



SAINTS BE PRAISED

Father Terry McGowan, a theology teacher at JPPII celebrates Mass to mark the canonization of the namesake of Pope John Paul II High School. In the foreground is a ski jacket worn by St. John Paul II and donated to the school. With the canonization, the jacket, which the school keeps on display outside the chapel, is now considered a second class relic. To read about a delegation of JPPII students, teachers and parents who were in Rome for the canonization, see page 2.



A KNIGHT'S TALE



JPPII ALUMNI PAGE



ATHLETICS



SCHOOL



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FAYE GIRTEN, SCHOOL'S FIRST REGISTRAR, RETIRES

When Faye Girtten heard that the Diocese of Nashville was surveying people about their interest in a new high school it was considering building, she wanted to get in on the ground floor. "I completed the survey (and) wrote a letter to Bishop (Edward) Kmiec that said not only would I send my son there but I would apply for a job there," said Mrs. Girtten, who had taught at Bishop Byrne High School in Memphis and Paducah Tilghman High School in Kentucky before moving to the Nashville area.

She became a volunteer and eventually one of the employees who helped open Pope John Paul II High School in 2002 when she was hired as the school's first registrar. After 12 years, Mrs. Girtten has retired.

She has seen JPPII grow from an empty hillside into a thriving school. "I think we're known for academic excellence and caring and concerned teachers, faculty and staff who support one another," said Mrs. Girtten.

In the beginning the staff and students were feeling their way

through the process of starting a brand new school. "It was extremely hard work to do the startup," because they had to design everything from scratch, she said.

But it also became an opportunity, for not only the teachers and staff but the students as well, to build something. "It was fun for them to be part of it," Mrs. Girtten said. "They took ownership in being pioneers."

Now that she is retired, Mrs. Girtten's plans are "definitely relax for a while," she said. "I want to spend time with my children and grandchildren. That's become a top priority. I've spent many days already doing that. ... My son Jeff is getting married in August. We've been busy making plans with him."

"I'd like to get myself, my life and my house organized," she said with a laugh.



Faye Girtten



**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

**AP
EXAMS
MAY 5-16**

**SENIOR
HONORS
NIGHT
6:30 P.M.
THURSDAY
MAY 15**

**SENIOR
WALK
2:45 P.M.
FRIDAY
MAY 16**

**BACCALAUREATE
MASS
10 A.M.
CATHEDRAL
SATURDAY
MAY 17**

**GRADUATION
1 P.M.
GRAND OLE
OPRY HOUSE
SUNDAY
MAY 18**



TALENT SHOW WINNERS

Remilia Li, left, and Chu Chu won this year's JPII Talent Show, performing the Chinese song "Encounter." Chu played the piano and sang while Remilia accompanied her on the violin.

**STUDENTS WIN
FBLA HONORS**

JPII students from the school's Future Business Leaders of America chapter competed in the State Leadership Conference in Chattanooga on April 7, with two teams winning first place in their category.

The Hospitality Management team of Raina Devrai and Caleb Holton and the Marketing Team of Victoria Dolan, Ilinca Sipos and Taylor Wallace both took home first place honors.

Other teams that placed, included: Entrepreneurship Team 1, Jeffrey LeCave, Daniel Al-Nimri and Collin Bryant, third; Global Business team of Anna Veazey and Megan Reding, fifth; Management Decision Making team of Haley Cline and Catherine Meyer, ninth; Hospitality Management Team 1 of Ben Silverman, Greg Silverman and Jacqui Ramos, 10th; Entrepreneurship Team 2 of Sophie Kolbe, Wyatt Kaiser and Madison Farris, 10th; Entrepreneurship Team 3 of Paul Hooker and Rivers Hinson, 14th.

The teams that finished in the top three in the state competition will advance to the FBLA national competition to be held June 29-July 2 in Nashville.

Other JPII students who competed at the State Conference were: Marketing Team 2 of Jovani Martinez and Christian Roberts; and Impromptu Speaking, Tyler Dorr and Zach Abdo.

**JPII DELEGATION IN ROME FOR
NAMESAKE'S CANONIZATION**

Cathy Kollai and her son Donald were in Rome in 2011 when St. John Paul II was beatified. "It was incredible, absolutely incredible," said Mrs. Kollai, a parishioner at St. Joseph Church in Madison. "I think half of Poland was there."

So when she and Donald heard that Pope John Paul II High School, where he is a senior, was planning a trip for students and others to attend the canonization of the school's namesake, they didn't hesitate to sign up.

"Mom said she would like to come back for the canonization, but she thought she would be in a wheelchair," Donald said. "I was a freshman (for the beatification) and now I'm a senior, so it happened pretty quick."

The Kollais were part of a group of four students, two parents, a grandparent and two teachers who represented the school at the canonizations of St. John Paul II and St. John XXIII on Sunday, April 27.

"We're going to compete with maybe 2 maybe 3 million people trying to get into (St. Peter's) Square that holds 300,000," JPII's campus minister Deacon Brian Edwards, who is leading the trip, said before departing for Rome. "For the general population, there're no reservations. It's truly first come, first serve."

Like the Kollais, he also was in Rome for St. John Paul II's beatification, one of the steps along the journey of becoming a saint. He also was leading a group of JPII students who were in St. Peter's Square for the late pope's final public appearance, shortly before he died.

Being at the canonization will be "an affirmation of what I believe in, what I talk about a lot here in school about the church," Deacon Edwards said. "It's a great experience, a wonderful, positive encouraging experience, especially when I have students who are there and a lot of them I'm aiding them in experiencing it for the first time."

With the canonization, "he formally becomes our patron saint as a school," Deacon Edwards said. Despite the canonization, the name of the high school will remain Pope John Paul II. "There are no current plans to propose to the bishop a name change," said JPII Headmaster Faustini Weber. "We believe 'Pope' John Paul II marks our founding in 2002 during his pontificate, which will distinguish us from all the 'Saint' John Paul II institutions sure to be built in the future."

The others making the trip are freshman Jack Palen, sophomore Ryan Helbig, his mother Angela Helbig and his grandmother Marjorie Rippy, senior Kira Romeo, and JPII Latin teacher Bozena Lawson, who, like St. John Paul, is a native of Poland.



The newest members of the National Honor Society at Pope John Paul II High School were inducted during ceremonies at the Bluegrass Country Club in Hendersonville.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS

Forty-one students at Pope John Paul II High School were inducted as new members of the National Honor Society during ceremonies on April 6 at Bluegrass Country Club in Hendersonville.

The new members were selected for showing the characteristics of Scholarship, Service, Leadership and Character, the four pillars of the National Honor Society.

The new inductees were the largest number of new members in JPII's history. They are: Zach Abdo, Gaby Aguilar, Michael Bringard,

Jacob Catignani, Chu Chu, Tyler Dorr, Whit Drennan, Jake Easter, Daniel Edwards, Marissa Edwards, Alyssa Fogolin, Abby Fox, Anna Fox, Avery Glenn, Mia Herrington, Cathleen Humm, Jacob Jarreau, Hailey Lavender, Rachael Leonard, Sarah Link, Queena Lu, Maggie Mann, Jovani Martinez, Thomas O'Berry, Anna Reding, Megan Reding, Jacob Reed, Rachel Richardson, Christian Roberts, Greg Silverman, Illinca Sipos, Olivia Snell, Madison Taylor, Jacob Telli, Casey Thompson, Austin Whitmer, Katherine Willoughby, Grace Wood, Alyssa Wyman, Annabel Yates and Christina Yi.

MUSICAL'S PREMIERE AT JPII A BIG HIT

The premiere of the new musical, "Bernadette of Lourdes," at JPII was a huge success, said Zac Campbell, the school's theater teacher. "It went really well. It was really well received," Mr. Campbell said. "The Sunday crowd was impressive. We got swarmed at the box office. ... We had a couple of priests who came and saw it and they talked about it in their Sunday homilies."

The play is about St. Bernadette, to whom the Blessed Mother appeared, highlighting the journey she took as a young girl and the challenges she faced from those who doubted the appearance.

The play was written by two Nashville area artists, Sarah Hart, a nationally known Catholic singer and songwriter, and Brian Hull, the master puppeteer at the Nashville

Public Library and director of the library's children's theater program. Although they had worked on the play for years, it had never been staged before the production at JPII in March. Through connections in the community, Mr. Campbell learned that Ms. Hart and Mr. Hull had an original work "and it fit our culture" at JPII, he said.

"I think they enjoyed it," Mr. Campbell said of the playwrights. "Brian Hull was there every show."

The reaction from the audience touched everyone involved in putting on the show, Mr. Campbell said. "People were telling us about their reaction, they personalized it, and how it affected their lives," he said. "You always want your audience to feel something. The feedback (the cast received) was exactly that."



Taylor Smith portrayed St. Bernadette in the premiere of "Bernadette of Lourdes."

JJ EBELHAR CONDUCTS FINAL CONCERT AT JPII

This year's Spring Choral Concert, held Sunday, April 27, was the last to be conducted by JPII Fine Arts Department Chair and Choral Director Jj Ebelhar. Mrs. Ebelhar is retiring at the end of the school year after 45 years as a music teacher. She joined the JPII faculty for the opening of the school in the fall of 2002.

The concert had two parts, the first a celebration of the canonization earlier that day in Rome of the school's namesake St. John Paul II. The second half of the concert was titled "Music Across the Pond" and featured songs from the British Isles.

At the conclusion of the concert, alumnae of the choral program at JPII joined the current choirs and Mrs. Ebelhar onstage to sing the school's alma mater, which she wrote. There were several tributes to Mrs. Ebelhar from the current choral students. At right, they gathered on stage to give Mrs. Ebelhar a giant group hug.



MARLIE FORD LIVES OUT JPII MOTTO IN MEXICO

Freshman Marlie Ford is truly living out the JPII motto that "Faith leads us beyond ourselves." Marlie recently traveled to Mexico with her grandparents and their Oklahoma Rotary Club to deliver wheelchairs to those in need. They worked with Centro de Rehabilitacion Infantil Teleton de Mexico, a network of infant rehabilitation centers, where they assembled and distributed 55 wheelchairs.

"The whole trip was amazing, but my favorite part was when we brought a wheelchair to a 96-year-old woman who had been bed-bound for many years," Marlie said. "Lifting her into her wheelchair for the first time was so special."

Marlie also got a chance to be interviewed by Chris Lewis, president of the American Wheelchair Mission Foundation, for a new DVD on the program.



Freshman Marlie Ford helps a child into a wheelchair during a recent trip to Mexico with family members to deliver wheelchairs to the needy.

STUDENTS' TALENT ON DISPLAY IN JPII ART SHOW

Art students at Pope John Paul II High School put their talent on display for the annual JPII Art Show, held Sunday, April 27, in the Claudia and William Puryear Library at the school. The pieces on display represented a variety of disciplines, including painting, drawing, photography, sculpture and mixed media.

Several students received special recognition. Junior Michelle Moore's mixed media piece "Recreational Killing Part 2" was named Best of Show. Others recognized included:

- Senior Madeline Davanport, Best of Painting, for "Selfie."
- Senior Megan Gerstner, Best of Drawing, for "Coca-Cola Cat."
- Senior Alie Ward, Best of Photography, for "Self-Loathing."
- Sophomore Allison Fowler, Best of Sculpture, for "Blue and Purple Kite."
- Sophomore Lucy Cook, Best of Mixed Media, for "HCI."

Students receiving honorable mentions included: junior Christina Yi for her oil painting "Hope"; senior Jordan Lee for her acrylic painting "Breakthrough"; senior Kenzie Carver for her mixed media drawing "The Fair"; senior David Campeotto for his photograph "Activated Spaces";



Irene Leonard, the mother of senior Madi Leonard, looks over some of the student artwork in the annual JPII Art Show, held in the Claudia and William Puryear Library at the school on Sunday, April 27.

senior Ally Jenkins for her photograph "Some Things Never Change"; and senior Susanna Edwards for her sculpture "Five Months Old."

ABIGAIL COX TO COMPETE IN STATE RIGHT TO LIFE SPEECH CONTEST

JPII junior Abigail Cox recently finished second in the Sumner County Right to Life speech contest and will represent Sumner County in the state competition to be held at Aquinas College in Nashville on May 3.

"The pro-life movement is a huge passion of mine and something I want to pursue after high school," said Abigail, whose speech was about abortion. "I've gone on the March for Life (in Washington, D.C.) the last three years and I thought it would be a great opportunity to share what I believe in with as many people as possible.

"I was always afraid of public speaking, but because I'm passionate about it, I had a lot of fun."



PIUS IX WINS HOUSE CUP

Seniors Victoria Hickham, left, and Jacqui Ramos, vice president and president, respectively, of the House of Pius IX celebrate winning the 2014 House Cup.

JPII STUDENTS SHINE AT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

Several students at Pope John Paul II High School won honors during the YMCA Youth in Government Conference at the Tennessee State Capitol this year, including two students chosen for one of the prestigious National Affairs positions at the National Affairs Conference in North Carolina.

JPII junior Tyler Dorr was elected as governor for next year's conference, the highest position at the conference, and fellow junior Casey Thompson was elected as lieutenant governor. Junior Jake Easter was appointed by Dorr as the governor's chief of staff.

JPII took 60 students to the three-and-a-half day conference, which teaches students how the state government works and how to write, present and argue bills in the legislature. Several students served in leadership positions,

including: Caleb Pracht, chief of staff; Tally Bevis and Tyler Dorr, speaker pro-temp and floor leader of the Red House; Lucas Pulliza, lieutenant governor of the Senate; Collin Bryant and Jake Easter, speaker pro-temp and floor leader of the Red Senate; Katherine Willoughby, chief clerk of the Red House; Jaime Rochester and Alex Lanigan, student attorneys arguing a Supreme Court case; and Tyler Davis and Reuben Hoyos, lobbyists.

Susanna Edwards, Loraine Iliia, Emily Ernst and Claire O'Connell won awards for outstanding bills and Alex Koeberlein won an award for outstanding statesman. Tyler Dorr and Anna Reding were chosen as delegates to the National Affairs conference and Tally Bevis and Collin Bryant were chosen as alternates.

MS. BELLAMY SHARES LOVE OF LEARNING WITH HER STUDENTS

Shara Bellamy always knew she wanted to be a teacher. “I decided when I was 4 and never changed my mind,” said the first-year science teacher at Pope John Paul II High School. “I truly could not imagine myself as anything but a teacher.”

“It’s really exciting to see a student do well. I’ve always loved learning. I love being a part of it,” she said.

She graduated from Cornell University with a bachelor’s of science degree in Biology and Society. “I loved that major so much,” Ms. Bellamy said. “The focus is on human interaction with science. ... It’s such a cool combination of things,” including medical ethics and how human perception affects scientific discovery.

After Cornell, Ms. Bellamy was accepted for a one-year fellowship with the Match Corps in Boston, teaching and tutoring urban students in a Match charter school. Then she worked at an alternative school in Albany, N.Y., teaching Spanish. She then came to Nashville as a graduate student at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College to earn a master’s degree in secondary education with a focus on science education. Part of her student teaching assignment was at JP II teaching with Science Department Chair



Shara Bellamy

Jennifer Dye. “She’s an incredible teacher,” Ms. Bellamy said. “She’s really great at giving you specific things to work on. It was the best possible learning experience I could have had.”

Student teaching at JP II also gave her the chance to work at one of the few schools that employ modeling teaching techniques. “JP II’s modeling program is so much different than what other schools are doing,” she said. After her student teaching assignment at JP II, Ms. Bellamy was offered a full time position. “I truly decided to stay in Tennessee because of this school,” she said. “It’s a chance to teach modeling with people who will help me do it better.”

This year, Ms. Bellamy has been teaching CP Biology to juniors and Anatomy and Physiology to seniors. “I really like the environment” at JP II, Ms. Bellamy said. “The students, they interact really well. They can disagree with each other without being rude. That’s a big skill, especially for high school kids.”

Besides teaching her classes, Ms. Bellamy served as one of the coaches for the Science Olympiad team and organized the science lunch speaker series, which brought in scientists to talk to students about their profession. She also judged JP II’s annual talent show.

“It’s been sort of a whirlwind,” Ms. Bellamy said of her first year at JP II. “There’s a lot you have to stay on top of. It’s been good.”

An advertisement for John Paul II High School. The background is a light blue sky with a large blue flag waving on the right. The flag has the letters 'JP II' in white. Below the flag is a shield-shaped logo with a blue background and a yellow cross. The text 'Seek. Find.' is in a large, dark blue serif font. Below it, 'JOHN PAUL II HIGH SCHOOL' is in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font. Underneath that is 'LEARN MORE.' in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font. At the bottom, 'JP2HS.ORG' is in a dark blue sans-serif font. At the very bottom, a quote in a dark blue sans-serif font reads: 'At JP II seekers find that “faith leads us beyond ourselves”.'

Seek. Find.
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