

STUDENT FEATURE

Dain, Max & Paige Benson

4th Grade Students

Dain, Max and Paige Benson are triplets in the 3rd grade at St. Michael Catholic School. They enjoy many things about St. Michael, especially the teachers, the principal, the after school activities, and even the homework - sometimes.

The Benson triplets have been at St. Michael since Kindergarten. They each have their own favorite teachers, as they are in different classrooms (a decision they made because they were tired of having to share everything). The triplets have many things in common, for instance, all three of the Benson triplets remember as their first memory of St. Michael the Casey Farm Field Trip, where they enjoyed an Easter egg hunt and ice cream. They also all enjoy the school lunches - Max likes the tacos, Paige likes the chicken nuggets and Dain really likes the pizza. The Benson kids participate in the school's after school program "Adventures Plus" along with other school activities like Chess Club and Kids Are Authors.

They each have their own ideas about what makes St. Michael special - Paige likes the option of doing extra credit homework, Max likes Ms. Gorman's rainforest classroom and Dain likes the prize box in Mrs. DeGross' class. When asked what they like about St. Mike's they all agreed the teachers are super nice, they enjoy the book fairs, going to church and to reconciliation. When they grow up Dain wants to be a football player or work at Beni Hanas Restaurant, Max would like to be a baseball player or an inventor and Paige wants to be a teacher.

Outside of school, the Benson triplets enjoy spending time with their parents, Teri and Curt, and their older brother Jared. They enjoy fishing, camping, going to Nanny's cabin, playing cards, playing kick ball, going on vacations, going to Duluth and spending time in their backyard fort. Their most memorable family vacation is Disney World and favorite sports are baseball and softball.



S P O R T S



Connor Klugherz (far left) and Ricky Schmitz (center) playing a home game against St. Wenceslaus

Blues Basketball

by Ricky Schmitz, St. Michael 6th Grader

Hi, my name is Ricky Schmitz and I played for St. Michaels 6th grade basketball team. I really enjoyed playing basketball this year and I think the rest of the team would say the same. Our team had a little trouble early in the year but once we got into it, we really started to improve. Our team had Danny DeGross, Connor Klugherz, Alex O'Brien, Erich Ohser, Will Tinguely, Christian Effertz and myself. In our season ending tournament we won by a score of 33 to 31 against IHM. We couldn't win our next game but we played hard. I really like playing Blues Basketball and I look forward to next years season.



C O M M U N I T Y

Students Act As Good Christian Role Models

As parents and teachers at St. Michael Catholic School, we try to influence our children daily on being good citizens, kind friends, and Christian role models. But more often the role is reversed and our children teach us what it means to be a faithful Christian. This happens every day within our families and at our school. The children teach the adults the value of giving.

When Hannah Le and 3 other students came to Patrick Fox with this story. They asked Principal Fox if they could request donations from our families to support a girl in their community who is in need of money to pay for reconstructive surgery. Since that request, the school has raised money to help this young girl and it is all because of the students who saw the need and took action to fill the need.



Hannah Le, Thao Thu Nguyen, and Leo Le

Thao Thu Nguyen

by Hannah Le, St. Michael 7th Grader

In the past months, our school has raised money for a girl named Thao who had been harshly burned. She was born on January 26, 1997, in Hung Yen, Vietnam. When Thao was only four years old, a boy struck her with a rock and burned her in a haystack. After trying to receive help from two hospitals who were incapable of treating her, Annetta DeVet, HSCV's (Humanitarian Services for Children of Vietnam) Vice President, had decided to help Thao while visiting the hospital she had been staying at. A year later, Annetta had brought Thao to America to receive surgeries to help her condition.

Currently, Thao is staying with the DeVet family in Prior Lake and goes to school at Five Hawks Middle School where she is one of the top students in her grade. Some of her favorite subjects in school are math and art and she also dreams of being an artist and a scientist. If you would like to help Thao please visit www.hscv.org or contact Leo Le, or the DeVet family.

Stations of the Cross

by Gabriel Ross, Creative Spirit Director

For over ten years, it has been my privilege to direct The Stations of the Cross with St. Michael School students. Each year around fourteen eighth graders volunteer to take time away from class to rehearse and present this drama for the school students and parishioners. It is a service project and learning experience for each of the students involved.



Tara Brandt, Anna Fossum, Sierra Crooks, Sydney Shea, and Chance Lien playing their parts in the Stations



Students Sierra Crooks and Tara Brandt with Gabriel Ross as they practice for the Living Stations of the Cross

Eighth graders have several challenges in presenting the Stations. The work is very slow and somber. The rhythm of the Stations demands that the students slow down from their fast paced lives and explore the sadness and injustice of Jesus' death. Rehearsing and presenting this drama requires a focus beyond the world of iPods, Facebook, pop music and the social life of an eighth grader.

This year, as in the past, the students from St. Michael School performed the stations with a grace and presence beyond their years. They are truly a gift to the community.

TEACHER FEATURE

Mrs. Kemper

Mrs. Ruth Kemper, one of our 3rd grade teachers at St. Michael, is our teacher feature this quarter. Mrs. Kemper is in her 28th year of teaching. She taught for 11 years in Kentucky before coming to St. Michael Catholic School. Many people influenced Mrs. Kemper to become a teacher - especially her Dad who had a genuine love of learning, her Mom who taught her patience, and her sister whose own path to teaching fueled her enthusiasm for it.

Mrs. Kemper attended college at Thomas More College, a small liberal arts school near her home town of Covington, Kentucky. She earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary Education with minors in English and Social Studies. She later earned her Masters in the Education of the Gifted and Talented. It comes as no surprise that Mrs. Kemper is teaching at a Catholic school, as she and her sister attended Catholic Schools since Kindergarten. Mrs. Kemper continued her Catholic education through college and feels that her faith has been nurtured at each school she attended. She believes her faith is her greatest gift from God and considers it a privilege to "be on the front lines of her student's faith development."

Mrs. Kemper and her husband Robert "Bo" have been married for almost 37 years and have 2 children - Chris and McKenzie and a daughter-in-law Jenna. Ruth and Robert are proud grandparents of two little girls, one year old Clair and 3 year old Caroline.

In her free time, Mrs. Kemper enjoys embroidery, reading, baking, light exercise, and travel. Her favorite time of day is the peaceful morning - she says it is, "God's most beautiful time of day."

A C A D E M I C

Northwestern University's Midwest Academic Talent Search

by Mrs. Loretta Eller, St. Michael Vice Principal

Each fall, students (6th, 7th, 8th) are identified as eligible to participate in the Northwestern University's Midwest Academic Talent Search (NUMATS) sponsored by the Center for Talent Development. This year, thirty-two St. Michael students qualified by scoring above the 90th percentile in reading and/or math on the current NWEA test. The NUMATS program offered an opportunity for these students to participate in above-grade-level tests such as the ACT or SAT. These tests are typically administered to thousands of college-bound eleventh and twelfth grade students to measure knowledge and skills seldom taught at the middle school level. Why should eligible students take these tests?

- Our students acquire experience and practice in taking above-grade-level tests.
- Studies show large differences in ability among students who score in the top 10% on grade-level tests. Above-grade-level tests help pinpoint these differences.
- Students receive information about other educational programs until they finish high school and are provided resources to assist in planning their future.
- Each student receives a certificate of recognition.

This has been a unique experience for many of our students. Through the years, a good number of students have distinguished themselves by scoring above the 90th percentile on the ACT or SAT. As a school, we find these tests to be another valuable 'data point' (along with classroom assessments, MAP testing, etc.) to consider as we tailor instruction to the needs of our students.

Wolf Ridge

by Kathryn Hockman, St. Michael 8th Grader

As our annual trip approached all of the eight graders were filled with anticipation. We were excited that for the first time in St. Mikes' history we would be going for 5 days not three. In the days leading up all talk soon began to turn towards Wolf ridge. Everyone wondered what to wear, pack and buy for the trip. Then the day came. We loaded up on the bus and drove up there. It was a beautiful drive with amazing scenery. After we got off everyone got a packet



Students during the "Superior Snow Shoeing" class at the top of the bluff overlooking Lake Superior



Stephan Martinez, Jack Murphy and Andrew Gabbard building a fire during their "Survival" class at Wolf Ridge

showing assigned dorms. Despite some apprehension with sharing rooms with some different people then we're used to seeing, it turned out well and all of us got to learn something new about our roommates. We had a lot of fun classes and learned some really interesting things using science. Some favorites were the ropes course, birds class and frozen lake study. For example in bird's class we got to study a hawk owl and have chickadees land on us. Another favorite were the meals which were actually pretty good. Everyone also enjoyed delicious desserts they had. This experience created great memories and let us leave with stronger bonds and new friendships.

What St. Michael School Means to Us

by Kate Pakiz, Ella Fossum, and Lauren Mandinec, Students at St. Michael Catholic School

During Catholic Schools Week, we reflected on our 50 years of Catholic education. Each student wrote about what St. Michael means to them. Here are writings from three students at the school.

St. Michael . . . I've been here at this school for five years. Each year gets better and better. The teachers are so nice, we learn a lot from them. My classmates are fun to be around. I'm friends with everyone. The principal is the best. I like the way we share, care, and pray everyday. I'm so glad I go to this school. It's the best! - Kate Pakiz, 4th Grader

I like St. Michael School. I love this school because we learn about God and plus we always go to church every Wednesday. St. Michael students are very respectful and nice. Every student has a friend here at St. Michael. My favorite part about my grade is reading and having book interviews and morning meeting. I love this school! - Ella Fossum, 2nd Grader

I like St. Michael School because you learn a lot in math, science, social studies, art, music, and gym. I like the teachers and staff. The food is great, it is the best. Some teachers have schedules with the time and what you are going to do at that time. In second grade you have pet day, where you get to bring in your pet. You get pizza parties and out of uniform days. There are a lot of fun games and challenges. It rocks here! You can ask for extras in the lunchroom and you also get opportunities to sing at church for Catholic Schools Week. You should come here, it is the best school you will ever find. - by Lauren Mandinec, 2nd Grader



Lauren Mandinec, Kate Pakiz, & Ella Fossum

Gala Dinner

by Keri Thayer, parent to 2 students at St. Michael School

This year's Gala Dinner and Auction was a fun and successful fundraiser.

New this year was the cash raffle. The money raised from ticket sales was split half to the school and the other half split between 3 winners.

We received many wonderful donations from school families and local businesses. This year many of the teachers offered their treasures and talents to the auction. It really sent a message of how dedicated our teachers are to us and our children.

Many thanks to everyone who attended. Mark your calendars for next year's Gala Dinner, it will be January 29th, 2011.



Angie Mahowald, Lisa Evans and Amy Martell at Gala Dinner 2010

Attention Alumni

Please add your name to our mailing list.

St. Michael Catholic School is in the process of building an alumni list. Goto www.saintmpl.org and click on "Alumni Outreach" Fill out your contact information at the bottom of the screen.