



**St. Martin of Tours Academy**  
**Sixth Grade Newsletter**  
**January 2012**

Dear Parents,

Happy 2012! Hope all of you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. We have finally approached the time most of your children have either anticipated or dreaded since the beginning of the year. I am thrilled to join your child in attending Astrocamp. I look forward to sharing memories with your child that I can guarantee will be both a positive experience, and one that they will remember the rest of their lives. Please look at the packing list that was passed out at the parent meeting so your child is aware of what to bring for the long week away. In this newsletter you will also find prices for the student store, along with a website to follow the weather while we are in Idyllwild.

We have learned a lot in 2011 and will continue to learn more in the 2012 school year. There are many exciting activities approaching during Catholic Schools Week starting January 30th. Please read the calendar so your child knows what to wear on our Spirit Days. I look forward to seeing you all at conferences on February 1st- 3rd.

Janene Palafox

**Literature:**

When we return from camp we will begin a new unit theme entitled "Is Conflict Always Bad?" where students will read and analyze short stories in a variety of ways that relate back to the unit genre. A conflict is a struggle between opposing forces. There are many types of conflicts, such as arguments, battles, and competitions. Each leveled story presents students with a reading strategy, a literary analysis concept, and vocabulary skills to extend learning in their writing activities. They will be distinguishing between internal and external conflicts.

We will also begin reading *The Revealers* after conferences. This story is about three young children that are battling with their own conflicts via the Internet. They will discover what happens when people take revenge rather than fixing problems. SLEs: 5a, b; 2b, d

- Book Report #3: Due February 16th
- Genre: Autobiography/Biography-Famous African American (Guidelines and Rubric have been passed out)

**English:**

The students have been writing "How to" papers on a variety of topics. They will turn their "How to Play" outline into a five paragraph paper. We will be breaking down the paper into five parts (with separate rubrics) to make the writing process easier and more understandable. When we return from camp we will begin a persuasive unit. Students will then write a letter of persuasion to Mrs. Dimuzio. We have spelling and vocabulary tests every Friday. SLEs: 3c, 5a, d

**Religion:**

Catholic Schools Week begins January 30th. Each day there will be spirit activities to remind students about the importance of spreading faith and love in our community. During Catholic Schools Week we will write thank you cards to different organizations in the community to show our gratitude for their ongoing support to St. Martin Academy.

We have been reading and talking about the first eight chapters in the Bible. Please ask your child all about religion as they have been exploring the many ups and downs of the Old Testament. We will begin to discuss family planning in the middle of February. With this unit, your child will learn about the differences between men and women, and the reason God made us in our own way. We will explore the life cycle of a newborn child, and the body parts of both girls and boys. Please feel free to ask them to share any information we discuss, and remember to reiterate the importance of respect during this touchy subject. SLE: 1a, e

## Mathematics

As the students prepare for their week at camp, we will spend a few days reviewing basic math skills. When they return, we will begin writing and solving one-step equations using all four operations. We will also include the idea of “reasonable solutions” in problem solving and test taking strategies. During this chapter we will be reviewing operations with decimals. A fun game to play to help with solving one-step equations can be found at <http://www.math-play.com/One-Step-Equation-Game.html>. *SLEs: 2b; 3a,b*

## Science:

We just finished Chapter 4 entitled “Mountains, Earthquakes, and Volcanoes”. Students have been learning about fault lines, mountain formations, and the consequences of tectonic plates slipping or breaking. They made their own volcanoes in class that they will be erupting on Friday for the 4th graders. They made the volcano either shield, composite, or cinder cone style. *SLEs: 2d, f, 3b*

## Social Studies (from Mr. Mains):

The students have just completed their journey to Ancient Egypt. They learned about such topics as the geography of Egypt, how the pyramids were made, the Egyptian social pyramid, the mummification process, and the characteristics of a variety of pharaohs. In our next unit, the students will be traveling to Ancient China where they will be learning about several different dynasties, the development of the Great Wall of China, the Terracotta Soldiers and Chinese advancements and inventions. Please encourage your child to always complete their homework and turn it in. Feel free to email me with any questions or concerns. *SLE: 1e*

### *Useful resources:*

- [www.china.mrdonn.org](http://www.china.mrdonn.org) • [www.history.com](http://www.history.com) • [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)
- The National Geographic Channel (and website) frequently has programs on Ancient Civilizations

## Reminders:

Please remind your student to write the homework in their assignment books each night.

Your child is getting very excited for camp. Below is a list of souvenirs at the camp store with the cost. Please remember to only give your child about \$10.00 for camp, and make all other large purchases with a check. Feel free to check the weather in Idyllwild while we are away: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com).

*Some souvenirs from the student store. . .*

T-Shirts: \$15.00  
Long Sleeve T-Shirts: \$17.00  
Hooded Sweatshirts: \$25.00  
PJ Bottoms: \$22.00  
Baseball Hats: \$12.00  
Stocking Hats: \$12.00

### *Miscellaneous with Logo:*

Beanie Critters: \$7.00  
Karabiners: \$4.00  
Stainless Steel Water Bottles: \$10.00  
Sport Bottle: \$3.00  
Astro Disc: \$12.00  
Magnetic Rocks: \$6.00  
Bouncy Balls: \$5.00  
Space Shuttle: \$4.00  
Post Cards: \$1.00