.
“Dear,” says Mom, “Welcome Maria to our house.”

Sarah Rahilly (2015)

The mysterious world of the unknown
Drives people crazy when things are not shown.
They quiver, they tremble, they curse, and groan.
Their guts are knotted, sweat flows down their brow.
The time has come to make peace with their soul.
Unto the Lord they hope to be consoled,
They find Him welcoming with arms to hold,
A heart so pure guiding us to our home,
The Holy Spirit to make us His own,
We are embraced in the House of the Lord.
The Class of 2010

These fine young men and women, the class of 2010—Where are they now?

Monica Derr
Sarah Langley
Angela Mudd
Casey O’Neill
Ashley Peterson
Beryl Shea
Eric Tamburino
Daniel Vicinanzo

Ave Maria University
Thomas Aquinas College
Seton Hall University
Thomas Aquinas College
UNH Manchester
Mt. Saint Mary’s University
Manchester Comm College
Coast Guard Academy

Right: For the second consecutive year, Fr. Andrew Beauregard, and Fr. Joseph Medio, Franciscans of the Primitive Observance, led the HFA student retreat on Wednesday, September 29th, on the Feast of the Archangels. The day began with the 8:00 A.M. Mass and continued with a series of three talks, small sharing group activities, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. The spiritual theme for the retreat was John 4:7-15, which is the school’s spiritual theme for this academic year.
Speaking of raffles!
Thanks to a generous benefactor, we will be raffling off a chance to win a full week stay at Hampton Beach next summer.
This is a 1st floor 2 bedroom condo, sleeps 6 - 7, has a pool and is located near the State Park just north of the boardwalk. The winner can reserve their date with the benefactor. Only the week of July 4th is unavailable.
There will only be 150 tickets sold at a cost of $20 per ticket. No family may buy more than 3 tickets.
Please call HFA at 603-644-7247 to purchase your tickets.

Annual Auction & Dinner
To Benefit Holy Family Academy

When: November 13, 2010
Where: Ste. Marie Church
       Montminy Hall
Time: 5:30 PM - 10:00PM
Price: $25 per person. Bring friends to really make it fun. $200 per table of eight.

Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship — as well the opportunity to bid on many GREAT items during our Silent Auction, Live Auction and Raffles. (Wrap up your Christmas shopping early!)

Tickets can be reserved by calling the Academy at 603-644-7247.