



Classroom Corner: First Grade

I remember my first-grade teacher so vividly, as if she were standing in front of me at this very moment. She embodied every characteristic that is needed of an educator for my little six year old self – kindness, compassion, prayerfulness, and a special knack for building an academic bridge for young minds who are just getting their feet wet in the world of a school environment. How blessed and fortunate we are at Holy Child Jesus Catholic Academy to have a first-grade teacher that exemplifies these very traits now for our children. Mrs. Teresa Santamaria joined our HCJ family in the 2017-2018 school year, but she has been educating first graders for 15 years now. Let’s peek at some great things about her class and the ways in which she approaches education to understand her self-coined “exuberant” students, warm and inviting educational environment, and perhaps to reminisce about a special classroom from our formative years that had an enigmatic educator like Mrs. Santamaria at the helm.

When the door opens to Mrs. Santamaria’s classroom on any given day, she believes it’s so important to greet the children with “a great smile on your face and welcome them with a loving expression and have fun with them.” She connects daily with our beautifully diverse class of first-graders by encouraging them, modeling for them, and always filling each lesson with “lots of love.” In her classroom, Mrs. Santamaria believes in the need for “fostering student self-esteem and their own sense of competence. [This] can help students feel like they belong in the classroom. I consistently communicate with my students and remind them that it’s ok to make mistakes. It’s part of the learning process and no student should feel embarrassed to ask questions if they don’t understand something.”

Mrs. Santamaria’s students will move on to future classes and grades, but will undoubtedly remember the chants and songs and smiles that nudged them lovingly into the world of learning. I asked Mrs. Santamaria about a special moment that she would remember for years to come. Her “sweet anecdote is one day, while teaching, I was giving directions for a writing assignment. I described the usual format: capitals, inventive spelling, and punctuation. I stated that this would be about a person who they admired someone who is important to them. We spoke about Jesus, our moms and dads, grandma and grandpa. We modeled and I told them to begin. Then I saw this little hand I walked over to my student who can be quite challenging at times. In his quiet voice, he asked, ‘Can I write about you?’ It’s those moments that make me stay.”



Upcoming Events

- 11/ 1 All Saints’ Day-wear saint costume- 9:00am Mass
- 11/ 2 All Souls’ Day- 9:00am School Mass
- 11/ 4 Remember to turn your clocks back one hour
- 11/ 7 Thanksgiving Pie Orders Due
- 11/ 9 School Closed-Teachers’ Professional Day
- 11/12 School Closed-Veterans’ Day
- 11/15 Parent Workshop about social media at 7:00pm in the gym
- 11/16 Supermarket BINGO at 7:00pm in the gym
- 11/19 Thanksgiving Pie Sale Pickup-NUT Card Day
- 11/21 Thanksgiving Mass at 9:00am- 12:00pm dismissal
- 11/22 School Closed- Happy Thanksgiving
- 11/28 Family Mass at 9:00am
- 11/30 Movie Night at 6:30pm in the gym

The Virtue of the Month

The focus for November will be **respect**:

- Treat others with honor and dignity
- Have good manners
- Celebrate diversity

Service Project of the Month: Sixth Grade

Thanksgiving is fast approaching. HCJCA has been invited to collect non-perishable food items for **Holy Child Jesus Church Social Outreach Ministry and Food Pantry**. This food pantry services individuals and families in need of food during these tough economic times. We have also begun to make plans for our **Grocery Bingo**. We are asking for donations to help not only those in our community who are struggling but also to defray the costs for our bingo prizes. Families will be provided with 1 hour of service for every 10 items donated. **We are counting on your generosity!**

Parent Workshop by PDHP: Bullying

What can parents do to help? Talk to your children but mainly LISTEN and ask your children questions about their day. Model positive ways for your children to make friends. Recognize the warning signs: frequent headaches or stomach pain, changes in eating habits, declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, not wanting to go to school, feelings of helplessness, and decreased self esteem.

What can kids do to help? Stop and think before you say or do something that could hurt someone. Keep in mind that everyone is different. Not better or worse. Just different. Be kind to the kids being bullied. Show them that you care by trying to include them.

Saving the Planet, One Marker at a Time

Many of us and our kids use good markers, but despite all the good qualities of markers, here is a bad one: they can be challenging to recycle. Since plastic does not naturally degrade, there are billions of tons of markers sitting in landfills, floating in the oceans or piling up on city streets. In HCJCA, there is a group of 37 students called the **Color Cycle Crew** who are making a difference and trying to make the world a better place. These students began an initiative to start saving our oceans, our landfills, our planet by recycling used markers through a program called Crayola Color Cycle in which parents, kids, and teachers collect markers that have passed their prime and send them to Crayola to be converted into clean fuel. This fuel can be used to power vehicles, heat homes, cook meals and more!

Please help and support the **Color Cycle Crew** by sending your kids in with any used markers you may have around the house, even non-Crayola brands. Drop-off boxes are located in each classroom. Let's get inspired to make the world a more environmentally friendly place and start acting now. Remember, it is in our hands to make our world a better one for all.



Members of the Color Cycle Crew : Joel Alverio, Kayla Alverio, Jacob Barajas, Juan Pablo Bravo, Matthew Chiofolo, Dominique Diaz, Maximilian Dietz, Marilynne Ferreira, Carmen Garcia, Natalie Hundiak, Prabhleen Kaur, Benjamin Lei, Robert Leon, Olivia Lopez, Emmett McLoughlin, Aydan Padilla, Olivia Par Chuc, Prem Persuad, Harry Pilapil, Harvey Pilapil,, Amy Pizarro, Elizabeth Pulick, James Pulick, Angelina Ramlogan, Daniela Rosado, Gianni Rubio, Savannah Rubio, Anna Rose Samoleski, Namanpreet Singh, Mariana Solarte, Daniel Tale, Valeria Tale, Annette Tanusantoso, Erik Torres, Paola Torres, Sophia Yance, and Thomas Yance.

The following is an interview with some members of the **Color Cycle Crew**

Why is it important to recycle used markers?

Anna Rose Samoleski explained: "All children like myself want to help the planet. By recycling the used markers, it will reduce the amount of plastic in the lakes, rivers, and oceans which can harm the environment. Please help us save our beautiful planet." Also, **Aydan Padilla** added that "It is better to rather reuse or recycle to get fuel or energy than to throw away and pollute."

Elizabeth Pulick said: "It is important because it would hurt the environment if we don't recycle things." Also, **James Pulick** explained that "If you recycle them, you don't waste and you make new things that are better." **Daniela Rosado** expressed that "It is important to reuse the markers because if not the whole world would have a lot of garbage."

Why is it important to take care of our environment?

Sophia Yance expressed: "God created this world for us. We need to respect God's creation and take responsibility to take care of it instead of destroying it. It is important we began to be more conscious with our actions and our role in the environment." Furthermore, **Paola Torres** stated: "If we take care of our Earth, then the plants, the animals, the human beings are going to have a healthier life." **Amy Pizarro** explained that "It is important to save our planet because it is our home and we need to love it."

Why do you decide to be part of the Color Cycle Crew ?

Dominique Diaz said: "I like to be part of the Color Cycle Crew because it is important to recycle used markers. Everyone in the world should help with the work to keep the environment healthy and safe. We will stay happy and safe if we all recycle together." **Emmett McLoughlin** stated: "I am so happy that my school and friends are doing the program because it is better to use old stuff than to just throw it away and waste things."

Thomas Yance expressed: "I joined the group because it is import to keep the oceans clean because if the dolphins eat plastic, they might not survive and I want to see the dolphins be happy." **Benjamin Lei** further explained: "I decided to join the Crew because it is important to be part of the solution rather than the problem." **Olivia Par Chuc** exclaimed: "Together we can make a difference!"