



St. Eugene SPIRIT

For the family and friends of St. Eugene School

Fall 2013

St. Eugene Graduate Delivers Hope in Rwanda

Jamie O'Neill first learned about the miracles of Jesus while a young student at St. Eugene School. One miracle recently took on personal meaning as Jamie planned an inaugural celebration for 150 people at the Butaro Ambulatory Cancer Center in northern Rwanda. When over 200 arrived she found



Butaro Ambulatory Cancer Center

that somehow the “loaves and fishes” were plentiful enough to satisfy all! Perhaps another miracle is being realized in this first cancer center in all of East Africa where a diagnosis of cancer is no longer a death sentence but is met with hope.

Jamie, SES Class of 2003, works for Partners In Health (PIH), a nonprofit founded in 1987 by Dr. Paul Farmer and others. PIH now serves over 2.4 million people directly, fighting tuberculosis, malaria, cancer, and other health crises in 12 countries.

Jamie explains, “Our mission is both medical and moral; we work in solidarity with communities in need to reach global health equity.” Since the 1994 genocide, PIH has rebuilt Rwanda’s health care system with sustainable programs that are co-staffed by Rwandans and train the next generation of health care workers.

In 2011, Jamie began working for PIH at the Boston headquarters. Since October of 2012, she has been living in a tiny Rwandan village and serving as External Relations Coordinator focused on communications, public relations, and fundraising.

Jamie’s undergraduate degree in health care policy and management from Georgetown University in

May of 2011 prepared her well for this work. So did her formative years at St. Eugene. “As a student at St. Eugene School, I learned both how to contribute to and depend on a close-knit, strong community. I learned how to go out of my way to help others, whether it was a struggling classmate or a younger student. Similarly, I learned the strength of humility, and that it’s okay to ask for help.”

“Living in rural Africa has many challenges, and I must rely on my friends, coworkers, and neighbors daily – especially when it comes to communicating in the local, and very difficult, language – Kinyarwanda! St. Eugene prepared me for being an active participant in my surroundings.”

When asked whether any specific teacher or class inspired her, Jamie responded swiftly. “In computer class, Mrs. Webster

always set high expectations, but we were also given plenty of space and time to be creative. I’ve found that this balance is especially important in my work today. Thanks, Mrs. Webster!”



Jamie and Vanessa

During her high school years at Divine Savior Holy Angels, Jamie valued her St. Eugene Parish youth group experience and the life-changing Appalachia Service Project. “ASP showed me poverty and suffering up close for the first time, and set me on a very specific trajectory. I know I will always work for underserved populations and fight for justice for the marginalized. Had I not been a part of the St. Eugene community, I think it

Continued on page 6



A Message from our Principal

We are very excited to reintroduce our alumni and friends newsletter, The St. Eugene Spirit! We hope that this publication will help us keep in touch with our graduates while sharing good news stories of our school community with parishioners and other friends as well.

At a recent parish meeting, I had the pleasure of meeting the parents of several alumni. They couldn't wait to share with me how well their children are doing in high school, college or the workplace. Not only are their children doing well, but they credit the education they received at St. Eugene for fostering their children's success and confidence.

As I visit the classrooms I see firsthand how hard our students are working in their academics. They take full advantage of the technology available to help them learn. From Smartboards to iPads, teachers and students integrate these tools seamlessly. An interactive Algebra techbook (online textbook) allows our 8th graders to watch a problem being solved - not just read about it. Homework is sent directly to a teacher's inbox on their iPad - no paper needed. Students prepare multi-media presentations giving them the opportunity to digest, synthesize, and present what they are learning.

While the use of technology is a visible and tangible educational tool, St. Eugene is also blessed to foster our students' spirituality. I am gratified to hear about alumni who are active in serving others through mission trips, volunteer service programs, or choosing jobs dedicated to helping the marginalized. Our alumni understand what it means to be the face of God for others.

One of my favorite phrases from our school's mission statement is . . . *St. Eugene School helps children grow in faith, character and service.* The faculty and I value our calling to form our students in Christ's love. It isn't always easy sowing the seeds. However, when alumni return and we hear their stories we know that our mission is coming to fruition. My prayer is for our current students to become proud St. Eugene School alumni, successful, confident and service-minded.

Rebecca Jones, Principal

Kohl Foundation Honors Mrs. Tulley

We are pleased to announce that longtime St. Eugene teacher Mrs. Mary Jane Tulley was awarded a 2013 Herb Kohl Foundation Fellowship. She received a \$1,000 grant, and St. Eugene School received a matching \$1,000 grant. Fellowship recipients are chosen for their superior ability to inspire a love of learning in their students, motivate others, and lead and serve within and outside the classroom. We are proud of our entire teaching staff and can now boast that five teachers are Kohl Fellowship recipients, the highest number of any elementary school on Milwaukee's north shore. Mrs. Tulley joins past SES winners in the photo below.



Left to right, Mrs. Bartkowski, Mrs. Webster, Mrs. Logman, Ms. Robaczek, Mrs. Tulley

SES Welcomes New Teachers and Staff

Mrs. Katie Dewey, Grade 5, brings over 25 years of teaching experience, most recently at St. Francis Cabrini in West Bend.

Mrs. Margaret Platten, Director of Learning Support, taught at a Catholic school in Chicago for seven years. She has a masters degree in literacy and specialized instruction from DePaul University.

Ms. Betsy Longrie, Kindergarten Aide, is a certified PreK-3 teacher and previously served as a long term substitute at St. Eugene School.

Mrs. Susie Desmond Nettesheim, Development Director, has served our school and parish in many volunteer roles. She graduated from St. Eugene School in 1972, and her children are also SES alumni.



Check out the St. Eugene School page on Facebook!
Go to our website (www.steugeneschool.com) and

St. Eugene School Graduation Class of 2013



Back row 8th Grade

Teacher Karen

Prendergast, Pastor Father Jerry Herda, Clay Rott and Principal Rebecca Jones
Middle row Natalie Maniscalco, Meagan Gauss, Maddie Maurer, Sonje Kozinski and Jesse Rivera-Mendez
Front row Laura Keyser, Audrey Gabler, Catherine LaRosa and Margaret Meyer

Excited graduates, proud teachers, and beaming parents and friends filled the pews for the Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation on June 7, 2013. Following their final Mass as classmates, the graduates received awards and diplomas, and then celebrated with a catered dinner in Mackin Hall. The speeches, class video, and memory books provoked laughter and sentimental tears as all reminisced about their years together at St. Eugene School. The graduates now carry the spirit of St. Eugene with them to their high schools, Dominican, Divine Savior Holy Angels, Nicolet, Brown Deer, and Cedarburg.

VALEDICTORIAN AWARD *Audrey Gabler*

Presented to the student with the best overall GPA from the seventh and eighth grade years.

MACKIN AWARD *Margaret Meyer*

Presented in honor of Fr. Mackin, founding pastor of St. Eugene. The recipient best demonstrates positive attributes in academic effort, athletic skill, and overall attitude.

FR. KROLL AWARD *Sonje Kozinski*

Presented in honor of Fr. Robert Kroll, SJ, a 1979 graduate of St. Eugene School. Presented to the student who best exhibits respect for our Catholic heritage, takes an active role in the parish through service to others, and exemplifies Christian values.

KRISTOPHER MICKSCHL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP *Catherine LaRosa*

Provided to a graduate attending a Catholic high school by the Mickschl family in memory of their son and St. Eugene student, Kris. Applicants wrote essays on "The Importance of Family and Friends."

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SCHOLARSHIP *Audrey Gabler*

Provided to a graduate attending a Catholic high school, and recognizing service to the grade school, leadership, character, and academic achievement.

CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK TO THE ST. EUGENE CLASS OF 2013!

2012-2013 Saint Eugene School Annual Fund Appeal

Thank you to the many generous parents, grandparents, parishioners, alumni, and friends of St. Eugene School who made the 2012-13 Annual Fund Appeal a success. Your donations help us fulfill our mission and make a difference in the lives of our students. **The 2012-13 Annual Fund raised \$74,273 for operating expenses and the endowment fund.**

MACKIN SOCIETY

\$5,000 and above

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Paul & Sue Keyser

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Mary Lacy
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In Honor of Kristin, Kim, Amy & Beth Bradley
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In Memory of Thomas Butscher
Jeff McCoy

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Getting to Know *Father Jacob Strand*

First graders ask great questions. “Why do you always wear black clothes?” “Is it hard to be a priest?” “Are you a SAINT?”

Well, no, not a saint. Rather, he’s the new associate pastor for St. Eugene Parish, Fr. Jacob Strand. Making friends with Fr. Jacob is easy for the first graders, because Fr. Jacob is willing to answer all of their questions, patiently and with a few jokes and stories along the way.

Two months into the new school year, Father Jacob has already met every student in grades 1-8. He has visited their religion classes, celebrated several school Masses, and blessed their pets on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. The students are at ease with him, perhaps because he makes it clear that his school years started

out much like theirs.

Fr. Jacob grew up in Dousman, WI, with his parents, two older brothers, and a younger sister. He played



basketball, baseball, and football, and learned to fish and hunt. Throughout these years, “Our parish, St. Bruno, was very much the center of our family life, which was very important as it supported the faith of our family. The parish provided our school, our social circles, volunteer opportunities, faith formation, basketball teams, and more.”

As a young altar server, he held the record of serving seven consecutive Easter Vigil Masses. “I liked all the incense, candles, and fire that accompany this beautiful liturgy. I also served many funerals,” he reminisced. “But all the time around the altar and being present at difficult moments of people’s lives also implicitly planted deep seeds of my vocation, although I obviously didn’t realize it at the time.”

St. Eugene students have wondered about his decision to become a priest. While he was attending Kettle Moraine High School and UW-LaCrosse, he tried to achieve high grades, excel at athletics, and become very popular. Success came often, but when it didn’t he was disappointed. “Eventually, I realized that I was trying too hard to win the praise and love of other people.

However, during the disappointing times, I realized something important – God’s love was unconditional – and so even when I didn’t do well on a test, or threw a few interceptions, or found myself alone – God still loved me. This was the foundation of my life. Struck by the power of His love, I realized that I had to tell others about it.”

At first, he thought he’d accomplish this goal by getting married and working in the Church. With his two older brothers already on the path to priesthood, it seemed impossible that he would also be called. While there was never a single defining moment, he gradually came to a feeling of “great peace with the idea of giving up marriage and family and offering my life as a sacrifice through the priesthood,” and realized “I couldn’t be more blessed.” His two older brothers offered impartial support during his years of discernment. “I also saw them happy and fulfilled in their vocations, which was reassuring because it showed me that priesthood is a great life.”

He entered the seminary at Loyola University in Chicago and earned a BA in philosophy. Next came a graduate degree in theology from the Pontifical North American College in Rome. Following his ordination on May 19, 2012, Fr. Jacob spent the summer at St. Charles Parish in Hartland and then returned to Rome to complete a specialized theology degree in marriage and family studies.

And so it came about that when the world was watching Rome, waiting for the announcement of a new pope, Fr. Jacob was there. He distributed ashes at Pope Benedict’s final Mass, and witnessed the white smoke rising from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. When Pope Francis walked out on the balcony of St. Peter’s, “it was one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life.” Not long afterward, he was among the many priests concelebrating the Chrism Mass with the new Pope.

Now as Associate Pastor at St. Eugene and St. Monica parishes, Fr. Jacob anticipates the ways God will use him to help people encounter the transforming love of Jesus. “I think that witnessing this encounter will be especially powerful while celebrating the Mass, hearing confessions, anointing the sick, praying with people, teaching the faith, and simply discussing the wonders of God’s love. Nothing is more exciting than seeing the grace of God work in the world.”

And he’s already seeing God’s grace in action at St. Eugene School. “I am continually struck by the excellent behavior of the students, and how well they answer my questions.” And on a much lighter note,

Continued on page 6

Jamie O'Neill continued

would have taken me much longer to learn this about myself."

Jamie's African travels have included a rewarding visit to our twinning parish in Uganda. Jamie was thrilled to meet Vanessa, the student her family sponsors at the Stella Maris School through the Caritas for Children program. "Everyone at the school is working incredibly hard to support and educate all of the students, and doing so with very few resources. The people were extremely gracious; it was obvious how much the relationship with St. Eugene means to them."

Jamie is looking forward to another trip very soon. She'll be coming home to visit her family and celebrate Christmas with the St. Eugene community.

Available in the St. Eugene School Library:

Mountains Beyond Mountains: the quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, the man who would cure the world by Tracy Kidder c2003, adapted for ages 12-16 by Michael French c2013.

For more information about Partners In Health:

www.pih.org and To Repair the World: Paul Farmer speaks to the next generation c2013 and In the Company of the Poor by Dr. Paul Farmer and Father Gustavo Gutierrez, c2013.

Fr. Jacob continued

"and how *good* they look in their uniforms." Oh yes, the school uniform ...the perfect example when explaining to those curious first graders why a priest is always dressed in black.

For more on how three brothers in one Wisconsin family were called to be priests...

Read this article from the Catholic Herald:

<http://www.chnonline.org/news/local/11157-family-enjoys-triple-dose-of-divinity.html>

View this video suggested by pastor Fr. Jerry Herda:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/25/3-brothers-from-1-wis-fam_n_1701102.html

Seeking Alumni Updates!

We are updating our records; please send us your email address. And can you share email and home addresses for your siblings or other alums? Are you interested in reunion planning? Will you send news about your life, work, family, education, travel, awards, and activities for sharing in future issues of SPIRIT? Please reply to Susie Desmond Nettesheim at nettesheims@archmil.org, or 414-918-1120, or 7600 N. Port Washington Rd, Fox Point, WI 53217.



In Memory...

St. Eugene School community extends our sympathies to the family and friends of ...

Dorothy Bagemihl, school secretary 1968-1991, mother of Barbara '62

Rosemary T. Battocletti, mother of Mary Rose '72, Theresa '73, Anne '74, Elizabeth '76, Mary Catherine '78, Timothy '80, and James '82

Yvonne "Bonnie" Briski, school secretary 1969-1992, mother of Larry '72, Ted '74, Jackie '77, and Mike '79

Dr. Ralph E. Brownlee, father of Eileen '70, and Bill '71

Thomas W. Butscher, father of Anne '73, Cathy '75, Mary Beth '76, Charles '78, Michael '79, Clare '81, and Joseph '84 (deceased); grandfather of Greg '06, Kevin '07, and Tom '11 Wisniewski

Charlotte L. Curran, mother of SES teacher Sharon Webster; grandmother of Kelly '92, Ryan '95, Michael '97, and Alison '00 Webster

Gustav J. Dreyer, Jr., father of Gustav '72, William '74, Katherine '79, and Tiana

Mary Patricia Fischer, mother of ten including former SES teacher Jane Fischer Glaser, and Katherine '65, Laurie '68, and Charles '70

Eugene J. Fons, grandfather of Emily '03, Elizabeth '06, and Erin '13

Nancy H. Jaekels, art teacher 1970 to 1980, mother of Chris '74, Ted '75, Mia '77, Andy '79, Julie '80, and grandmother of Madeleine '10, Michael '12 and Dodie

Thomas L. Mulcahy, Jr., father of Terry '74, Bill '75, Tom '76, and Kelly '78

Anthony J. Sweeney, M.D., father of Joe '87, Theresa '90, Matt '92, Andy '95, Mike '99, and Jimmy '04

Madonna A. Young, mother of Madonna '65, Walker '67, Meg '68, Sarah '69, Tim '70, Jamie '72 (deceased), Amy '73, Fred '74, Maureen '75, Patrick '77, Martha '79, Bridget '81, Fitzgerald '82, and Maggie '86



St. Eugene School
Guiding hearts, growing minds