



August 31, 2017
Principal's Newsletter

"All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them."

Earvin Johnson

I welcome everyone back to the 2017-18 school year!

SFP is a great place to be!

As a Catholic High School Principal, I am charged with being the instructional and inspirational leader of the building and held to the very high standard of ensuring that everyone lives out the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Pretty lofty standards! However, throughout every school year, I find myself learning more from our students, faculty, and staff than I can ever teach them. I remain in awe of the job our teachers do in the classroom, the staff does in keeping the organization running as smoothly as it does, and the respect, responsibility, and pride our students demonstrate in the classroom, on the playing fields, during performances, in our hallways, and in our community. The support that we all receive from parents and guardians and our alumni base is unmatched and incredible. I absolutely love what I do here at SFP and will be forever in debt to those who have afforded me this incredible opportunity to be entrusted with the enormity of this vocation.

So let us begin another school year, another journey: one that no doubt will be filled with challenges, victories, anxiety, accomplishments, surprises, fun, and blessings. I look forward to working with a phenomenal group of people who live out the Franciscan Mission every day. This is a special place filled with pride, history, tradition, and – most important – love forged by special relationships. Let us cherish this and use it as a motivation and inspiration to build on this incredible spirit! Enjoy the Journey!

I will be writing a monthly "***Principal's Newsletter***" to better inform students, parents, faculty, and staff about events, accomplishments, and activities concerning our St. Francis Prep community. A special welcome is given to the class of 2021 into the SFP Family. Our Parents Guild will also host the 9th-Grade Parent Welcome Program on *Sunday, September 17th*, starting with a 10:00 am Liturgy followed by a reception in the Cafeteria. Important orientation information will be presented; there will also be a chance for parents, teachers, and administrators to meet in a casual and relaxed environment.

Our school calendar has been posted on the school website, www.sfponline.org. Please review it for all important dates, deadlines, events, and faculty and staff information.

We are in the process of modernizing our Music Rooms. They will be state-of-the-art facilities that feature equipment that would be found on the University level. Along with the Music facilities, new locker rooms will be added. Our gymnasium had a makeover this past summer with a fresh coat of paint



and the installation of new bleachers. These changes are all part of our school improvement program so that our students have the optimal high school experience.

A look at the week ahead:

All students must be in uniform for the first week of school.

☑ Tuesday, September 5: All faculty report

☑ Wednesday, September 6: 9th-graders and Peer Counselors report at 8:30 am. Sophomores and Juniors report at 11:30am. Seniors report at 12:30pm.

☑ Thursday, September 7: First full day of class starting with day 1 A period.

☑ Friday, September 8: Second full day of class.

A reminder to parents to activate your Power School account that will give you live-time access to academic progress via the Parent Portal. If you need assistance with any of your Power School needs, please email the Prep Technology Department at email.questions@stfrancisprep.org.

SCHEDULES

Students' schedules were finalized on Friday, 23 June. Students were able to request changes throughout June. Students may not make any changes to their schedules at this time. Great care and much time were given to make sure students received the courses they requested and need. Please encourage your child to work hard right from the beginning of the school year and to make it a great year. We wish you all the best for a successful school year.

All the Best, God Bless!

Mr. McLaughlin

Campus Ministry

This summer, a group of 8 Prep students, involved in Campus Ministry, joined Mrs. Kotowicz for a week at the University of Notre Dame to participate in the "Vision" program. We travelled with several other New York schools: Mary Louis, Bishop Kearney, Fontbonne Hall, Sacred Heart, Hempstead, and their chaperones.

This was the 9th year we participated in this exceptional program, and the students were not disappointed! Guided by mentors from the university, the students spent time listening, discussing, singing, dancing, praying, and considering the question: "What are my gifts and talents" and "How can I use them to make the world a better place?"

Conversations with students from all over the United States and the guidance of the mentors helped them to learn more about themselves and how God is working in their lives.

A good time was had by all and some of our students are already planning to return next summer.

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This past July, 12 students from the class of 2018 and 3 faculty chaperones from SFP returned to Chaclacayo, a suburb of Lima, Peru, to live and serve amongst the patients at Hogar San Francisco de Asis (The Home of Saint Francis). The Hogar is a hospital and home for Peruvian children with serious medical conditions who cannot pay for care. The man responsible for the Hogar, Doctor Tony Lazzara, invites us in each summer to spend time with the children at his home. We visit with the older kids, help the younger ones with their homework, and care for the babies. The experience is challenging and enlightening as students are faced with the realities of poverty and illness. The students have been asked to reflect on their experience in their own words. I will share some of their thoughts here.

"Before entering the Hogar, I was a little nervous to be surrounded by young children with disabilities. Sure enough, the first child I met when we arrived had burns on his face. As we were shown the baby room, I was saddened to see that there were so many babies with full casts on their legs and to hear about all that they had to endure. Yet, as I spent more time with them, I got more used to being around them. Really, they were just normal kids: they laughed, they liked to play with each other, they liked to joke around. Seeing a child missing a limb didn't make me feel as uneasy anymore." -Valentina Marzulli

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“Upon coming to Peru, I knew that I would be helping children and providing a hand to others in need, but I wanted to come to be able to experience the different lives of these people in a different country because I feel like I take many things for granted. My education, my lifestyle, and especially money are examples of the many things I take for granted. We get a lot of things handed to us and many people put themselves before others who are more in need. In Peru, I was taking care of a little boy name Jason who got very frustrated very easily. I thought about what he must be like when there aren't volunteers around and how he probably doesn't get the attention he needs. It warmed my heart when I finally got him to be calm and fall asleep in my arms. It made me think about all of the things that these children don't have.”-Priscilla Estevez

These are wise words from our student volunteers. Here are some photos of our students at the Hogar:





Pictured: Marisa Anderson, Gillian Barrins, Victoria DeVine, Priscilla Estevez, Kathleen Lavin, Anthony Marchini, Valentina Marzulli, Patrick McArdle, Adriano Pardo, Cesar Santana, Thomas Soupionis, Karen Vargas, Ms. Bradfield, Mr. Sempowich, Mr. Soto.

English Department

Students in SFP's first ever Study Abroad Program earned academic credit on a trip to Italy from June 28 to July 5. Accompanied by Dr. Stephen Marino and his wife, Katie, the students visited locations in Assisi and Rome about which they researched and studied.

Photo: Study Abroad Program director, Dr. Stephen Marino, with the students in St. Peter's Square

Photo: The group poses at the foothill of Mt. Subasio with the city of Assisi in the background.

Photo: Kathryn Healy, Thomas Houghton, Laura Armellino, Sean O'Leary, Bruno Rinaldi, Salvatore Puleo, and Nicholas Pepe standing in front of the Basilica of St. Francis



Guidance Department

Three hundred members of the class of 2018 got a tremendous head start on college advising and application processing as they attended the College Summer Symposium held in August. It was a terrific success for the students and the counselors.

Art Department

The St. Francis Prep Art department kicked off the summer with a ten-day tour through Italy! This was the department's second international trip (the first was to Paris in 2015), and second time working with the wonderful EF Tour company. The tour was designed by Jeanne Buccino and Anthony Biondolillo in



conjunction with the company, and they were joined by Dianna Shmerykowsky and Kathleen Schnurr, who also aided in the planning of the trip, as chaperones.

The tour began with an overnight flight to Milan where the group was met by their tour guide, Wendy. It was wonderful for the students and chaperones that had been to Paris to be reunited with Wendy, who had been their guide at that time.

After a brief stop in Verona, where the group was invited to shop, eat, and visit Juliet's window at the house that is tied to the famous play, the tour moved on to Venice for the first two nights. The group stayed on the luxurious beach-front hotel at Lido, near Venice, and visited, among other areas, the world famous sites at St. Mark's Square, attended a painting class, and took an afternoon ride in a gondola through the canals.

The tour then moved to beautiful Florence for three days, where the students climbed the Duomo of the cathedral and visited art of immeasurable value at the Uffizi Gallery and the Academia Gallery. The guests on the tour poured over Michelangelo's David and works by Caravaggio, Titian, Giambologna, and Gentileschi (among many others); they even saw the first painting Leonardo da Vinci is known to have assisted on! While in Florence, the students also got to participate in a fresco painting workshop and brought home their tiny "walls" as a souvenir.

After departing Florence, the tour moved for three nights to Rome - a city of action not unlike the one they came from. Amidst the hustle and bustle and designer shopping were sites of endless importance, like the Roman Forum and Colosseum. A highlight for everyone was a trip to the Vatican Museum, where we witnessed Michelangelo's masterpiece - the Sistine Chapel ceiling - and to St. Peter's Basilica to view his sculpture of the Pieta. A wonderful day tour to Pompeii (a favorite among the group) led to a wonderful night in lovely, coastal Sorrento and a day taking in the famed beauty of Capri.

It was truly the trip of a lifetime for all involved, which perhaps naturally led the students to asking where the next trip would be. Of course, their teachers already have a few ideas....



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Foreign Language

This year 49 of our students traveled to Croatia, Slovenia, and Italy, immersing them in knowledge, culture, and inspiration. The knowledge and experience of this trip was invaluable and created memories that will last a lifetime.



Alumni

The former St. Francis Prep pitcher committed to Fordham University earlier this month, just a few weeks removed from deciding to take a prep-school year next fall. It's a schedule Crowley isn't just excited about, but one he's thankful for, certain it will help him improve, both on and off the field, with a step-by-step plan.

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Congratulations Salvatore Ferro, his family and coaches for signing his Letter of Intent to LIU Brooklyn for baseball

