NEW PASTOR JOINS NEW TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

When we kicked off the 2016-2017 school year in September, we not only welcomed some new teachers and new students; we welcomed a new pastor as well. Father James Cruz joined St. Raymond’s on Labor Day. In addition to Fr. Cruz and our new staff members, we also opened a third Pre-K3, a third Second Grade, a fourth Fifth Grade, and a Pre-Honors 6th Grade. St. Raymond remains the largest elementary school in the Archdiocese of New York.

“Each September, we return to school recharged and ready to face the challenges of the new school year,” says Sr. Patricia Brito, RJM, the school’s principal. “This year, we were excited to expand our offerings, continuing our commitment to provide the very best educational experience possible for our students, and at the lowest tuition in the area. St. Raymond Elementary School really is something special in the heart of the Bronx.”

CHRISTMAS SHOW 2016 — A BIG HIT!

Christmas Show 2016 — A Big Hit!

Winter Time Is Here For Pre-K

Once Upon a Christmas was the theme of the 2016 Christmas Show. With the Nativity center stage, our students sang classic Christmas carols, such as Angels We Have Heard on High, The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy and Joy to the World, as well as modern standards such as Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree, Sleigh Ride and We Wish You a Merry Christmas. Students in Kindergarten through Grades 5 sang and performed to a sold-out audience of families and friends, staff and supporters on December 13 and 14. In addition, the Junior and Bell Choirs, composed of students in Grades 6 through 8, performed the Nativity on both nights. Some students also sang solos.

For the second consecutive year, our Pre-K 3-year-olds and Pre-K 4-year-olds had their own musical program, an afternoon performance called Winter Time Is Here. Our youngest students sang Here Comes Suzie Snowflake, Jingle Bell Rock, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and Winter Wonderland, as well as other seasonal favorites.

“We can always count on our music teachers, Patrick Connolly and Sandra Munoz, to lead our students into giving their musical best and this year was no different,” said our principal Sister Patricia. “Our students and teachers put their hearts and souls into this year’s Christmas and Holiday Shows and were rewarded with an overwhelming response from an appreciative audience.”

ST. RAYMOND HONORS SLAIN HERO — SGT. PAUL TUOZZOLO FROM NYPD’S 43RD PRECINCT

When Sgt. Paul Tuozzolo of the NYPD’s 43rd Precinct, a familiar presence at St. Raymond Elementary School, was tragically killed in the line of duty on November 4, two of our teachers immediately wanted to do something to help. With support from Sr. Patricia, teachers Caitlin Regan and Michele Napoli organized a school-wide card and fundraising drive. Each class in the school — from Pre-K3 through Grade 8 — made its own cards, which were sent to the Tuozzolo family and to the 43rd Precinct. In addition, on November 9, the entire school participated in Dress Down Blue for a Cause. For each donation, a blue ribbon was displayed on the fence outside the school in memory of Sgt. Tuozzolo.

“We were deeply saddened and disheartened to hear of Sgt. Tuozzolo’s tragic killing,” said Sr. Patricia. “Our hearts and prayers go out to Sgt. Tuozzolo’s family and to his fellow officers at the 43rd Precinct. Our school community wanted to help in any way that we can. We hope that the outpouring of love and support will provide some solace during this difficult time.” Together we raised $2,550 toward the education of Sgt. Tuozzolo’s two young children whom he left behind.
Dear Alumni and Friends of St. Raymond,

Happy New Year! And blessings and peace to you and your loved ones in 2017.

We began the 2016-2017 school year with more than 900 happy children, eager to start 2017 and with a new pastor. Welcome, Father Cruz! As in prior years, we remain the largest elementary school in the Archdiocese of New York.

During the past four months, we had Back to School nights for all grades, with 98% of our parents in attendance; the Mass of the Holy Spirit to officially open the school year; Family Faith Formation; a successful VIP Reception Spaghetti Fest; Halloween activities; and our Thanksgiving Mass and food drive. We also held two Dress Down for a Cause fundraisers; one for the family of Sgt. Paul Tuozzolo (see page 1); and a second one to benefit hurricane victims in Haiti and earthquake victims in Italy; and to purchase Thanksgiving turkeys for families in our area. Our Junior Choir was invited to perform for the Cardinal’s Luncheon at the Waldorf Astoria — quite an honor! And yes, our sports program continues winning! We finished 2016 with two evening performances of our Christmas Show. Each night, 900+ guests packed the auditorium. Can you imagine! Then we had a well-deserved rest before 2017 rolled in.

As the New Year unfolds, we are looking forward to an engineering day for our middle school students, who will participate along with our two high schools. This program was initiated by a graduate of our schools now attending Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Thank you for your continued faith in us and for your generosity and support. All the best in the year ahead.

Gratefully,

Sr. Patricia Brito, RJM
Principal

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Elementary School,

In the last few months since I became pastor of the Church of St. Raymond, I’ve had the opportunity to spend time at St. Raymond Elementary School and meet our students and many of their families. I’ve also had the chance to learn about the wonderful faith formation and academic education that our students are receiving here. I’m happy to report that our students are benefiting both spiritually and intellectually from their time in our thriving parish Elementary School, whose enrollment remains 900 strong.

Faith is first and foremost at St. Raymond. In addition to daily prayer and religion class, our students can participate in the school Masses held right here in the auditorium. Already this past fall, I and my fellow parish priests celebrated the Mass of the Holy Spirit — always the first Mass of the school year; the All Saints’ Day Mass; the Thanksgiving Mass and Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Service is also a priority at St. Raymond. Doing as Jesus did and helping those in need is a practice we carry out throughout the year, whether raising money for victims of hurricanes and other natural disasters; collecting food for Thanksgiving baskets or sending cards to our local police and firefighters during Catholic Schools Week. Many of our older students are altar servers, members of the Junior or Bell Choirs or lectors at the school Masses.

We are truly blessed at St. Raymond Elementary School and we wish blessings upon you and your family and all the best in this New Year.

Sincerely,

Father James Cruz
Pastor

ST. RAYMOND HONORS LUIS MERCADO AND OUR CHILDREN AT THE 2016 VIP RECEPTION

St. Raymond Elementary School held its annual VIP Reception on Sunday, October 16, following the 12:00 p.m. Parish-Schools Reunion Mass at St. Raymond Church. This year, the Elementary School honored our children and Luis Mercado, a longtime parishioner and St. Raymond’s Director of Maintenance. To recognize Luis, as well as to focus on our children, this year’s VIP Reception was a family- and child-friendly Spaghetti Fest, which was held in the school’s auditorium. “It’s our children who make the school. Without them, we would only have a building,” said Sr. Patricia. “And without Luis Mercado, our school would not be nearly as beautiful or in as good condition because he takes such good care of the building and of us. We are blessed by all of them.”

(Left to right): Fr. James Cruz with Luis Mercado, VIP Reception honoree, and Sr. Patricia Brito, RJM.
FIRST QUARTER ROUNDUP

The first quarter of the 2016-2017 school year was very busy. We prayed, we learned, we celebrated and we shared with others.

Mass of the Holy Spirit

Scholastic Book Fair

Fourth Grade Goes Colonial — Makes Butter in Class

Class 5-108 Says Hello to Autumn
Photo by Caitlin Regan

Thanksgiving Food Drive & Mass

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NOW MORE THAN EVER
ST. RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUND

St. Raymond Elementary School offers our students a solid Catholic education — a strong academic program immersed in the Catholic faith and a broad array of extracurricular activities, in a safe, supportive and loving environment. We provide excellent value for a reasonable tuition. Sadly, many families are unable to send their children here because they can’t afford the tuition. Others send them, only to have to leave when they can no longer keep up with the payments. We do provide scholarships for some students on an as needed basis but they aren’t sufficient to keep up with the demand. To address the need for tuition assistance, we have formed the St. Raymond Elementary School Financial Assistance Fund. Through your generosity, you can give our current students the opportunity to remain in our school and incoming students the chance to join our school community.

For our alumni, here is a chance to give back to the school that gave you so much. Consider making a donation on your own or joining with your classmates to give a one-year scholarship in honor of your graduation year.

Catholic education lasts forever. Won’t you help provide our students with this lifelong gift?

LEVELS OF GIVING

- Catholic Educator ............. $3,780* (one year’s tuition)
- Catholic Leader .................$1,890 (half-year’s tuition)
- Catholic Supporter ........... $945 (quarter-year’s tuition)
- Catholic Booster ............... $378 (one month’s tuition)

*All tuition figures are for the parishioner rate for Kindergarten through Grade 8 for the 2016-2017 academic year. Pre-K and non-parishioner rates are higher.

To make a contribution, mail a check to St. Raymond Elementary School, Attention: Advancement Office, 2380 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, NY 10462. Please put “Financial Assistance Fund” in the memo line.

Donations can be made online through our credit card vendor. Go to www.NYCharities.org/app/straymondelementary/faf.

FIRST QUARTER ROUNDUP

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Christmas Show - Once Upon a Christmas
Pre-K Holiday Show - Winter Time Is Here
Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest
Benefits St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital

St. Raymond Elementary School Newsletter

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KEEP IN TOUCH

Want to keep current on the latest happenings at St. Raymond Elementary School?

Join our email list and receive our E-News. Email alumni@straymondelementary.org and we’ll add you to our list.

Like us on Facebook: St. Raymond Elementary School, Bronx