

# Principal's Newsletter

## Scranton Preparatory School

January 2010

Dear Parents,

Reflection, a main element in the prayer life of St. Ignatius, is also a main component in his education plan. Whereas a typical instructional model is a two-step process of experiencing a lesson and then demonstrating what has been learned, Ignatian education adds the third distinguishing element of reflection. Reflection is defined in great depth in Jesuit documents but a basic definition of reflection in the educational process is the use of “the memory, the understanding, the imagination, and the feelings to capture the *meaning and the essential value* of what is being studied, to *discover its relationship* with other aspects of knowledge and human activity, and to *appreciate* its implications in the ongoing search for truth and freedom.” (from *Ignatian Pedagogy, A Practical Approach*).

We strive at Scranton Prep to make reflection a part of the experience of our students in all their endeavors in the classroom, on retreat, in their faith development, in their service work, and in sports and extracurricular activities. In freshman year it might be as simple as reconsideration of subject matter from another point of view in an attempt to grasp academic concepts better. By senior year, students are involved in much more extensive reflection about their studies, their faith, and their lives.

This year we have refocused our attention on this aspect of Jesuit Education. As I reported in my last newsletter, faculty reflected on their vocations as teachers, and then in December the board of trustees, faculty, and students discussed the notion of reflection. We clearly heard how seniors have learned the importance of reflection in their formation. We also learned that we can do more in this area, especially in a student's first years at Prep, to help each student recognize what reflection is and how it can enhance his/her understanding in all areas of school life. The following paragraph from *Ignatian Pedagogy, A Practical Approach* frames our discussion as we continue to strive to incorporate meaningful reflection into a Prep student's experiences.

A fundamental dynamic of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius is the continual call to reflect upon the entirety of one's experience in prayer in order to discern where the Spirit of God is leading. Ignatius urges reflection on human experience as an essential means of validating its authenticity, because without prudent reflection, delusion readily becomes possible and, without careful reflection, the significance of one's experience may be neglected or trivialized. Only after adequate reflection on experience and interior appropriation of the meaning and implications of what one studies can one proceed freely and confidently toward choosing appropriate courses of action that foster the integral growth of oneself as a human being.

As we begin 2010, we as a school will continue to reflect on how to best serve the young people entrusted to us and continue to teach them how to use reflection as a powerful tool in their own development. Also as we begin the new year, I extend to you and your families best wishes for many blessings throughout the year. I hope that all of us in the Scranton Prep community may experience a year of happiness and fulfillment in the work we do together.

Sincerely yours,

Patrick J. Marx  
Principal

## **Course Selection Process To Begin For Next School Year**

The important process of student course selection for next year will begin during the first week of February. Each class year will have an assembly where students will learn about their course requirements and options for next year. Students will be bringing home forms explaining the process. They will receive a list of required courses and the electives that they may choose. Please discuss these options carefully with your son or daughter. Guidance counselors will assist each student with this process and will be happy to answer any of your questions. Once you and your child have selected the courses he/she wishes to take, please sign the form and return it. Please keep in mind that changing courses once your child has signed up is often very difficult and sometimes impossible. Students requesting honors and advanced placement courses must meet criteria set by academic departments for inclusion in these courses. In the spring each student will receive a finalized list of courses, and you will be asked to verify that the courses are correct.

## **Parents Club Sponsors Drug/Alcohol Program; Plans Program on Safe Use of Electronic Communications**

### **Drug/Alcohol Panel Held on November 19**

**On Thursday, November 19,** Judge Michael Barrasse and a panel of experts on substance use and abuse gave a compelling presentation to parents about the signs and dangers of substance abuse as well as the laws covering illegal uses of alcohol and drugs. The panel presented the problem through real-life examples of the effects of substance abuse and then offered guidance to parents on how to help their sons and daughters avoid the pitfalls and pressures of a culture that sometimes seems to glorify substance abuse.

### **Safe Use of Electronic Communications Presentation Set for Tuesday, January 26**

**On Tuesday, January 26,** the Scranton Prep Parents' Club will sponsor a presentation by Ms. Deborah McCoy of Educational Development Services. She will speak about the challenging issues facing students in the area of electronic communications. Her presentation will address how healthy social communications using e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, web sites, and chat rooms can quickly and sometimes unexpectedly turn cruel and harmful for teens. She will discuss what is appropriate on-line behavior for teens. Safe guidelines for using cyber space and the unexpected consequences of bullying, inappropriate photographs, and damaging personal information are also part of the program. Ms. McCoy spoke with all Prep students last year in two assemblies which were very well received by the student body. In her presentation to students, Ms. McCoy also stressed how impossible it is to stop the spread of information and photos that they may have meant to share with only a few friends. She explained how embarrassing and damaging personal information posted anywhere in cyber space can affect college acceptances as well as job placements. Administrators and faculty learned much from these presentations that have helped us in working with our students to keep them safe. I encourage parents to make an effort to take advantage of this timely presentation.

**Tuesday, January 26, 2010 — 7 p.m.**

**The Electronic World of Students, Speech, and Bullying**

**St. Robert Bellarmine Theatre**

**If you plan to attend, please notify the Prep Development Office at 941-7737 or email  
parentsclub@scrantonprep.com by January 22.**

## Midyear Exam Information

Tuesday, January 19	8:15 - English 10:00 - Modern Language
Wednesday, January 20	8:15 - Math 10:00 - Religion
Thursday, January 21	8:15 - Science 10:00 - Social Studies
Friday, January 22	8:15 - Latin / Greek / AP Biology 10:00 - Myth & Epic / AP Human Geography / AP Art History
Monday, January 25	8:15- Make-up exams 10:00 - Make-up exams

Exams are ninety minutes in length. Students may leave the exam after sixty minutes if they have finished. Students report only at times for which they have exams scheduled. There are no classes after exams. Students may leave after the completion of their exams for the day. On days students have two exams, they are **not** permitted to leave the building between exams. Also on days students are scheduled for two exams, they must take **both** exams. Make-up exam day is for illnesses only. Students may not miss exams for vacations or college visits. Districts that provide busing have been notified that dismissal is 11:35.

In the event of a two-hour delay due to weather conditions during exam week, the first exam will begin at 10:15 and dismissal after the second exam will be 1:35. In the event of school closing for one or more days, the order in which exams are taken remains the same. If school were to be closed on Wednesday, exams scheduled for Wednesday would move to Thursday. Monday, January 25 is exam make-up day for students who are absent for a scheduled exam. If there are no snow cancellations during the week, then students who do not miss any of their scheduled exams do not need to report to school on Monday, January 25.

**In the event that Scranton Prep needs to convey more information about delays or cancellations than is possible through the information provided on television and radio, we will do that through announcements on our phone system and on our Websites [scrantonprep.com](http://scrantonprep.com) and [scrantonprep.net](http://scrantonprep.net)**

## Junior Parent Evening of Information - Monday, March 8

On Monday evening, March 8 at 7 p.m., the guidance department will hold its junior parent evening of information. Parents will learn about important aspects of the college process for juniors and upcoming events including information on the college fair on March 30.

## Prep's College Day and College Fair Set for March 30

Tuesday, March 30, is College Day for Prep juniors. Beginning at 12:50, juniors will attend sessions devoted to the college selection process. This program affords juniors an opportunity to meet in small groups with admission counselors from many colleges and universities. In the evening there will be a "college fair" for parents and students. Parents are encouraged to attend this informative program at the school from 7 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. College representatives will be on hand to provide information and answer your questions. There will be special sessions that evening on the college admissions process and financial aid.

## Upcoming Events

January 18.....	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day— no classes
January 19-25.....	Midyear Exams
January 26.....	Second Semester Begins
February 2-5 .....	Kairos Retreat
February 9.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
February 15.....	Presidents' Day - no classes
February 17.....	Ash Wednesday - school liturgy
March 2.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
March 4.....	Parent / Teacher Conferences at 7 p.m.
March 8.....	Guidance Department's Junior Parent Evening of Information
March 9-12.....	Kairos Retreat
March 26 .....	Third Quarter Ends
March 27 .....	Prep Auction
March 30.....	Faculty Meeting -12:50 dismissal except juniors; College Day for juniors begins at 12:50
March 31.....	Easter Break begins after classes
April 12.....	Classes Resume
April 16-18 & 23-25.....	Scranton Prep Players Present <i>Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat</i>
May 2.....	Senior/Parent Social at St. Mary's Center
May 4.....	Faculty Meeting—12:50 dismissal
May 5.....	Junior Day of Recollection



### Scranton Prep's Auction 2010

"*Breakfast at TIFFANY'S*"

March 27, 2010  
St. Francis Xavier Center  
6:30 PM

*Dinner by Epicurean Delight*

Mark your calendars for Prep's annual auction sponsored by the Parents' Club. This year's theme, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, promises to showcase an eclectic collection of gifts. A successful online auction was held the first two weeks of November in conjunction with the major fundraiser.

Homeroom solicitation for auction gifts will begin this month. Parents who have not yet donated an item will receive letters requesting a gift or monetary donation of \$35.00. Each homeroom will be assigned a gift theme.

Joe and Theresa '83 Ferrario, Matt and Kim Stuckart, J.P. '81 and Davida Sweeney, all current parents, are chairing the event. The success of the auction greatly depends on the variety and quality of the gifts that are offered on the auction block. If you have a large or unusual item that you would like to donate, arrangements can be made to have it picked up by calling the Development Office at 941-7743.

Invitations will be mailed to all current parents in late February.