

Jaguar Beat

Saint Joseph Academy issue # 2

What Are You Thankful For?

By Amanda Drapac-Novotny, J'10

Thanksgiving is right around the corner, and all too often, we let this holiday slide by as just a chance to eat lots of turkey and watch a ton of football. Yet there is so much more to Thanksgiving than these few elements. The real question to ask yourself shouldn't be "Am I going to have corn, carrots, or both?"

but "What do I have to be thankful for this year?" We've assembled a list of some things that we can ALL be thankful for, little things in life that tend to be often overlooked. Add to it with a few of your own!

BE THANKFUL FOR...

1. Your family. 2. Your friends. 3. Your home. 4. Your pets. 5. Your education. 6. Your athletic ability. 7. Your artistic ability. 8. Your academic ability. 8. Your teachers. 9. Your school. 10. Your church. 11. Your favorite color. 12. Your favorite hobby. 13. Your smile. 14. Your most prized possession. 15. Your relationships. 16. A secret that you have kept. 17. A story that someone shared with you. 18. A God who loves you. 19. That you live in a free country. 20. Each meal that you eat. 21. You have clean drinking water. 21. The internet. 22. Your cell phone / home phone. 23. Your iPod / MP3 player. 24. Your ability to use a computer. 25. Your ability to see. 26. Your ability to hear. 27. Your ability to smell. 28. A snow day. 29. An unexpected surprise. 30. A note in your lunch from one of your parents. 31. A hug or a kiss. 32. Those who look up to you. 33. Those who set an example for you. 34. People who have taught you important life lessons. 35. People who you may not get along with. 36. Friends that you had in your childhood. 37. Friends that you have lost touch with. 38. Friends that you will meet later in life. 38. Good decisions that you made. 39. Poor decisions that you learned from. 40. Hearing your favorite song on the radio. 41. Watching the wind blow through the trees. 42. Drinking hot chocolate. 43. Laughing. 44. Crying. 45. All of the difficult times that made you stronger. 46. All of your exciting memories. 47. Vacations. 48. Being able to sleep in. 49. Not having any homework. 50. Getting a letter or package in the mail. 51. Having the opportunity to go to college. 52. Finding a job. 53. Going out for ice cream. 54. Watching cartoons. 55. Visiting your grandparents. 56. Reading a good book. 57. Finding something amusing in a magazine. 58. Being able to express your opinion. 59. Eating junk food. 60. Going for a great run. 61. Working out. 62. Playing a sport. 63. Dancing in the rain. 64. Watching the snow fall. 65. Listening to a thunderstorm. 66. Choosing the clothing that you wear. 67. Learning to drive. 68. Getting your license. 69. Having a car. 70. Every time someone helped you. 71. Every time you tripped up the stairs. 72. Every time you thought about how someone else feels. 73. Making a snowman. 74. Staying up late. 75. Swimming. 76. Going to the beach. 77. Hanging out on warm summer nights. 78. Coloring with crayons. 79. Going to dances. 80. Going to church. 81. Getting all dressed up. 82. Wearing comfortable shoes. 83. Staying warm in the winter. 84. Staying cool in the summer. 85. Smelling flowers in spring. 86. Seeing the leaves change colors in autumn. 87. All of your talents. 88. All of your hopes and dreams. 89. All of your challenges. 90. Feeling accomplished. 91. Feeling loved. 92. Feeling hopeful. 93. Remembering what it felt like to believe in Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and the Tooth Fairy. 94. Getting along with your parents. 95. Being friends with your siblings. 96. Sharing. 97. Completing an assignment. 98. Learning something new. 99. Finding something you thought you lost. 100. Eating watermelon. 101. Witnessing a miracle. 102. Hearing a baby cry. 103. Finally giving back your baby for Health class. 104. Paws for Pride Day. 105. Getting to go on Junior Shadowing. 106. Graduating SJA. 107. The Walk of Roses. 108. Looking through photo albums. 109. Taking a picture. 110. Getting an e-mail. 111. Getting an unexpected text message. 112. Hearing someone say, "I love you." 113. Hearing someone say, "I'm proud of you." 114. Hearing someone say, "I'm always here for you." 115. The smell of brewing coffee. 116. Homemade cookies baking in the oven. 117. Holidays. 118. Visiting other cities and countries. 119. Learning to speak a second language. 120. Taking a risk. 121. Rising to a challenge. 122. Helping others. 123. The time to volunteer. 124. Riding a bike. 125. Taking a walk. 126. Swinging on the swings. 127. Your singing voice. 128. Your limitless possibilities in life. 129. Everything that makes you YOU. 130. Creating something new. 131. Finding a better way to do something. 132. Watching a funny video on YouTube. 133. Taking a nap. 134. Taking a bubble bath. 135. Painting your nails. 136. Having an alarm clock to wake you up. 137. An unexpected visit. 138. Playing video games. 139. Going on an adventure. 140. Dressing in costume for Halloween. 141. Drinking out of a straw. 142. Eating a piece of candy. 143. Going to the zoo. 144. Watching waves crash against rocks in Lake Erie. 145. Mending broken hearts. 146. Mending hurt relationships. 147. Every time you have felt secure. 148. Every time you have felt joy. 149. Every time you have felt peace. 150. Every time you realize how much you have in life.

So this Thanksgiving, try to think about all of the little things that you either possess or have the opportunity to experience in life. Never forget to be thankful for the wonderful life that is yours to enjoy!

National Novel Writing Month

By Melanie Mironovich, J'11

Although many of us don't know it, November is actually National Novel-Writing Month. This event begins November first and lasts the whole month. Participants are asked to write a novel with at least 50,000 words in only a month's time. A contestant's work is tracked online, and if he/she finishes by midnight on November 30th, he/she 'wins' the prize of completing a novel. Anyone anywhere can participate; they just need to have the dedication and time to write a novel with a decent length.

About 87% of Americans say they have a story worth telling, but they never write it. One of the teachers at our school, Mr. Rondon, who teaches English, is in the minority that wrote their stories. He participated in National Novel-Writing Month in 2007 and again this year. In fact, his story from 2007 is being published. His novel is titled "The Silence of This Wall" after a line from a poem from one of his favorite authors, Paul Auster. As he told me, "It is the story of a very successful New York businessman who loses everything in his life in the course of one week and finds himself in Oxford, England out of sheer impulse. While at Oxford, he meets a young Indian student who befriends him and helps him find a path to follow." He also continued, "It's really a story of loss and the effort it takes to forge ahead and reconstruct a life out of whatever is left." This year, Mr. Rondon's story is titled "The Errors of Truth" and is about the events that happened in New York City the morning of September 11th. "The protagonist gets involved in a web of lies and half-truths that lead him to discover love for the first time, but potentially too late for him to achieve it."

Many of us who find it difficult to write a simple paper for one of our classes probably cannot imagine writing a novel in only a month's time. It takes a certain dedication and a will to reach your goal, but eventually anyone can finish their book and write the story they have always wanted to. There is always a series of challenges that makes it difficult to reach our goals. For instance, Mr. Rondon said that "writing a novel is a great commitment of time and effort", and one of his greatest challenges was "believing and keeping faith in the project". Also, Mr. Rondon says he thinks of November as his "crunch time", using the rest of the year to edit/revise his work at his leisure. Although this year's race to write a novel has already begun, consider participating in next year's competition. Who knows, your novel could be published too!

Who's Jodi Picoult?

By Caroline Pallotta J'12

Surely we've all finished our summer reading book, *My Sister's Keeper*. We know about Anna and Kate and Campbell, and Julia, but what about Jodi? Jodi's not a character, she's the author, and besides a blurb on the back cover about her living in New Hampshire with her husband and three children, we don't really know anything about her.

I tried to reach Ms. Picoult (pronounced "Peek-o") through e-mail, but her response said that she couldn't answer questions because she was behind on her deadline for a new novel. However, based on previous interviews that have been posted on her website, I was able to come up with a few things about her and *My Sister's Keeper*.

She says that her favorite character that she has written was Jesse, Kate and Anna's brother from *My Sister's Keeper*, also a favorite from our book discussion one afternoon for Health class. When asked what character she wouldn't want to trade places with, she

answered, "I would have to pick Sara Fitzgerald. To live your whole adult life with a chronically ill daughter and then to lose another one - well, I don't know if I'd ever recover." She says her most influential person in her life is her mom. The first book that her kids ever read by her was *My Sister's Keeper*. Her oldest son read it and wrote a book report on it with an author line that said, "JODI PICOULT (MOM)". Her middle son was reading a book as a 12 year old, when he met a high school girl who said, "She's my favorite author! How did you hear about her?" He responded, "She's my mom."

Jodi went to school at Princeton University and then got her Masters Degree at Harvard. She has currently written 15 novels, two that have been made into television movies and *My Sister's Keeper* that is currently in production starring Cameron Diaz as Sara Fitzgerald. She resides in Hanover, New Hampshire with her family, two Springer Spaniels, two donkeys, two geese, three ducks, six chickens, and once and a while, a cow.

Advent Traditions

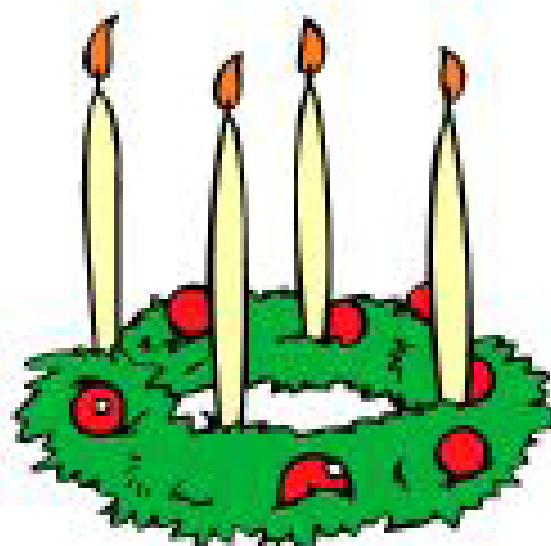
By Mary Jo Morgan, J'10

The first Sunday after Thanksgiving traditionally marks the beginning of Advent and the end of the church year. The season of Advent comes with many traditions. One such tradition is displaying an Advent wreath. The Advent wreath is made up of a regular Christmas wreath and four candles (some wreaths do have a fifth candle for Christmas). There are usually three purple candles and one pink candle. The candles are purple because that is the color symbolic of Advent. The one pink candle, which is lit on the third Sunday of Advent, reminds Christians that Christmas is almost here. On the first Sunday of Advent, one candle is lit. The following week two candles are lit, and by Christmas, all four candles are aglow.

Another Advent tradition is the custom of an Advent calendar. The calendar usually begins on December first and lasts through Christmas. Many calendars have doors or flaps that you can open once a day with a picture,

quote, or treat in them. Some calendars have pockets that can also hold treats. Advent calendars are easy to make, but they can also be store-bought.

Displaying the Nativity scene is a popular way to remind people about the purpose of Advent - that is to prepare for the arrival of the Christ child. Nativity



scenes can be as simple as Mary, Joseph, and the manger with baby Jesus or elaborate with lots of figurines and set pieces. Many people do not put Jesus in the scene until Christmas to symbolize his birth. Instead, every time they do a good deed during Advent, they place a piece of straw in the manger

so that they are making a bed for the baby Jesus.

There are many other Advent traditions and several variations of the ones mentioned above. Your family may already observe these traditions or have some of their own. Of course, if you don't do any of these, you could always start a new tradition!

Get to Know our New Teachers

Mrs. Rodica Nan

By Katie Haller, J'11

Mrs. Nan is a new Algebra I and Honors Algebra II teacher. Here's what she had to say when interviewed:

KH: Since you're originally from Romania, how is American education different from Romanian?

RN: Not too much different.

KH: What do you like about math?

RN: I like math because: It makes me calm and very creative. I can relate math to many things that I can see or cannot see at all. There are always different ways of doing things.

KH: What are some ways in which you explain math so students understand it and can relate to it better?

RN: I like to compare mathematics with running because running takes some effort. In both cases there are no shortcuts when you want to be successful. You either run/do more math practice or you will never get to a happy end.

KH: What's your favorite thing about SJA so far?

RN: My favorite thing so far at SJA--my students. They really make me feel very special every day.

KH: Tell us about your 'bilingual black lab'!

RN: I got Max from a rescue lab association (Atlanta, GA) when he was only 8 weeks old. Although he never barks, he understands two languages (English and Romanian). My husband and I trained him to run and do many good things around the house. I always remind my family that we adopted him because he had nobody. I guess I really love my dog.

Mr. McCartney

By Mary Kate Chambers, J'12

MKC: What was your greatest high school experience?

RM: Playing tennis. I had such a tight team and a great coach. The over all tennis experience.

MKC: What is your favorite quality about the girls at SJA?

RM: I like that the students put in the effort and care about their grades.

MKC: Who was your inspiration in high school?

RM: My ninth grade Algebra 2 teacher. He had a lot of patience and inspired me to educate.

MKC: What is your favorite subject?

RM: Geometry. I like the material, it's a challenge, and it's different from what the girls have seen. They just come in with a clean slate.

MKC: What do you like to do in your free time (hobbies, etc.)?

RM: I like to play tennis, and I have recently picked up on running. I enjoy hanging out with my friends and my parents.

Mrs. Stephanie Itzoe & Miss Stephanie Blades

By Caroline Pallotta J'12

The freshmen weren't the only rookies who were new at SJA on the first day of school. Mrs. Itzoe and Miss Blades were two of several new teachers this year. Mrs. Itzoe is teaching Spanish II and Honors Spanish II this year. Miss Blades is a math teacher, and she's instructing girls in Honors Algebra I and Algebra II. I was very excited to ask both of them a few questions. Here are their responses starting with Mrs. Itzoe.

CP: If you weren't teaching Spanish, what would you want to do?"

MI: I cannot imagine doing anything else! If I had to choose something, I suppose I would travel to various countries to experience and learn from other cultures."

CP: What is your best high school memory?"

MI: My best high school memory is graduation day. I will never forget the feeling of accomplishment and success I felt from four years of hard work coupled with the anticipation of college."

CP: Is there any TV show on now that you can't miss?"

MI: Amazing Race 13 and The Office"

CP: What is your favorite thing to do on the weekend?"

MI: On the weekend I enjoy spending time with my husband and family and getting lots of rest!"

CP: What is your favorite part about Saint Joseph Academy?"

MI: The students!!! The girls here at SJA make this school such a unique and wonderful place."

Miss Blades says:

CP: What would you be doing if you weren't teaching math?"

MB: If I was not teaching math, I would be working as a waitress/bartender to save up money to travel around the world."

CP: What is your favorite high school memory?"

MB: My favorite high school memory was our football team going to states our senior year. We threw a community pep rally and the whole team, coaches, and cheerleaders (I was the captain) came out on the back of flatbed semis into a pitch black stadium with "We Are the Champions" playing. At the moment in the song where it gets really powerful they flipped on the stadium lights, and we rushed the stands. The whole town seemed to be in attendance, and the news was there - it was just awesome. Although we lost the next day 47-7, I'll never forget that night."

CP: What is your favorite song or music group right now?"

MB: My favorite song right now is probably Pink's "So What". Although that is a super hard question and could change by the time you read this."

CP: What are some of your hobbies?"

MB: My hobbies are watching movies and great TV, but I also like to play pool. I've been playing since I was two, so the hardest part is just finding someone who is willing to play me more than once."

CP: What is your favorite part of Saint Joseph Academy?"

MB: My favorite part of Saint Joseph Academy is the girls. I have never been around such fun, sweet, strong and determined young ladies. It is truly an honor to get to teach the women of the 21st Century."

Kristin Who?

By Samantha Schulte, J'10

Nearly all students have walked by her office at one time or another, either while changing for gym or simply while getting a drink before Mass outside the Academy Center. However, how many people actually know Kristin? Those who are not athletes may not be familiar with this name, but for those of us who have run into her office crying because of an injury or just because we wanted to talk, she has become more than your run of the mill athletic trainer. She is a refuge when practices get tough and she is always there to help you see the positive in things. Trust me ladies, not all schools are as lucky as we are in regards to how dedicated Kristin is to us.

After working at Fairview Hospital during the day, she travels down Lorain to Rocky River Drive to our humble school to tape, wrap, and ice us. She remains at school until at least six each night and later on days of home games. No matter

what the problem is--finger, shoulder, ankle, calf, or hip-flexor--she will always do her best to accommodate each and every individual situation. Speaking from personal experience, Kristin will even go out of her way to help you even if your sport is out of season; even if it means creating your very own workout program designed to help you agility.

Kristin Archual has been at St. Joseph Academy longer than any of us students have, but she is much more than the school's athletic trainer, even though she spends an incredible amount of time with us. She is also a wife and a mother to two beautiful children. So girls, the next time you walk by that door by the locker room, know that that room is home to more than pre-wrap, water bottles, and the forbidden ice machine. That room is where you can find our amazing trainer, Kristin, who does not get enough thanks. So, next time you see her, be sure to say "Thank you!" for all she does for the student body.

Thanksgiving Traditions: From the First Thanksgiving to Today

By Alyssa Deis, J'10

From the time of the First Thanksgiving in 1621 many Thanksgiving dishes have been served. These dishes still carry on through tradition today, representing the compassion and collaboration between both the Native Americans and the Pilgrims in times of hardship.

The main course of the Thanksgiving meal is the turkey. Surprisingly, the turkey might not have even been served at the first Thanksgiving. There is no real proof, but since turkey was plentiful in America at the time of the Pilgrims, it is probable that this was the main course served at the feast. Another main part of Thanksgiving is the cornucopia. This decoration is also known as the "horn of plenty", and it represents the Earth's abundance, symbolizing the Thanksgiving feast appropriately.

Also, the cranberry (or cranberry as it is known today) was served at the first Thanksgiving. It was originally a bitter berry, but the Pilgrims quickly learned to use maple sugar to sweeten it and turn it into a sauce. Ever since, it has become an essential part of the Thanksgiving feast.

Next, there are three main vegetables all believed to be a main part of the first Thanksgiving feast. These are beans, pumpkins and, of course, corn. The Pilgrims learned to grow beans from the Native Americans, using the corn stalks for support. This food source helped the Pilgrims to get through the brutal winter. Amazingly, the pumpkins also might not have been served at the first Thanksgiving. Pilgrims were not very big vegetable eaters, so the feast mostly revolved around the main course of meat. However, if pumpkin was served, it would have been served as a sweet dish with honey or sugar, or its leaves might have even been made into a salad. That's slightly different than we would eat it today! Lastly, corn was a main part of the First Thanksgiving feast, just as it still is today. This was one of the food staples during the harsh winters that the Pilgrims learned to cultivate with the help of the Native Americans. Corn is also used as a decoration, such as corn cobs are a main sign of fall.

All of these foods are symbols of how America is based on compassion, collaboration and diversity. They can all still be seen today around this wonderful time of fall!

How to Stay Healthy During Thanksgiving Break

By Lydia Apostoluk, J'11

When most Americans think of Thanksgiving, they think of family time, falling leaves, and filling meals. For many of us, we are left feeling stressed and concerned about completing chores and eating right. The fact is that most adults gain 8-10 pounds during the holiday season, which often is full of heavy, unhealthy, and filling meals. However, the holidays don't have to be so worrisome and unhealthy. By following these tips, anyone can remain assured that their Thanksgiving break is as healthy and smooth as possible.

Utilize whatever free time you have during Thanksgiving break to rest up, spend time with family and friends, and work on upcoming projects or homework. This will truly make the stretch of school between Thanksgiving and Christmas break more bearable.

If you are traveling, keep a small bottle of hand sanitizer in your purse or bag to avoid becoming sick from the often dirty rest stops.

If having guests over your house, make the holiday easier for everyone by helping your parents with the many chores on their plate. Offering to vacuum the living room, mash the potatoes, or even straighten up your room can really make a difference in Mom or Dad's day. Make chores fun by involving the entire family in tasks such as washing the dishes, so you can all socialize while getting work done.

Decide on the amount of food you are going to eat before the meal begins, and stick to your plan. Fill your plate once, and don't be tempted to get seconds. Eat until you feel full - no more, no less.

If you have the opportunity to bring or make your own dish, try to make your dish low in fat and full of vegetables or fruits. Some examples of healthy Thanksgiving sides are squash soup, fruit salad,

pumpkin bread, chili, and fresh green salad. Most foods can be made much healthier through lighter ingredients and less oily cooking methods.

If you will not be cooking any food this year, try to at least eat some of the healthier options available on the table, such as squash, cranberry sauce, salad, nuts, green beans, and turkey. Turkey is a very healthy Thanksgiving staple, being high in protein, amino acids, vitamin B6, and niacin. To make it even healthier, try cutting off the fat and skin.

Although during the holidays, it may seem more appealing to drink sugary drinks such as pop, cider, and hot cocoa, try to stick to water. Water has zero calories, can help you feel full so that you eat less, and is otherwise greatly healthy for you.

After dinner, aim for some physical activity with your family. While it may sound appealing to nap after the big meal, sleeping after eating can cause snoring, heartburn, indigestion, and the calories consumed can sit inside your body and not be utilized. Exercise can reduce stress, increase energy, and improve sleep and digestion. Why not play a fun fall sport, like tag football, take a walk, go for a bike ride, or rake leaves together as a family? Don't let the weather stop you - dress accordingly and bring an umbrella.

Count your blessings by going around the table and naming what you are most thankful for. Remember, the true spirit of Thanksgiving is in giving thanks to God for all he has given us- shelter, food, and family.

Thanksgiving break can really be a relaxing and stress-free time. Many healthy food options are available, and all it takes is a little willpower to avoid overeating. Keep in mind that Thanksgiving is all about spending time with family and being grateful for each other and for God. With these tips, everyone can have a healthy and happy Thanksgiving break!