



*Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice  
at the end of the day saying,  
"I will try again tomorrow." -- Mary Anne Radmacher*

**From the desk of Mr. McLaughlin:**

**Merry Christmas !**

We celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As Franciscans during this Christmas season, we continue to live out our school mission and the ideals and values of our patron St. Francis. We are a community that seeks to develop the whole child, and we strive to model peace, love, and respect every day.

We are very proud of our students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni who demonstrate the SFP mission at all times. This December Newsletter points to some of the great things that happened in our community this past month. God Bless!

**A Blessed New Year to all!**

A New Tradition

The Christmas Spirit was thriving at St. St. Francis Prep starting in early December by "Prepping the Halls." All students during Cor were permitted to use the time to decorate the corridors and their lockers. Our final event in preparing for Christmas was on Thursday, 21 December.

- We began and ended with Cor so Cor teachers and students would have some special bonding time.
- All students attended Mass with their Cor; 2 separate Masses accommodated everyone.
- There were performances and singing in the Gym. Again, there were two sessions of this so everyone could attend.
- Dismissal was at 11:45 a.m.

Our focus for all of Advent has been to proclaim joy and hope – one of our core Franciscan values. This last day before Christmas vacation was a great new tradition at St. Francis Prep. Some comments from students:

"I hope we're doing this again next year!"

"I had so much fun!" "This was awesome!"

"I wasn't sure you could pull this off, but I have to say this was the best thing we ever did at Prep."

Thanks to Mr. Castellano and his committee, the Dance Team, Alvernians, Jazz Band, and Campus Ministry for their time, talent, organization, and thoughtfulness.

# SF Principal's Newsletter



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# SFP *Principal's Newsletter*



## **Julie Chen, SFP Class of 1987, Visits the Prep**

On Tuesday afternoon, December 19, Prep had a special visit from Julie Chen, Class of 1987 and CBS television host of the popular programs Big Brother and The Talk. Julie was filming a special personal interview session with NY1 and their weekly program Spotlight NY, and she requested that the filming take place at St. Francis Prep. During the session, she toured the school's facilities, shared stories about her experiences as a student at Prep, and talked about the path she took to a successful career in the television industry. Julie met with Brother Leonard, Mr. McLaughlin, several of her former teachers, and an enthusiastic group of students who asked a number of questions that she answered in a delightful, meaningful way. She also posed for many photos with the students and staff.



# SF *Principal's Newsletter*





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### From the desk of Mr. Castellano

#### COURSE SELECTION

During the first week of January, we will begin the process of course selection for the 2018-2019 school year. Students will attend assemblies to hear about the process, and guidance counselors will visit a class on every level to discuss course selection. Students will have until 4 February to discuss courses with teachers, counselors, and parents and guardians: all course selection must be completed by 4 February. Please encourage your child to take full advantage of this time in order to make the best choices for the next school year. We make some changes in June, but many classes close and are not available; changes cost \$40. Students are best served to make wise choices now. The entire course book is posted on the school web site [HERE](#).

Students may choose to take an extra credit or an H period class if they are in good academic standing and have good attendance and punctuality. There is **no** application form. Students who do not meet the criteria for H period or extra credits will be removed from these extra classes.

Pre-registration for certain classes will begin on Sunday, 28 January. There will be information about pre-registration on the web site, and students will get more information at assemblies and during class visits.

We encourage students to take the most appropriately challenging classes for which they are eligible. This selection is unique for each student. Please encourage your child to speak with his or her teachers and guidance counselor to make the best decision. Each department has its own criteria for honors and A.P. classes and its own process for receiving approval. Classrooms teachers are the best source of information about how to proceed.

Once your child has selected and submitted the choices for classes, please have him or her print out the sheet with classes listed. Parents or guardians will sign this and students will return it to school on Monday, 5 February. Thank you for your guidance with this process and for encouraging your child to meet with counselors and keep with all deadlines.



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Please contact your child's guidance counselor or Mr. Castellano (ext. 209) with questions about course selection.

### PSAT RESULTS and PREPARING FOR THE SAT

Our sophomore and junior students took the PSAT in October. The PSAT is a practice test for the SAT, a major college admission test. About 1% of the students in the nation receive recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation based on their PSAT results. Each year, we have between 10 and 15 students who are so recognized. For the vast majority of students, however, the PSAT serves as practice and preparation for the SAT. PSAT scores are not seen by colleges and do not influence college acceptance.

Students should have received an e-mail from the College Board (the organization that oversees the PSAT) saying that their scores are now available on-line. This e-mail provided them with the information so they can view their PSAT results. In January, we will have assemblies about how to understand the results, interpret the score report, and prepare for the SAT. At that time, we will also return to students their test booklet. We encourage students to go over the score report with parents and guardians and to review their entire test on their own. Students with questions about the PSAT should speak with their guidance counselor.

All juniors should take the SAT or the ACT (another major college admission test) sometime in the Spring semester. Colleges accept either SAT or ACT scores for applications. SAT and ACT scores are important because they influence college acceptance and can qualify students for various scholarships. Juniors should discuss the timing of their test with their parents and guardians and their guidance counselors. We strongly recommend that all students do some type of explicit test preparation. This preparation may be a course, individual tutoring, or a test preparation book or on-line program. That is a family decision. Please feel free to call your child's guidance counselor to discuss this decision.

Sophomores will take the PSAT again in the Fall of junior year. There is more information available on the College Board web site: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

SAT scores are important; they are 1 piece of the application package students will send to colleges in the Fall of senior year. Colleges also look at the following items: overall average; classes taken; level of difficulty of classes; extra-curricular activities; service; recommendations; student essay. Receiving the PSAT is a good opportunity for students to re-dedicate themselves to their school work. Good grades in good classes are as important as good SAT scores, and good work in school will result in improved SAT scores.

### SAT REGISTRATION

The College Board offers the SAT at many locations on different dates throughout the Spring. Students may check this information at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). Registration is done through the College Board web site. This Spring, St. Francis Prep is offering the SAT on Saturday, 5 May. We encourage students who want to take the SAT at St. Francis Prep to register early: there are a limited number of seats available, and these seats fill up early. St. Francis Prep does not control who gets to take the test at the school. Please encourage your child to register early. Students should do explicit test preparation.

We wish students all the best on this phase on college preparation.



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### **Franciscan Youth Movement**

Visit to Queen of Peace Nursing Home December 18, 2017.

#### [FaceBook Slideshow](#)

PROJECT JOY, conducted by the Franciscan Youth Movement (FYM), invited our SFP community to bring joy to the elderly by writing Christmas letters. Over a thousand letters in English and Spanish are delivered by groups of FYM members to Nursing Homes and dropped off at Veterans Hospitals. FYM visited the elderly in their rooms, sang Carols for them, delivered small gifts, and spent time individually with each of the residents. Brother James, Franciscan Mission Coordinator, said, "This is just one way that we put our Franciscan value TO PROCLAIM JOY AND HOPE" into practice. FYM works with all facets of the SFP Family to promote our four Franciscan values. Special thanks to all teachers and students involved, particularly the Religion and Foreign Language Departments and the Key Club for their support. These pictures were taken at Queen of Peace Nursing Home where FYM also leads day long Service Retreats monthly.

### **4th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting**





### **Alvernians**

This year's Fall Drama, [The Phantom of the Opera](#), was a huge success. Thanks to Ms. Mejia and the entire cast for a spectacular job!

### **Christmas Party for our Friends with Special Needs**

"Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words." - St. Francis of Assisi We would like to take a moment to thank everyone who, through great generosity, gave others a wonderful Christmas. The party on Saturday, December 16th, could never have been as successful as it was without your generosity and the support of our students, teachers, staff, parents, and alumni. Every guest left happy and grateful to the entire Prep Community for this event. You have shown what it means to live the words of St. Francis. Thank you! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mrs. Camus and Mrs. Rich



[FaceBook Slideshow](#)

### **Model UN**

The St. Francis Preparatory School Model United Nations Team participated in a conference hosted by Plainview-Old Bethpage High School with about 500 students from 16 high schools attending. Our delegation of 19 had a strong showing and earned a number of awards. We currently are in the process of preparing for our own conference to be held on Saturday, January 13, 2018.

1. Penda Martin 310\*
2. Kayla Keenan 409
3. Franz Bleus 202 - Honorable Mention in the UN Population Fund
4. Vincent Smedile 315
5. Christina Lino 410\*
6. Joanne Gotanco 307
7. Abigail Bossa 302\*
8. Joshua Matthews 311
9. Ashley Mangra 410
10. Daniel Hodurski 109
11. Tim Hyland 109\*



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12. Katie Zahner 317
13. Matthew Van Praagh 317
14. Andrew Lee 409
15. Thanasi Dilos 204 - Honorable Mention in the Security Council
16. Henrik Israelian 207
17. Mark Moritz 112\*
18. 18.Nicole O'Connor 412
19. 19.Olivia Fratangelo 107\* - Honorable Mention in the Human Rights Committee



### **Art Department**

On December 12th, the National Art Honor Society held their Christmas party in a unique way. They decided to celebrate both the art department's theme for the year, Comic Con, and movie-making by attending the hit film Justice League. Mrs. Buccino, Mr. Biondolillo, and Ms. Shmerykowsky escorted ninety students to the AMC Loew's Fresh Meadows Theater after school where they all feasted on popcorn while watching the first-ever live action team-up of the classic DC superheroes. The afternoon was great fun for everyone!



### **English Department**

The English Dept. took 22 Seniors to the Museum of the City of New York on Wed. Dec. 13th. We were given our own educator, Hannah, who took us on a very informative and interesting tour of a large exhibit, specifically dealing with New York City's history from 1870 to 1898 (The Gilded Age). The students were given postcards and pencils to make notes on any item of personal interest, which they then shared with the group. During this sharing, Hannah would elaborate on the items and their historical context. This trip was to help facilitate an understanding of setting in Carr's *The Alienist*, which is an assigned reading in the Gothicism class.

### **Music Department**

On Friday, December 8th, and Saturday, December 16th, St. Francis Prep Music Department presented its Christmas Concerts. Saturday, Dec. 16th, featured all three bands, Prep Chorus, and Chamber Choir. A highlight of the 16th was our annual "Hallelujah Project": our ensembles were joined by choruses from Our Lady of Hope, St. Gregory the Great, St. Andrew Avellino, and Intermediate School 77 in Handel's ever-popular "Hallelujah Chorus."



[FaceBook Slideshow](#)



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## Athletics

### Girls Basketball

Our team had a very successful trip to the Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix, Arizona. The girls completed the tournament with a 3-1 record against some of the top-ranked schools in the country!



### Boys Soccer

Congrats to the boys soccer season on winning the Brooklyn-Queens Championship! Also congrats to senior soccer player Shawn Chacko and Junior Justin Silva on being selected to the all NYC First team by MSG Varsity.

