



January 2010



Christian L. — Grade 7

# Ignition

## Ask, Seek, Knock

*Some days I think I just fell from the sky,  
Some days I have to ask the question, "why?"*

We all know the torment of listening to endless "why" questions. There are days when I'd gladly give everything I have for a few minutes of peace and quiet. "Why?" a little voice asks after everything I say. "Because." "Why?" "Because." "Why?" It's as frustrating as "I know you are but what am I?" that all kids learn around five years old and use to torment their siblings. There are days when I long to get out the duct tape ...

As frustrating as it is though, questioning is a good thing.

## The Principal says...

Although it is only January 28, we are already planning for the flurry of activities that will take us through to Spring Break. In fact, February is what we affectionately refer to as, "the longest, shortest month". With a mere 16 instructional days, you'd think it would fly by, yet that month, more than any other, leaves us breathless.

People were made to ask questions. We come into this world knowing nothing; we need to ask questions in order to learn, to figure out our environment and how we fit into it. And that learning should never stop, we should always be learning new things, no matter how old we are. Sometimes we feel that as adults we shouldn't be asking questions - we're supposed to know everything, aren't we? Often we feel it isn't proper to be asking questions about long-held truths - these things just *are*, we're supposed to accept them, not ask why.

But I think in doing so we're limiting ourselves. Humans were made with an innate curiosity and

This edition of the *Ignition* outlines a host of academic, faith-based, and liturgically significant events. Accordingly, I felt compelled to compose the following:

### Recipe for an Enriching February:

1/2 cup of Parent-Teacher conferences  
2 cups of *I Love to Read* month activities  
1 cup of Catholic Schools Week celebrations

## ...Tracy Zapp

God encourages us to ask. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7) To stop asking questions and seeking clearer truths means we think we know everything and that just isn't possible! Our minds are capable of wonderful and awesome things, of holding and processing enormous amounts of information and using it to do wondrous things. We can never put too much into them so why should we stop?

See? There I go, asking why again. I guess I can't get too frustrated with my son when I'm as bad as he is.

## ...Danielle Kolton

1 Shrove Tuesday pancake lunch  
1/4 tsp. of ashes  
1 winter camp trip (for grades 7 and 8)  
5 Tbsp. Indoor recesses  
A sprinkle of laughter, learning, and faith  
A handful of Lenten prayer  
A gallon of service projects  
Generous amount of PD days  
1 statutory holiday

*In a warm and nurturing environment, layer each of the ingredients, one at a time. Mix in*

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## The Principal Says... (continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

*laughter, learning, and faith. Add guests and community members. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, sift ashes thoughtfully. Fold in Lenten prayer and service projects. Sprinkle a generous amount of PD days and a statutory holiday. Simmer for 28 days at Arctic temperatures. Serves 237 students and 25 staff.*

As you have probably noticed, there are several days of **NO CLASSES** throughout the month:

**Friday, February 5** – Parent/Teacher conferences (K-6 only)

**Wednesday, February 10** – PD day for teachers (School goal, assessment workshop)

**Friday, February 12** – PD Catholic Schools Day for all staff

**Monday, February 15** – Louis Riel Day (statutory holiday)

We recognize that this requires great planning for dual-working parents, and we appreciate your support of our professional development endeavours. It is not optimal to have two professional development days in the same week, however, we are taking

advantage of an out-of-town speaker who is offering a workshop on differentiated instruction and assessment which are listed as one of our school goals. The opportunity to attend her workshop as a whole faculty was an opportunity we couldn't pass up; however, we assure you that this will not be the standard practice for February in subsequent years.

Parents are our best ambassadors, so please spread the word that we are currently accepting applications for N-8, spaces are limited in some grades. The **deadline for applications** is March 12, 2010.

Please stop by the office sometime this week to check our new additions: framed pictures of St. Ignatius and Mother Marie-Rose Durocher. Special thanks to Father Gerry and Sr. Cathy Laviolette, SNJM Provincial, for donating pictures of these significant community figures to be prominently featured in our main office.

...Danielle Kolton

Thank you for the privilege of educating your children;



### SISPAC

2010 is off to a busy start as we look forward to continuing to work towards building spirit and community. Please don't forget to mark your calendars for January 30<sup>th</sup> for SISPAC's annual parents evening. This year is a fun TWENTIES theme, SO THROW ON YOUR BOA OR PUT ON YOUR FEDORA AND COME JOIN US FOR A FUN FILLED EVENING OF FOOD, DRINKS AND GAMES!!! There will be raffles and a live auction. Also please remember that every parent is automatically a member of the St. Ignatius School Parent Advisory Council (SISPAC). SISPAC meetings are scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month and there is usually baking!! Principal Danielle Kolton will be presenting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> the School Plan for SISPAC's review and feedback. Hope to see you there!

Kristina Ostermann

## Water is a Human Right and Public Good

*Reflections from the Social Justice Committee*

Inspired by the work of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, the faculty leaders of the Social Justice Committee have been guiding the student committee members on a path of discovery. The SNJM statement, *Water is a human right and a public good*, is our inspiration. Students have learned many interesting facts

about the world's water crisis, and some of these facts have really touched them. The disastrous effect that a lack of access to clean water has on children in developing countries was very surprising for the students. They are also interested in the many issues surrounding the bottled water issue as well as the comparisons about how much water we use com-

pared the amount a family in a very poor country would use. The Social Justice Committee is making plans to continue their path of discovery, share their information with the student body, and think about the most beneficial way they can contribute to a solution to the global water crisis.

...Mrs. Eliasson & Mrs. Probetts

The St. Ignatius School Board of Directors has a Treasurer portfolio vacancy commencing in September 2010. Please check the school website under Board of Directors for more information about this portfolio. Some training as a regular member is required prior to starting in this position in September. If you have some related background in this area and are interested, please contact Linda McVicar, Chair, at 287-8790 for more information.

Please visit the information board in the school front foyer, just opposite the office. You will find a new poster has been placed there, introducing each member of our school's Board of Directors. It's a way of putting a face to who we are and thank these volunteers for providing their unique gifts for improving the lives, visions and goals of our school community.

The support of our parent community is vital to the

continued growth of this school, so please consider joining our members.

Lee Mencik  
Communications

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

## Catholic Schools Week...

...Mrs. Cenerini

This year, we got the idea for our Catholic Schools Week theme from the Olympics Theme: *Heroes Live Here*. Throughout the history of the St. Ignatius community, we have been blessed with many people who, through their leadership, service, and example, have contributed to the development of faith in our children and in the community at large. Accordingly, we have titled our Catholic Schools Week: **Faith Heroes Live Here**.

Margaret MacDiarmid, Minister of Education in British Columbia, defines a hero in the following terms:

*Heroes come in all shapes and sizes. True heroes might not necessarily be the ones you see on television or in the movies. Instead, they are the people in our schools and our communities who inspire and teach us, the people we respect and admire, the people who give us the courage to strive every day for excellence.*

In preparation for Catholic Schools Week, February 8 – 12, students will explore the definition of a faith hero and name those people in our community who inspire us to deepen our faith. We will create and display posters to recognize these faith heroes.

**Monday, February 8:** In celebration of our Catholic community, we will begin the week with a Mass at 9:00 a.m. We will also honour the example of our faith heroes by holding a Community Book Sale that day (see Mrs. Kirby's article, *Literacy, A Gift We Share*).

**Tuesday, February 9:** There are a variety of off-site activities planned for this day. This provides the opportunity for students to celebrate our community by modeling the meaning of kindness, gentleness, support, and faith for one another.

**Wednesday, February 10:** NO CLASSES Staff Professional Development

**Thursday, February 11:** Activities will be planned by the Athletic Council for grades K to 6. These activities will challenge us by introducing obstacles to ordinary events. There will be lots of fun for everyone.

**Friday, February 12:** NO CLASSES Catholic Schools Day for all Archdiocese Staff

As indicated in Mrs. Kirby's article, we will also be having an assembly one day during Catholic Schools Week (date to be announced) to have a guest speaker share her experiences in Lesotho, working in an SNJM mission. This will give our students the opportunity to make a connection with a fellow Catholic school and to introduce the recipient of our various classroom Lenten Christian service projects which will begin after Ash Wednesday (February 17). Stay tuned for more details and a Catholic Schools Week review in the February edition of the Ignition.

Over the last few months, the faculty at St. Ignatius School has dealt with a few issues pertaining to Facebook activity that have occurred off-site, outside of school hours. When something hurtful happens on Facebook, it makes its way into the dynamics of the classroom and consequently affects relationships and instruction. Although they do not have access to Facebook on their school accounts, it is not uncommon to hear students discussing conversations that have occurred on Facebook from the previous night. If the topic is comical, and no one has been excluded, then all is fine. However, when the topic is the ridicule or derogatory commentary of a classmate, the effects can be devastating and long-lasting: the student feels hurt, distracted, humiliated, etc.... all of which take away from the ability to concentrate on studies and contribute in a meaningful way to learning. When the friends of the classmate, who has been hurt on Facebook, feel outraged about a posted comment, a "group" against "group" dynamic occurs which further disintegrates the learning environment. Furthermore, as a Catholic school, *we expect our students to create a positive, faith-based learning environment where all students are accepted and encouraged to develop self-esteem and respect by treating one another with courtesy, respect, consistency, and fairness* (p. 18 Family Handbook).

When hostile, defamatory, or inappropriate material has sufficient connection to or impact on the school environment, including the general welfare and learning atmosphere, it quickly becomes a school issue. According to the St. Ignatius School Code of Conduct, cyber-bullying is defined as *using information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone, text messages, instant messaging, chat rooms, and online personal polling websites, that support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm another student* (p. 19 Family

Handbook). Although it has not been our experience that cyber-bullying is occurring - in the sense that one particular student is targeted repeatedly - it is worth noting that Facebook conversations can very quickly become cyber-bullying, with multiple bystanders. This can have consequences beyond school discipline, including violation of section 264 of the Criminal Code. Consider the following statistics from a 2007 study conducted at Simon Fraser University:

- 53% of students report that cyber-bullying occurs in chat rooms (as opposed through text-messaging);
- 40% of students have received angry, rude, or vulgar messages from another students over the Internet;
- 29.4% of girls and 21.4% of boys report occasionally engaging in cyber-bullying others.

Our experience is that most students, 9-16 years of age, have no idea how widely viewed, public, accessible, and hurtful their Facebook activity can be. Facebook, itself, does not allow students under the age of 13 to use the site (see <http://www.facebook.com/help/?safety>), however, we are aware of many young students (under 13 years) who have Facebook accounts. As part of our ICT curriculum, we teach students that the Internet is entirely public and how to use it ethically.

Unfortunately, social networking sites are an increasingly popular method of staying connected with friends and sharing personal information that has little boundaries. When parents show me printed copies of Facebook conversations, I am consistently shocked by the extreme profanities, disinhibition, and inappropriate topics (racism, sexual innuendo, etc...) that are written by students that we typically experience as polite, respectful, and compliant adolescents. The culture and

language of the Internet are shocking, indeed!

To summarize, my purpose in writing this article is threefold:

1. To let you know that social networking Internet sites, such as Facebook, affect classroom dynamics and learning;
2. To inform you that Internet activity that affects the school environment will have consequences associated with our Code of Conduct;
3. To provide you with information to support your children, and to assure you that we will continue to have classroom conversations about Internet safety.

A list of basic safety strategies for online use is as follows:

- Be aware of what social networking sites your teen is accessing;
- Monitor your teen's account so that you have access to all conversations that occur; review these often;
- Talk with your teen about criteria for who they accept as their "friends";
- Reinforce that your teen must never post anything mean or threatening about another person;
- Discuss how to handle being a bystander to inappropriate conversations;
- Create specific and limited rules about what type of personal information can be disclosed on your teen's page (including photos);
- Discuss the consequences of public conversations with your teen;

Discuss the danger of Internet predators.

This is the first of a series of articles I will be writing on Internet safety. Stay tuned for information on "sexting", internet dangers, and more in upcoming editions of the *Ignition*. Let's work together to keep our students safe!

February is a fun-filled month of learning and reading in celebration of *I Love to Read* month. Our goal is to increase the amount of time students read at home and at school and especially to encourage reading with fun and interesting classroom, school, and home activities. Please participate, as a family, in the daily events on the *I Love to Read* calendar. At school, each class will record extra reading and try to achieve a goal they have set. We will also "drop everything and read" each day. Teachers and students will share favourite poems, stories and articles with their peers and their reading buddies, and on Monday mornings, Mrs. Hochkievich will read a quote or part of a story over the intercom, and students will have the opportunity to enter a draw for a prize if they guess the correct author or title. Guest readers are another way that we celebrate *I Love to Read* month. We are very fortunate to have guest readers on each Thursday during the month of February. Guests will bring their favourite books to read for classes. In an effort to connect *I Love to Read* month with our theme of Catholic Schools Week, we have also asked our guest readers to share who their Faith Hero is and why. The guest's "Faith Hero" is someone who has inspired them to live in faith and in service. We look forward to a great month!

## Literacy, a Gift we Share

...Mrs. J. Kirby

Education is a gift that we share with our fellow Catholic schools around the world. In conjunction with *I Love to Read* month, Catholic Schools Week, and Lenten Service projects, we will be sponsoring **St. Rose Primary School** and **St. Angela Home** in Lesotho, Africa which are missions under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM), the same order who managed our school with the Jesuits and about whom our Staff Faith Development is based this year. One of the main goals of this congregation is to foster education that leads to liberating action. For more information, please visit their Manitoba website: <http://www.snjmmb.ca/index.html> or the Lesotho website at <http://www.snjm.org/lesotho/> (look under "Ministries" for descriptions of both schools).

In order to introduce this to our students, Ms. Linda Gervais, SNJM Associate, will present a slide show on the lives of students who attend these schools during an *I Love to Read* month assembly (she will also be one of our guest readers). She has recently returned from working in Lesotho for 18 months. These children in Africa attend school with limited supplies; so, Ms. Gervais has suggested that the students of **St. Rose Primary School** would greatly appreciate small books created by our students about themselves. Making this personal connection, providing reading material, and promoting literacy is a wonderful gift from our school to theirs. Further direction on this project will be forthcoming from classroom teachers, and our intention is to complete the project by April in order to send the books with Sr. Cathy Laviolette, SNJM Provincial, who is going to Lesotho in May.

**St. Angela Home** is a school for disabled children in Lesotho. We ask each family to donate books for the purpose of a Community Book Sale which will occur on February 8, with all proceeds going to St. Angela Home. Please send your gently used books to school between January 28 and February 7. Our students will have the opportunity to take a new book(s) home to read, and the children in Lesotho will have money to make a necessary purchase – a win-win situation! Hopefully, we will have sown the seed of literacy and all will benefit. Please note that you will also be hearing about classroom Lenten service projects that are also intended to support St. Angela Home.

To keep the children in Lesotho healthy and strong so they can attend school, we are also asking each family to send one package of vegetable seeds sometime during Catholic Schools Week (February 8-12). In Lesotho, each family has their own garden with very fertile soil which produces multiple crops per year. Providing seeds to the families of these children is our way of sowing seeds of LOVE!

To summarize, this is how we are asking our families to be involved in sharing the gift of literacy:

1. Take advantage of the *I Love to Read* month calendar by sharing in literacy activities with your family;
2. Send in your gently used books between January 28 and February 7 for our Community Book Sale on February 8. Send money with your children on that day, and come in to purchase yourself something new to read. Remember that
3. proceeds from the Book Sale go to St. Angela Home;
4. Send in one package of vegetable seeds to be sent to Lesotho.

Thank you for your support. By working together to promote literacy at home and in Africa, we build community and teach our children to reach out by putting our faith into action!