

Amid fun of Catholic Schools Week, importance of faith and religion play significant role

MOUNTAIN TOP – While students at Saint Jude School enjoyed motivational speakers and dress-down days as part of Catholic Schools Week 2023, they also focused on the importance of faith and religion.

The entire student body of more than 250 kids gathered for a special Mass on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at neighboring Saint Jude Parish. While the students regularly gather for Mass each week, many say the Catholic Schools Week liturgy is among their favorite.

“This school gives students an opportunity to learn not just academics but also faith and the understanding of what is real and what is truth in life,” eighth grader Connor Hillard said.

The church came alive during the Mass as the children recited prayers and sang several hymns including, ‘Here I Am, Lord.’

“Growing up in a community that is based on faith and going to Mass has really taught me on the weekends how to behave in Mass and has brought all the moral beliefs of religion into my life,”



Students from Saint Jude School celebrate Mass for Catholic Schools Week on Feb. 1, 2023, at Saint Jude Parish in Mountain Top. (Photos/ Eric Deabill)

seventh grader Clare Grandzol said.

On the right side of the church, the oldest students from Saint Jude School sat with some of their youngest peers.

“The seventh and eighth grade classes take the kindergarteners to Mass on Wednesdays in the afternoon. I think it’s a great

opportunity,” seventh grader Rhea Mascarenhas said.

“We teach them all the things we learned over the years,” eighth grader Izzy Wasley added.

Saint Jude School prides itself on its environment of faith and prayer and helping all students to hear God’s call and be able to respond and spread the



During Catholic Schools Week, Saint Jude School decorates its entire building with the help of student artwork. This year the school celebrated the fact that “Saint Jude School is Cool.”

Good News of Jesus through love, service and justice.

“We just did an Epiphany program in January. We do a Living Stations program and we do a Nativity program,” eighth grader Steven Rowlands explained.

Rowlands said he loves Saint Jude School for its “family

environment” and was happy to point out that Catholic Schools Week is “the best week of the year.”

Many other students expressed the same feelings.

“It is a break from hardcore learning ... Catholic Schools Week is our time for the students to shine and express themselves,” Wasley added.



The Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, celebrated Mass with students, faculty, and the community of Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore. As part of his homily, he reminded them that Jesus is present every day, even though we can’t see Him. “He is with us when we read His words in the Bible, when we receive Him in the Eucharist, and we experience Jesus in the lives of one another.”



To mark the beginning of Catholic Schools Week, students and their families from Saint Agnes School in Towanda participate in a family Mass at SS. Peter & Paul Church.

Diocese of Scranton

CATHOLIC

SCHOOL SYSTEM

FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

The Diocese of Scranton is committed to educating our students in an environment that is academically excellent and facilitates the development of moral judgment and Christian decision-making. We are proud to share the following successes of our students in the classroom and in their service to others. Each day, our schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing today's youth and young adults to become tomorrow's faith-filled leaders.



As part of their Catholic Schools Week fun, students from **Epiphany School in Sayre** had a visit from the Kopernik Observatory and Science Center's mobile planetarium and solar system lightshow.



The Parent Teacher Organization of **Holy Rosary School in Duryea** treated students to a visit from PT Reptiles PA, a hands-on approach to learning about reptiles.

Rhea Mascarenhas, a student at **Saint Jude School in Mountain Top**, gives it a whirl at a special Catholic Schools Week assembly with motivational speaker Jim "Basketball" Jones.



Students and faculty at **Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre** ended Catholic Schools Week by celebrating Mass as a school community and receiving the Blessing of Throats on the Feast of St. Blaise.



Brothers Noah and Connor Troy, students at **Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green**, enjoy some hot chocolate during the "Winter Wonderland" relays sponsored by the Student Council during Catholic Schools Week.



Monsignor John J. Sempa and Deacon Jim Meizanis greet seventh grader Ryleigh Santee, eighth grader Logan Ostrowski, and fifth grader Lola Ostrowski, students at **Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter**, after they spoke at Mass about why they love their school. The students extended an invitation for interested families to attend the school's open house.



First graders at **Notre Dame Elementary School** in East Stroudsburg enjoy an ice cream social on crazy hat day during Catholic Schools Week.



Mrs. Kara Ware, principal of **Saint Clare/Saint Paul School** in Scranton, poses with players from the basketball team at the school's activity night at the McDonald's Northside location.



The eighth grade class at **All Saints Academy** in Scranton participate in a basketball game vs. the Learning Campus during Catholic Schools Week.



Students at **Holy Cross High School** in Dunmore celebrated Catholic Schools Week with fun dress-down days and the Mindstorm game show. Students also had the opportunity to buy raffle tickets to win a chance to throw a pie in a teacher's face. All proceeds went to support the Children's Advocacy Center.



Students from **Saint John Neumann Elementary School** in Williamsport spend a day with their Big Knight Buddy during Catholic Schools Week. Students participated in science, math, gym and history classes.



Sixth graders at **Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School** in Williamsport present their handmade blanket that will be donated to the local Gatehouse, a short-term inpatient Hospice unit for the management of pain and other symptoms relating to a life-threatening illness.



Taylor Pansy and Malcolm Naughton, seniors at **Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School** in East Stroudsburg, dress alike on "Twin Day," part of the school's Catholic Schools Week festivities.