



Faith | Academics | Community

## OLL Turns on the Water

Water has a central place in the practices and beliefs of many religions for two main reasons.

First, water cleanses. Water washes away impurities and pollutants. Water can also make a person clean, externally or spiritually. Our life in the church begins with the waters of baptism.

Secondly, water is a primary building block of life. Without water there is no life.

Here at Our Lady of the Lake we are especially blessed with the gift of water. As we get ready to celebrate our Parish Feast Day which begins down at the lake, we are especially reminded of this.

Lake Erie provides water to:

- Quench our thirst so that our we can live
- Clean our bodies and food so that we can stay healthy
- Provide sanitation and sewage treatment which helps prevent disease

Not only are we fortunate enough to have water for our needs, we are also lucky enough to have water to play in!

We are so very blessed...all we have to do is turn a handle and we have an unlimited amount of water at our fingertips!

In many places around the world, that is not the case. Women and children must walk many miles daily to draw water from

a well or stream and then carry it home. There is little or no water to wash hands or food or to treat sewage. This often contributes to the spread of disease and illness. The effects of these diseases and illnesses are magnified when you consider that children cannot attend school and receive an education if they are ill.

In gratitude for the gift of water, we are working through Catholic Relief Services to share the gift of water with others less fortunate than we are. During this week and throughout next weekend, we will be collecting donations to provide some of the following:

A hand washing station to reduce disease and increase student attendance and academic achievement. Basic hygiene education is also provided.

A community watering station which will bring fresh water to a central location and alleviate the hours spent carrying heavy jugs of water that are unsafe to drink.

A community latrine which will conserve resources, protect underground water reserves and prevent disease.

Tools to dig a well.

A family wash kit.

Pump mechanic training to ensure that latrines, wells and pumps keep running.

## Wednesdays on the Porch Bring Neighbors Together



Several years ago, Barb Pistillo started gathering neighbors on her porch in Euclid, as a fun way to get to know each other. She'd put out a little sign, and that was the signal to gather and share refreshments, stories and a little time together. Anyone was welcome – no formal invitation required – and it became a great way to meet new people, learn about good things happening in the neighborhood, and build a sense of community.

Barb wanted that same sense of community for others in Euclid – so she's taking Wednesdays on the Porch city-wide. She teamed up with Kathy Benda, another Our Lady of the Lake parishioner, and they successfully sought funding from Engage Euclid's grant program. With \$500 fund-

ing, they were able to print yard signs and share the idea for this fun, easy program. Already, six households have signed up to host – several Porch sessions have already happened – and with beautiful Fall weather in the forecast, they look forward to seeing many more.

This idea is beautiful in its simplicity – welcome neighbors to your porch or yard, and get to know each other. Neighborliness is one of the wonderful things to love about this community, and we look forward to seeing many more neighbors enjoying time together!

If you'd like to host your own Wednesdays on the Porch gathering, or would just like more information, contact Kathy Benda at Our Lady of the Lake, (216) 486-0850.

## Celebrating Gifts As We Return to School

Our 2016-2017 school year at Our Lady of the Lake has gotten off to a wonderful start! We have added classrooms and now have two classes in each grade. We will introduce our new teachers in the next edition. Our preschool is nearly at capacity and it has been wonderful to see all of our returning families and to welcome all of our new families.

Our theme for this school year is: "Though many...we are one in the Body of Christ." We will be talking this year about each person's uniqueness and the special gifts that each of us brings. We need to help our children understand that they are part of this wonderful community, that we celebrate our differences, that each of us is needed and valued.

At one of our opening parent meetings, I read the inscription off a plaque that hangs right outside the main office. Though I pass it every day, I never really stopped to ponder the message. It goes like this:

- Be it known to all who enter here,
- That Christ is the reason for this school,
- The unseen but ever present Teacher in its classes,
- The model of its faculty and
- The inspiration of its students.

What a truly beautiful message and so true. During our curriculum night, the parent of one of our new students stopped in the office and remarked how happy she was

that they were now part of our school. She felt that presence of Christ and she wanted that for her daughter. We talked about how important it is for our children to have that relationship with Jesus Christ. It is the most important lesson that we will ever teach.

### Lunchroom Cuteness

During these first few days of school, our children are asked to pack their lunch. As the children were eating, one of the kindergarteners packed up her lunch box, got up from the table and started to walk toward the door. We asked her where she was going and she looked up and said, "I'm going to finish my lunch at home." It does not get any better than that. She had been here long enough and it was time to head home!

We explained to her that the day was just a little bit longer and she would be going home soon! Our children are so precious. These first few days can be stressful and overwhelming. Everyone needs just a little bit more love and attention-even the grown-ups in the building. I love this quote and always try to remember it: "If we are depressed, we are living in the past. If we are anxious, then we are living in the future. If we are at peace, then we are living in the present." It is always good to truly present to the moment that you are in – to be aware of the presence of God and of the people and beauty that surrounds us. We are looking forward to a wonderful year!



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