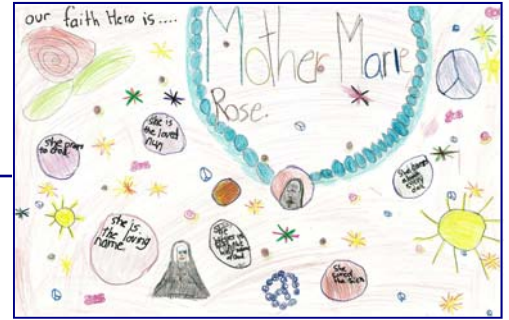




February 2010

# Ignition



## The Principal Says...

On Tuesday, February 23, Keith Macpherson and his music partner, René Lamoureux, (of Keith and René) shared their experience working with *Free the Children* across the world which is an organization that "empowers children in North America to take action to improve the lives of fellow children overseas." Coincidentally, I attended an address by Craig Keilburger, founder of *Free the Children*, at a leadership conference that I attended last week. Craig shared an incredibly moving message about the power of education to influence courage, compassion, and community to our next generation so that they can be agents of change.

Through the medium of music, Keith and René brought a message of hope and leadership for our world, and we see them as tremendous role models for our students as people who have put their gifts and faith values to work in service to others. Not only did they raise awareness about social issues, they challenged us to take collective responsibility to share a vision for how humans can relate to each other in pursuit of democracy and justice to serve

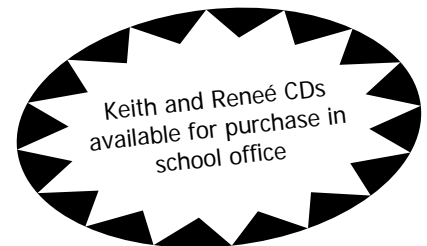
the "common good."

It is timely that I had the opportunity to hear Craig Keilburger's message in the same week that we had the privilege of listening to Keith and René about their work with *Free the Children*. Both messages embody the research and writing that I have been doing in my PhD courses on transformational leading, teaching, and learning at the University of Manitoba. Over the past year, I have been immersed in readings, discussions, and lectures about liberty, equity, human welfare, justice, and community. I have come to realize how profoundly responsible we are in education to bring awareness about and action against social inequities that exist in our world. One of my favourite authors, Margaret Wheatley, maintains that change begins with an idea that engages others (Leading in Uncertain Times, 2009). Between my coursework, my work as a principal, and the *Me to We* philosophy, I consider myself entirely engaged to ask questions and act critically about how human potential can be better enabled, irregardless of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and

## ...Danielle Kolton

ableness, in order to instill hope and a vision of human capacity. This is also the passion that fuelled Mother Marie-Rose's commitment to providing education to women and children in rural Quebec in the mid-1800's: from humble and challenging beginnings, amidst social, religious, and politically stifling contexts, she left a legacy of service that has transcended generations. Please join me in carrying her torch...

*Danielle Kolton*



## Good Graces...

...Christine Gillis

A year or so ago, I had a conversation with my friend, Elly Black, about becoming a Minister of the Eucharist. Elly was a Minister, and I was curious as to how she became one, and what the experience meant to her. She told me that the church hosts a retreat for new and returning Ministers, and invited me to come along when the next retreat was being offered.

This year, I went. It was a crazy Saturday morning: the kids had activities; my husband was in meetings all day. I left my house wondering if I really could afford the time it would take to go on this retreat.

The retreat started out in the church. Fr. Jeff Burwell gave a fantastic talk which included our shared history with Judaism, plus some background on the Eucharist. I was inspired by his discussion about Judaism, by the similarities between our practices and even our prayers. It fit in well with my own personal belief that we, all of us, the human race, are more similar than different, and that we are all intricately connected, bound and responsible for one another.

But when he spoke about the Eucharist, I felt an immediate connection and discovered exactly why I was at that retreat. The word Eucharist comes from Greek and means "thanksgiving". The Eucharist is also referred to as Holy Communion, The Last Supper, the Blessed Sacrament. Jeff spoke about the Eucharist as nourishment. I realized how perfectly becoming a Minister of the Eucharist fit into my own

calling to be a mother. What is a mother's primary function? To care for and to nourish our children. We begin before they are even born, and, in infancy, nourishing our children from our own bodies. We carefully select their first foods, ensuring they are healthy and well balanced. We prepare and serve meals to our entire family at mealtimes. We try to maintain the tradition of family dinners that I grew up with: we wait until everyone is seated, we offer up thanksgiving to God, we eat together, we use our manners, and we share the highs and lows of the day. We do this to keep connected, to live harmoniously (in communion), to experience and give thanks for being part of a family. It is a joyful time.

I realized that this is also applies to my larger family; our parish community. As a community, during Mass, we offer our thanksgiving to God, we eat together, we use our manners, we keep connected to each other and to God, we strive to live harmoniously, and give thanks for being part of this large extended family. We are more alike than we are different, intricately connected, bound, and responsible for one another. It is a joyful time.

The first time I was a Minister, I expected to be nervous. I was not. I was really conscious of my role as server, offering Christ's blood to my own children and to the community. I felt a profound sense of peace, happiness and grace. It felt "right".

This is not a role everyone might

want to fulfill. But for me, it is enriching, and deepens my connection to both God and my extended family: our church community. And as Fr. Jeff said at the retreat: "grace builds upon grace, builds upon grace, builds upon grace...." Aren't we all looking for a little of that?

## SISPAC News

SISPAC has a lot of thanks to give as we start this Lenten season. The Parent's Evening (formerly known as Dinner in the Hall) was fabulous. A great big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who worked and participated in this fun event. It was a very enjoyable evening for socialization and it appeared that everyone in attendance had some fun and fellowship. SISPAC also has to send out another note of appreciation to the Knights of Columbus who helped put on the yummy pancake lunch of Shrove Tuesday. It is these volunteers who assist St. Ignatius in being such an amazing parish and school. One last shout out goes out to Danielle Kolton who attended the February 16<sup>th</sup> SISPAC meeting to review the school plan. It was very informative and further supported the schools overall focus and school priorities that included not just academic excellence, but faith formation as well. Merci, Danielle! On a housekeeping note, if you are wishing to have information included in the e-update, please send it to Danielle Kolton by Tuesday of the e-update week. Our next meeting is Tuesday, March 16, and 7:30. I encourage parents to attend and volunteer as participation assists in many positive outcomes for students that are reaped from the contributions of time by parents and parish volunteers. Kristina Ostermann

February is an exciting time of year. Our basketball teams are working hard and gaining many skills both physically and socially. I'd like to send out a huge thank you to our parent coaches and the teacher supervisors.

We are now beginning our badminton unit for grades 3-8 and net/wall games for grades K-2.

The Athletic Council proudly organized an Olympics Day during Catholic Schools Week. Our focus was on the Paralympics and how challenging and inspirational these true heroes are. With the Vancouver 2010 Olympics underway, I was truly inspired by the following article I found in the January 2010 Manitoba Physical Education Teachers' Association Journal. Silken Laumann wrote a wonderful article entitled: *Insight into Why Kids Quit Sports - Putting the Fun Back into Sport*; the short version of his message is this:

*As a four time Olympian I know intimately the level of passion and commitment to pursue sport at the highest level. The years I trained to be the best in the world were tough, grueling, and an absolute joy....The thing is, I wasn't the average kid. I was one in a million whose motivation came immoderately, intensely and without boundaries. I was going to be an Olympian whether we had to practice five times a week or twenty....But why, I wonder have we built our community sport on such a high performance model? Why is so much of our sport built to develop performance over building character and developing their bodies optimally?...When I see eight year*

*olds in serious training for a triathlon I wonder if they will be in the sport at 28 when they truly are at their physical peak. Physio-therapists tell me about the extraordinary number of overuse injuries they are seeing in 10 year olds. Some muscles are very strong, not the overall fitness that comes from cycling and climbing trees; running and jumping are missing in these kids. And I wonder if the fun is missing too? How much time do these kids have to just run around outside, use their imagination to build a fort in the yard or go for a bike ride?...Sport can be so good: It teaches kids to have dreams and set goals; It illustrates the relationship between hard work and results; It helps control their attitudes and learn to win and lose gracefully; Sport is a good place to gain experience grappling with the intense emotions that competition invariably brings up; Sport has the potential to be a great positive force in children's lives, not just helping them develop physically, but helping them develop a strong foundation of life skills....This is our opportunity and our challenge, to create the kind of sport we can be proud of, and to help every child enjoy the joy of scoring his or her first goal, the thrill of running a track race, the fun of playing together. To find this, sport needs a lot more play. Parents need to assess why their child is participating and to help shape community sport so that it supports the physical, mental and social health of our kids.*

Researchers from the University of Michigan's Youth Sports Institute surveyed children aged 10 – 18 regarding their feelings about sports:

## **The 10 most important reasons I play my best sport:** (in order of importance)

1. To have fun
2. To improve my skills
3. To stay in shape
4. To do something I'm good at
5. For the excitement of competition
6. To get exercise
7. To play part of a team
8. For the challenge of competition
9. To learn new skills
10. To win

## **The 11 Most Important Reasons I stopped Playing a Sport:** (in order of importance)

1. I lost interest
2. I was not having fun
3. It took too much time
4. Coach was a poor teacher
5. Too much pressure (worry)
6. Wanted non-sport activity
7. I was tired of it
8. Needed more time for study
9. Coach played favorites
10. Sport was boring
11. Over-emphasis on winning

When I read this article, I found myself saying, "Yes! That's it! That's right!" As a physical education teacher in the year 2010, I see many challenges in the world of schools athletics - the challenge is to try to assess students' athletic skills and goals and to build our school athletic program accordingly. Developing the whole athlete, body-mind-spirit, not only in preparation for high school athletics, but also with an appreciation of lifelong sport and recreation is the foundation of what we do.

# Board of Directors

...Lee Mencik

The St. Ignatius School Board of Directors is happy to announce that Danielle Kolton will continue in her position for a second three year contract as Principal of St. Ignatius School. We look forward to many continued successes with Danielle.

We would also like to welcome a new Board member, Dorothy Woods, who will be assisting with the Personnel portfolio this year and replacing Pat de Jong next year. A volunteer position is available for the Treasurer portfolio commencing in September. If you are interested, please contact Linda McVicar, Chair at 287-8790 for more information.

A reminder to parents, who have

not sent in their cheque for \$35.00 in lieu of selling coffee from the fall fundraiser. Be advised that this is the only mandatory fundraiser that the Board holds in order to assist the parish in it's funding of our school. Please attend to this promptly.

The Board would like to thank the SISPAC Adult Evening coordinators for hosting their annual Parents Evening and making it such a successful community building event.

St. Ignatius School is blessed to have such a creative force within our school with the imaginative minds of our students. They are proud to display their art and creative writing pieces. It is only fitting to display these creations

for viewing, not just within the school, but to share with our parish community. I invite everyone to come down to the church hall and view the bulletin board just to the right of the stage that has been dedicated to our students work. The Grade 1 class is our first group to display their art and are very excited to present their pieces for your enjoyment. To showcase the students' accomplishments, we plan to change the display every two weeks. Enjoy!

For information about your school board and its members, please refer to your Family Handbook and [www.stignatius.mb.ca](http://www.stignatius.mb.ca) Contact us at: [board@stignatius.mb.ca](mailto:board@stignatius.mb.ca)

# Sharing Gifts

...Eileen Eliasson

On Wednesday, February 3, 2010, the grade one children enjoyed another wonderful visit with their *SHARING GIFTS (S.G.)* friends. Our intergenerational project, which connects senior members of our parish with the children of St. Ignatius School, is really beginning to take shape. The students of grade one were very excited to see their new friends again.

The theme of this month's get-together was *Parlour Games*. The questions of the day were: (1) How did you get the news and information about the weather before you had television and computers? and (2) What did you do for fun when you were young like us? They received some very interesting answers.

The children learned that radio and newspaper were the best ways to find out what was happening in the world before television news was possible.

What really interested them, however, was what they found out about weather forecasting: They were amazed to hear that some people didn't know what the weather would be like the next day or the next week and that they never did know what the current wind chill factor was. They also learned that people used to go to movie theatres to learn about the weather across Canada. One group of students heard about how their S.G. friend could read the colours of clouds to predict the next day's weather; a skill he learned from his father. The children were fascinated by all this information.

The S.G. friends' answers to what they used to do for fun without televisions and computers were great! One group was shown a writing tablet with vellum finish and a page liner to insert behind the unlined page being written on, quite different than the quick

email of today. The 'new three lane Acme Cribbage Board, circa 1950-1960, was also a hit. Some children also learned how to play a string game with their fingers. But, my favourite answer to how to pass time without technology ( an answer given by all the seniors) was—READ! After chat time, the groups played checkers or cards as they continued to get to know each other better.

Each group of children had a chance to show their S.G. friend the Smart board game, Math-Lines. It's a speedy game of combining numbers to make ten, that the children love to play. I think our visitors enjoyed playing as well.

The visit ended with a story for each group and a quick look outside at "Papa's" (one of our S.G. friends) license plate, that says *PAPA*. The children liked that.

# Making Sense of the Text

...Danielle Kolton

Digital Drama ... Sexting ...  
Twittering ... Tweeting ... Huh ?!?!)

Take time to consider the following statistics from the Canadian Centre for Children Protection (retrieved February 18, 2010):

- 93 per cent of teens aged 12-17 now go online;
- Nearly 63% of kids in this age group go online every day;
- A full 36% of 12-17-year-olds go online several times a day;
- Teen use of social networking sites has risen significantly:
- 73% of wired teens now use such sites, compared to just over half of online teens (55%) that used them in November 2006;
- Nearly 69 % of teens aged 12-17 have a computer.

As parents raising a new generation of tech-savvy youth, we are continually challenged by the unsupervised playground in

which our children are now engaging socially in. Students aged eight to 15 are especially at risk for revealing personal information on the Internet. Rampant teenage attraction to chat rooms and social networking websites such as Twitter and FaceBook increase the dangers of meeting strangers online, putting people in jeopardy, loss of privacy, exposure to inappropriate material, and unintended interest from Internet predators. These websites are dangerous because access to what is posted is broad. Photos and/or identifying information such as first/last names, family facts, phone number(s), address, hobbies and school are an absolute no-no. Furthermore, students can now videotape and post themselves on YouTube; when uninformed, this is a frightening endeavour, indeed! Experts suggest that parents keep connected computers in a public area of the house, frequently check the

browser's history, and invest in monitoring software. For a list of the top five internet risks, as reported by Kids in the Know (a division of the Canadian Centre for Children Protection), please see the chart on the insert page of the Ignition.

Sexting, a frightening new phenomenon in which youth send sexually explicit pictures or sexually lude messages via cell phones, has enormous repercussions. I strongly encourage you and your child to visit the site: [www.athinline.org](http://www.athinline.org) which has information and videos about "when privates go public".

In addition, the following websites are highly recommended to help parents become better informed about the dangers of Internet activities for students aged 8-18: [www.texted.ca](http://www.texted.ca)  
<http://www.thedoorthatsnotlocked.ca>  
<http://www.connectsafely.org/>

# Catholic Schools Week

...Carol Cenerini

Catholic Schools Week started with a Mass, based on the theme of "Faith Heroes Live Here". Father Gerry did a wonderful job of guiding us in celebration of our faith heroes and reminding us that we are like a mirror: we reflect the light of God and our faith heroes onto others through kindness, faith and service.

The book sale was a success. We raised \$311.50 for St. Angela Home for disabled children in Lesotho. A huge thank you to all those who donated and purchased books.

Tuesday was a gorgeous day! Students enjoyed the various activities that were planned by their teachers. Grades K-2 went bowling and munched on a pizza lunch.

Grades 3-6 participated in winter fun activities at Harbourview and grades 7 and 8 burned up the rink at Crescentwood Community Centre. Even Mrs. Kolton played hooky that day to enjoy the many activities.

On Thursday, we started the day with a school assembly and had the pleasure of hearing Ms. Linda Gervais share with us her experiences in Lesotho. It was a wonderfully enriching presentation as a kick-off to our Lenten service projects.

We continued to celebrate throughout the day by participating in the Para-Olympic events organized by the Athletic Council. Lots of fun was had by all. A huge thank you to all of the parent volunteers, teachers, Father

Gerry, Father Joe, students and special guests for making this week a tremendous success!

On Friday, members of the Catholic Schools community, gathered together and listened to the wise words of Father Stefano Penna, from Edmonton. He spoke to us of the importance of wellness and how one's wellness is dependent on our emotional, spiritual, physical, world community and family needs. It is through nurturing our spiritual wellness that guides us in maintaining a positive wellbeing towards all aspects of life. For no matter what happens in our lives, good and bad, God is always there for us.