



Sunday Sidelines

September 17, 2017



On Friday, the whole school enjoyed the Crusader Rush. We have a long-standing tradition at Aquinas Academy of dividing the student body into **four teams with names of Greek origin**. These teams are **Aristoi** (wearing yellow shirts), **Beltistoi** (wearing blue shirts), **Kratistoi** (wearing red shirts), and **Megistoi** (wearing green shirts). These Greek words all mean “the best...” in some way. Aristoi is the best, in worth; Beltistoi is the best, morally; Kratistoi is the best, in strength; and Megistoi is simply the greatest.

At various times during the school year we do activities by teams. These teams cross the grade levels. This past Friday was the Crusader Rush – where teams competed at each level of the school (lower, middle, and high school) with challenges that were academic, physical, and creative. Throughout the year, there will be occasions for team competitions. Each of these is an opportunity for students to work together with students from other grades to achieve a goal.

We had a great day on Friday and look forward to building team spirit throughout the year!

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¹ **This Saturday, September 23rd, the Alumni Council is sponsoring an Alumni Homecoming. All Aquinas Alumni –8th grade and high school – as well as Alumni Parents have been invited to join together for 11:00 Mass in the Chapel followed by a picnic on the field.** Alumni will have the chance to tour the new high school building. Some of our oldest alum actually had their high school classes in the current PreK-Kindergarten buildings! If any of our families have alum who would like to attend and have not received an invitation (locating all former students is an ongoing process), please rsvp to alumni@aquinasacademy-pittsburgh.org.

² **Final RSVPs for the Aquinas Family Fall Festival to be held this coming Sunday, September 24th, are due by Monday, September 18th, along with \$15 per family (see attached flyer).** If you have yet to reply, please email [Xanessa"J arrisop](mailto:Xanessa.J.arrisop) to let her know that your RSVP slip will be sent in on Tuesday. **To date, there will be over 350 people attending!** With the festive atmosphere of a DJ added to this year’s picnic, it will surely be a fun afternoon! Remember to bring your own chairs, drinks and a side or dessert to share. There will be bottles of water. The fun begins at 2:00 on Sunday, and wraps up with clean-up at 6:00!

³ **Help for those affected by the recent hurricanes:** As a school community, we would like to offer our assistance to those who have been displaced or are rebuilding due to the flooding in Texas and Florida. **There is a family with seven children ranging in age from 4 to 16 who has reached out to ask for our prayers. The family’s home has been severely damaged, and the rebuild will take 5 to 6 months.** At one point, that family was looking to relocate nearby, which is why they reached out to Aquinas. However, they have been able to find temporary housing in Houston while they rebuild. **The father has asked that our students create a spiritual bouquet, offering prayers for his wife and children so that they know that “real people with real names” are praying for them during this trying time. Students will do that during school this week. Meanwhile, 4th grade girls have gotten busy making bracelets that they would like to sell during lunch on Friday, with proceeds going toward the hurricane victims, and some of the 8th graders will be sponsoring a bake sale during lunch on Friday as well. On Thursday and Friday of this week, as well as at Sunday’s picnic, we will take donations from students.** Perhaps they could earn a dollar or two doing a few chores. I was hoping to purchase Wal-Mart gift cards for each of the children in the above-mentioned family to replace some of the basic things they will need as their home is restored. Above that, any additional money collected will be sent to the Catholic Relief Service fund for the hurricane victims.

⁴ **We are happy to announce that we have selected Food First as our lunch provider, and hot lunch service will begin on Monday, September 25th. Food First is a provider whose offices are in Erie,**

and whose ideal market is medium-sized private schools. We will continue to use the declining balance system in place through Pay For It, and lunch prices will remain the same -- \$4.50 for grades 6 – 12, and \$3.75 for K – 5. Daily, there will be “grab and go” items available such as wraps, salads, and pizza. **The menu for September and October is attached.** The menu will also be posted to the website on the My Aquinas Tab. I believe you will be very pleased with the variety and appeal of the menu items. Students will once again sign up for hot lunch in the morning when they arrive for school. For those who are new, please see the attached instruction sheet for signing up for Pay For It. If you are a new family, you will be able to create a Pay For It account for your children beginning on Wednesday of this week. For those who had an account last year, your balance simply rolls over for use this year. While cash is certainly accepted for grab and go items, you will find it to be much easier to operate on the declining balance account if your child will regularly buy lunch items. If you prefer to send in a check to load your account (rather than by credit card, which has an associated fee), please send the check in to school marked “lunch account”, and it will be loaded to your pay for it account. THE MENU FOR SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER LOOKS FABULOUS. We are excited about this new lunch partnership!

⁵ **Please recall that Monday, October 9th is an in-service day for teachers and there is no school for students. After-Day will be open that day from 7:45 until 5:45. Please let Mrs. K know if you will be using after-day all day or part of the day on 10/9.**

As mentioned at the Parent Night meeting, the faculty will be taking part in Active-Shooter training that day. We have ordered lockdown devices for the classrooms in the lower school so that all locations on campus can be secured either electronically, or by key, or by device without entering the hallway. On October 9th, we will engage in training with SWAT team members and first responders to learn and practice strategies to handle critical situations with an armed intruder. While we all pray that learning these strategies would never be anything but precautionary, to not have thought about them or practiced them would mean not preparing for that kind of critical situation. I will also invite Hampton Police to join us for the training if they wish so that they can better know the unique challenges of our campus.

Between these devices and the training, we have invested \$4000 which was not in the budget proposal for the year, but is certainly urgent. Following parents’ night, I have received \$2500 in donations from two families. If you would like to contribute to this fund, your tax-deductible donation would be much appreciated. Please contact Leslie or send a check to the office marked “Safety Training”. Thank you in advance.

⁶ With October fast approaching, the **AAPA needs a chair for All Saints Day on Tuesday, October 31st.** The chair will coordinate cupcake bakers, distribute and collect prayer slips, and hand out cupcakes at lunch. If anyone is interested please contact one of the AAPA co-chairs. (Jennifer Dingle, Tina Rossi, Vanessa Harrison, Laurie Lynch, Carol Scherer).
Thank you from AAPA

⁷ Speaking of AAPA: **The first Parents Association (AAPA) meeting of the year will be Tuesday morning, October 3rd, at 9:30.** The meeting will be in room 523, on the 2nd floor of the high school. Please feel free to come to the meeting and then stay for 11:00 Mass!

⁸ **Parents of Seniors:** Justyna Montanez, mother of Juliette (2nd grade), is a professional photographer who has done **senior photos** for some of our students in the past two years. She is offering a discount to Aquinas families. You can see some of her work and contact info at <https://www.cositalindallc.com/> Please mention that you are an Aquinas family to receive that discount! Justyna does stunning work and has taken quite a few of the photos we use on our website and in promotional materials.

⁹ On Sunday, October 1st, the Silver Ring Thing – Catholic Edition will be held at Cardinal Wuerl North Catholic HS. Silver Ring Thing promotes chastity and virtue in relationships and is appropriate for students in grades 8 to 12. If you wish to learn more or to register for this session held in the north (another event will be held in the south at Seton-LaSalle in January), please go to this link: <http://www.silverringthing.com/events/cranberrytwppa>

Upcoming dates:

Thursday, October 5th – College Night for High School Students and Parents

Wednesday, October 11th – PSAT and PSAT 8/9 for ALL STUDENTS GRADES 9 – 11.

(Please don't schedule appointments for this day. This is a national testing day with no alternate opportunity!)

Friday and Saturday, October 13, 14 – Stratford Trip for juniors and seniors

Wednesday, October 18th – School Picture Day

Tuesday, October 24th – High School Information Night for Middle School Parents

Saturday, October 28th – Admissions Open House for Prospective Families