Dear Friends,

A favorite poem about Spring begins:

“Have you heard winter’s over?  
The basil and the carnation cannot control their  
laughter...”

Here at our school at this time of year we have a hard time controlling our glee as we consider all that has happened and will happen as we look forward to Easter Resurrection and 4th quarter activities!

Our fine arts program is alive and thriving:

• A number of classes have gone to the Cleveland Play House for interactive workshops in drama and expression
• Great Lakes Theater came to present TREASURE ISLAND and engage the students in active participation
• Our band and choir members performed alongside The Cleveland Orchestra and four other schools as part of Councilman Matt Zone’s initiative
• Our Community Art Show and Drama Club production are just around the corner

We rejoice with our 8th graders who have been accepted at their high school of choice. We congratulate the ones who have received scholarships already and can hardly wait until our May Honors Assembly to hear more!

Certainly gratitude goes out to our Junior High Green committee for their bake sale last month that raised $150 to help bring fresh water to a village in Uganda. Closer to home our student government coordinated a drive to make a financial donation to the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland whose vans were stolen.

We share in this newsletter our efforts to welcome families of diverse nationalities and a story of teachers adapting their learning environment to meet student needs.

Yes, we could express more through the written word. However, it would be better if you came to see for yourself what is happening at Metro Catholic, a school predicted to last three years and now celebrates 30 years and is going strong.

“Have you heard Metro Catholic is a great school?  
Encouragement and success abounds there!”

Sincerely,

Sr. Anne Maline, SND  
Co-Director

Mrs. Mary Lou Toler  
Co-Director

How do you say “good morning” in Arabic?  
“Sabah Al Khair,” responds Jack Nasr, a 7th grader at Metro Catholic School. Jack, a native of Syria, is one of 47 students at our school enrolled in the English Language Learners program, directed by Sr. Linda Marie Gecewicz.

The program has been around since 2004 and has welcomed students from more than a dozen countries.

Jack was born in Homs, Syria on February 18, 2006. His family — mom, dad, and three brothers — applied for visas in 2002, and finally came to join family in Cleveland in 2017, escaping political and religious turmoil.

Jack, a very positive young man with a ready smile, enrolled at Metro Catholic last fall and was warmly welcomed by his classmates and
LESS SQUIRMING, MORE LEARNING

Grab a yoga ball and get comfortable. We are going to talk about flexible seating in the classroom.

Don’t worry, traditionalists. There are still regular desks and chairs for you. Or you might want to try sprawling out on an oversized pillow. Or standing at a high rise desk in the back.

These are just a few of the options for students in some of the classrooms at Metro Catholic School.

The idea of flexible seating has been around a few years. Miss Alison Tortelli learned about it while doing research for her master’s degree at the University of Dayton. Mrs. Allison Klutarich heard about it in a workshop. And Miss Laura Antel joined this fresh approach to keeping students engaged.

Together they introduced it here.

It’s as much of an adaptation for the teachers as it is for the students. But if you are willing to give up the rigidity of one seating choice for all, the students will happily follow, said Miss Tortelli.

So how is it working out? Is the new seating a distraction or an enhancement to learning?

Miss Tortelli said she measured her results of the new arrangement by grabbing a handful of popsicle sticks and using them to count the number of times she had to “redirect” the students. That means settle them down and refocus them on the lesson. She found that the new seating options had a positive effect. Fewer disruptions. Less squirming, more learning.

Mrs. Klutarich measured her results by seeing an uptick in grades.

Miss Antel got student feedback with a survey after the concept was introduced. Yoga balls were the biggest hit, followed by cushions on the floor. There are also “wobble seats,” (stools that bend from side to side,) and thick elastic bands that fit around the desk’s legs for students who get a kick out of learning.

Everyone has found a seating preference, but not many prefer the old desk-and-chair idea. One student in the survey called traditional desks “boring.”

Flexible seating is a privilege maintained by following the rules posted at the front of the classroom. The emphasis is on being respectful and following the teacher’s directions.

In June, Miss Tortelli will present her research on flexible seating at a conference for Catholic Education at the University of Dayton. With her faculty enthusiasm evident and documented student performance, it is likely more teachers will give it a try.
We invite you to join our Legacy Society with a bequest or planned gift.

Members of the Cleveland Orchestra and our choir prepare for the Gordon Square Music Showcase.

Our students raised money to assist the Boys & Girls Club purchase new vans after theirs were stolen.

The Healthy Eating Club learned about fresh vegetables as they made salads to take home to their families.

Students received ashes from their teachers on Ash Wednesday.

The Green Team met Mayor Jackson at the Sustainable Cleveland Kickoff.

With their FIT Bands, 3rd graders have been able to help UNICEF send over 300 meals to children in need using their step data analyzed in Math class.

Student Art showing our diverse school culture.

Students are able to enjoy Chess in the Learning Garden.

You’re invited to the Metro Catholic Drama Club presentation of

If only...

Thursday, April 11, 2019 • 6:00 pm • Stephen Building

30

Metro Catholic School

This is a special production celebrating our 30th anniversary.

We invite you to join our Legacy Society with a bequest or planned gift.

1300 W. 78th Street
Cleveland OH 44102

April 4, 2019
5:00-7:00 pm

Clark•Gallagher•Metro Catholic
Our Lady of Mount Carmel • Urban Community
Valley View Leadership Academy • Waverly
teachers. He began a rigorous daily schedule of school, gym, after-
school tutoring and helping out at home. How does he keep up that
pace?
“I work very hard. I don’t say ‘I’m not going to do it.’”
And the hard work is paying off for Jack. His English language skills
are getting stronger every day, and he is comfortable socially in the
classroom and on the playground.
Jack gets extra help during and after school from Ms. Kinkoph, Ms.
Jackson, and Ms. Skvoretz. And he enjoys building his skills using the
computer programs Imagine Learning, Flocabulary and Classworks.
He also appreciated his time with a volunteer Miami University
student, Mr. Reid Nelson.
Jack’s father, Simon Nasr, is eager to see Jack go far with his
education, possibly becoming a doctor one day.
This year, all of the students have learned to say the Sign of the Cross
in four languages — Swahili, Spanish, Vietnamese and German. At
Metro Catholic, kindness and respect for other cultures brings us all
closer together and reminds us of God’s vision for our world.

Metro Catholic has welcomed students into the ELL program from:
Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Congo, Burundi, Liberia, China, Palestine,
Egypt, Vietnam, Central America, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Syria, Poland,
Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Supportive teachers like Ms. Christine Jackson ease the transition and
create success stories.

Check our Facebook Page for daily news and events – accessible from www.metrocatholic.org