

St. Francis Central Coast Catholic High School

Principal's Newsletter

Keith B. Mathews, President and Principal

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To SFCCCHS families:

Art Speaks of Our Search

Once again this year, as the holiday and post-holiday movies hit the theaters, I am reminded of our seeming fascination with the "undead." The intrigue of the past couple of years regarding vampires has been augmented by interest in zombies, as various recent movies and television shows confirm.

Even the classics are impacted by our cultural fixation on the undead. The independent film "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Undead" builds on Tom Stoppard's stage play of a similar title: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead. That masterful postmodern commentary re-tells the tale of the two doomed spies in Hamlet. This latest cinematic reworking of that theme looks to be at once humorous and a stretch: the trailer claims to link vampires, the tragedy of Hamlet, and the search for the Holy Grail, all in a raucous comedy starring Robert Downey, Jr.

As more and more of recent art turns its attention to zombies and their ilk, I feel inclined to offer a rejoinder to our teens, something like that offered several years ago by Fr. John Itzaina, who served here at St. Francis as President from 2005-2007. The week after the movie version of "The Da Vinci Code" was released, the campus was buzzing with talk of the "truths" that came out in the movie. Fr. John addressed the student body with this simple observation about the false portrayals of the Church in the film: "First of all, the Catholic Church does not hire albino monks to murder people." The chuckles that his comment elicited reminded us all that Hollywood means to entertain and not to shed light on the truth, historical or otherwise.

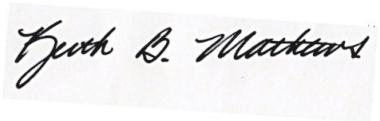
So, too, with this year's phenomenon. Fortunately, zombies and vampires are not real, no matter how many Internet sites are dedicated to "proving" otherwise. I'd perhaps be more troubled about the current fad if not for two things: (1) this interest in "the undead" has been around for a while; those of my generation can't help but think of Bela Lugosi's masterful portrayal of Dracula in that "old" 1931 movie that we watched as kids on TV; and (2) of more consequence, this drive to make more of life than what this earth offers us speaks to a fundamental truth.

Part of the allure of the supernatural is our foundational belief that there simply must be more to this life than what happens while we are here, on earth, as flesh-and-blood people. Movies and

novels that offer us a way to defeat death spring from a primordial knowledge rooted deep within us: there's more here than meets the eye. I would argue that, in no small measure, we are drawn to tales of life after the grave precisely because of a larger truth: there is, indeed, much of life after we have "shuffled off this mortal coil"—to quote the Prince of Denmark.

As people of the Risen Christ, we embrace a religious tradition that has always captured the truth of it: that our lives in Christ do not end when our time here on earth is at its close. The contemporary obsession in art speaks to the mystery of life after death, and it is, indeed, a mystery.

Zombies aside, there's something hopeful about the search for a larger meaning to our daily existence.



Feast Day of St. John Bosco: We come together to celebrate the life of St. John Bosco on Tuesday, January 31, 2012. Mass will be held at 1:00 in the BAC, and Most Reverend Richard Garcia, Bishop of Monterey, will preside. All are welcome to join us.

Throughout the week of January 30th, *Animas* will be sponsoring various fun and informative activities that remind us all of the legacy of Don Bosco.

Sophomore Class Retreat: On Wednesday, February 8, 2012, all sophomores are required to attend their class retreat:

Wednesday, February 8, 2012
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM (roll will be taken)
➤ **Young women @ Camp St. Francis**
➤ **Young men @ Aptos Village Park**
(see directions on enclosed sheet)

- **Please note that young men and young women of the sophomore class attend the retreat at different locations.**

Refreshments and lunch will be provided. Students should dress casually, but they must wear athletic shoes (no sandals, please). Bring a sweatshirt, as the weather may necessitate one. Students need bring no school materials (e.g., books, etc.) Parents are to pick up students promptly at 1:00 PM; no supervision is provided after 1:15 PM.

We understand the burden this places on families for transportation; we hope the experience justifies this burden, as this is an opportunity for each sophomore to more fully develop his/her spiritual life and for the class more fully develop as a community.

Please see the enclosure related to this announcement.

Trip the Light Fantastic: Winter Dance: *Animas* sponsors the annual winter dance later this month:

- Date: January 27, 2012
 - Location: Watsonville Elks Club, 230 East Lake Avenue in Watsonville.
 - Time: 7:30-10:30pm
 - Young women may wear nice pants (no jeans, please) or a skirt or a dress. No flip flops or sport shoes. Men must wear shirt-and-tie with a sweater or a sport coat. Pants must be dress pants (no jeans). No sneakers, sandals or flip-flops. Ties must stay on for the entire dance.
 - Ticket sales in the office: January 23-26
 - Cost of tickets: \$15 per person, or \$25 per couple
 - Dress code: The expected dress for this event is more dressy than usual, but still casual. **Please note:** students are not expected nor encouraged to rent clothes or purchase new clothes for this dance.
- Dance attendees must wear neat, clean clothing that displays levels of modesty in keeping with the Dress Code of SFCCCHS (see the Family-Student Handbook).
 - Young women must wear a dress; no skirts, pants, denim or short dresses. Dresses must be no shorter than four inches from the top of the knee. Backless dresses may not be cut lower than mid-back. Strapless dresses and spaghetti straps are acceptable if well supported. No visible cleavage. No flip flops or sport shoes.
 - Men must wear ties and long sleeve shirts with dress pants (no jeans). Sport coats or suit jackets are optional. No sneakers, sandals or flip-flops. Ties must stay on for the entire dance.
 - Students not dressing in accordance to the dress regulations for the event will not be admitted to the event. Students who violate the dress regulations during the event are subject to being removed from the event. In such a case, a student's parent/guardian will be notified prior to the student being excused from the event.
 - All purses or backpacks are subject to search. St. Francis High School is not responsible for personal belongings brought to the dance.

Revision Enclosed: Important School Dates for 2012-13: A revised listing of important school dates for 2012-13 is included in this mailing. Please note the change on the starting date for the second semester: 1/9/13. Please dispose of the previous dates listing sent with the last Newsletter; keep this one, with its revision date of 12.26.11.



See the enclosure related to this announcement.

Academic Honors: Enclosed is a listing of all SFCC students whose first semester grades qualified them for First Honors (3.50 GPA and above) and Second Honors (3.0 to 3.49 GPA). Congratulations and keep up the good work. Included in this mailing are certificates for students who earned first or second honors for the first semester. If there is a mistake or oversight in this regard, please contact Mr. Suarez (724-5933, x203 or email: suarez@stfrancishigh.net).

Please see the enclosure related to this announcement.

Report Cards: First semester report cards are included with this newsletter. If a student has received a D or F grade, a letter about the impact of such grades will be included. Please review this letter carefully and contact Mr. Suarez if you need to confer with him. Also, students with a GPA lower than 2.0 will receive a letter about their status on academic probation.

Registering for Classes for Next Year: Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will be attending presentations between January 30th and February 3rd about registration for next year's classes. Student class registrations must be completed both on the class selection form (which students receive at the presentations) and on Edline **no later than 3 PM on Wednesday, February 8, 2012**. If both the paper form and Edline registrations are not completed by this deadline, a late fee of \$20 must be paid before the registration is accepted.

NHS and CSF Membership: Membership in the National Honor Society and California Scholarship Federation is an academic honor that recognizes student achievement and is a significant asset on college and scholarship applications.

All NHS members (juniors and seniors) who have retained a 3.67 cumulative GPA may assume they are still members of the NHS, unless otherwise notified.

All current CSF members (juniors and seniors) need to reapply by completing the CSF application and CSF calculator sheet which is available online, per the instructions in the e-mail sent to them by Ms. Colosi, the adviser.

Sophomores become eligible to apply for CSF membership this semester, based on their first semester grades. Any sophomore with mostly As and Bs (some Cs are acceptable, but no Ds or Fs) may apply and will be oriented to the process within the next few weeks by Ms. Colosi during one of his or her classes.

The deadline for submittal of all CSF applications to Ms. Colosi is Friday, January 27 by 3 PM.

Checking Those Second Semester Grades: Edline Upload Dates for the Second Semester (and other grade-related dates) are as follows:

- Tuesday, 1/17
- Monday, 1/30
- Monday, 2/13
- Monday, 2/27
- Monday, 3/12 All third quarter grades posted
- Tuesday, 3/13 Last day for students to express concerns about posted grades
- Monday, 3/26 First upload of the fourth quarter
- Monday, 4/16
- Tuesday, 5/1
- Monday, 5/14
- Tuesday, 5/29 All fourth quarter/second semester grades posted (except the final exam grade)
- [Semester exams: 5/29-6/1]

- Thursday, 5/31 Last day for students to express concerns about posted grades.
- Tuesday, 6/5 Semester 2 final grades (including the semester exam grade) posted

College Acceptances: College acceptances are arriving in the homes of our seniors. Seniors are asked to provide Mr. Suarez with a copy of each letter of acceptance received from a college or university. Also, if acceptance is received by e-mail, the notice can be forwarded to Mr. Suarez at suarez@stfrancishigh.net.

Reminder: A New Website Feature: Google Calendar: When you now visit the school's website and go to the calendar page (<http://www.stfrancishigh.net/calendar.html>) you'll see a new Google Calendar for school events. We have added this service so that you can stay up-to-date with school events no matter where you are, and no matter what electronic device you have. Part of this service includes the ability for you to subscribe to this calendar if you already use the popular Google Calendar service. This would mean any future events added to the calendar will be added to your Google Calendar, as well.

This calendar feature will serve as the new calendar for the school for a number of reasons:

1. Updates and calendar changes: This calendar will display event changes and additions as soon as the school announces them.
2. Printing options: If you still need a printed copy of the school calendar, you can do so from the calendar page. You have the option of printing these Daily, Weekly, Monthly. Just look for the 'Print' option and follow the steps.
3. Subscribe feature: If you already use Google Calendar as do our faculty and students, you can subscribe to this calendar. This feature will automatically update your calendar as the school one is updated--meaning any changes we make will automatically show up on your calendar. To subscribe to this calendar just click on the "+ Google Calendar" icon on the bottom right.
4. Going Green: The school means to reduce its impact on environmental concerns by reducing paper use wherever possible.

News from Counseling and Guidance:

Seniors and parents of seniors: It is strongly recommended that all seniors applying to a two- or four-year institution and their parents fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The FAFSA determines your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Even if you think you will not qualify for federal financial aid, you will need to file the FAFSA to apply for scholarships and for other types of aid packages such as student loans and student work/study aid packages, etc. It's best to begin the process with a FAFSA worksheet so you will be prepared to submit the FAFSA between January 1st and March 1st. (Senior students were given a copy of the worksheet to bring home or you can download a copy from the website) NOTE: the earlier you submit, the earlier you learn what your expected family contribution (EFC) is. This, in turn, will give you definitive information about how much your family will need to pay for college. Keep in mind that the costs of college does not influence the Expect Family Contribution amount. Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov for the worksheet and to apply. Be sure to apply at the ".ed.gov" site, not the ".com" site. You should not have to pay to fill out the FAFSA! AND NOTE: Private colleges may have additional financial aid forms for you to fill out. Check their admission requirements or call their financial aid office. If a particular college requires what is called the "CSS Profile," find it at www.collegeboard.com.

If you and your student haven't registered for the **Personal Identification Number (PIN)** yet, it's a good idea to go on line to obtain one. The PIN number will allow your student's financial

aid forms to be processed faster and allow you to sign electronically for loan applications. Go to www.pin.ed.gov or on the www.fafsa.ed.gov web site to apply today.

Sophomores and Juniors: Sophomores and juniors will receive their PSAT Test results and booklets on January 10th (sophomores) and January 11th (juniors) in their theology classes, Students will be shown how to interpret and use their scores and learn how to access many great resources available to them via the internet. Parents should expect to receive a letter and a parent tutorial guideline outlining how to understand the test results and the tools and services your student qualifies for at that time. We urge the juniors to diligently review the test and work on incorrect answers before taking their SAT's. A parent tutorial is available on www.collegeboard.com

During the 2nd semester, the juniors should begin thinking about preparing for taking the SAT Reasoning Test. It is recommend that junior students take the SAT Reasoning test for the first time in March, and a second testing in May. If a student is looking at a science and/or math major, the ACT should also be considered in April. To register for the tests, go on line to www.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org and follow the instructions. Mrs. Green will be available to assist students in the initial registration process as needed. *St Francis will offer the May SAT Reasoning Test on site for the convenience of the students.

The following are the 2nd semester SAT test registration dates and deadlines:

Test Dates	Registration Deadlines
March 10, 2012.....	February 10, 2012
*Note--No April SAT test date available...take ACT in April (see below)	
*May 5, 2012.....	April 6, 2012
June 2, 2012.....	May 6, 2012

**NOTE: The UC system does not require Subject Tests for admission beginning school year 2013-14; however, please check the UC website of the university you may choose to apply to for specific majors that may require a Subject Test. CSU never requires Subject Test results.

All colleges now accept the ACT in place of the SAT Reasoning test. The April 14th test day (registration due March 9th) would be a great time to take this test. For some students the ACT is a better way to demonstrate academic achievement because it includes more verbal than math questions and it tests skills in science, as well. Students planning on going into a science-related field are strongly urged to take the ACT due to its science component. You can register for the ACT by going to www.actstudent.org.

- The **Junior Parent College Search Night** program will be held Monday, February 27, 2012. The night is designed to help junior students and their parents begin the college search and application process. All juniors and their parents should try to attend this important program.

Upcoming Calendar Reminders:

1/14/12	Applicant Exam, 9 AM
1/16/12	Holiday ; Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance
1/21/12	Applicant Exam, 9 AM
1/27/12	Winter Dance, Elks Lodge, 7:30 – 10:30
1/31/12	1:00 PM: Mass, Feast Day of St. John Bosco (dress uniform)
2/4/12	VITA! Activity night for frosh, 7 PM, BAC
2/8/12	Sophomore Class Retreat (Camp St. Francis & Aptos Village Park)
2/17/12	Student holiday ; faculty/staff in-service
2/20/12	Holiday ; Presidents Day