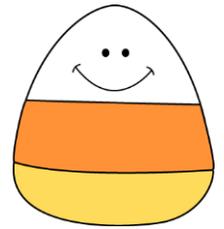


# Primary Department Newsletter



October 2017

## Cooler Weather Is Coming!

Many students have begun to wear a sweater, sweatshirt, or jacket to school in the morning. Please make sure to label your child's clothing so that we can find the owner.

*Outerwear* - Only St. Cyril outerwear that can be purchased from the vendor or solid colored sweaters, sweatshirts, jackets and fleece vests with no design/logo larger than 1 ½" X 1 ½" are permitted. These may be pullover, zippered or hooded. St. Cyril shirts must be worn underneath with collar visible when appropriate.

-From the St. Cyril's website  
<http://stcyril.com/Policy.html>

## Important Dates

October 12<sup>th</sup>: Half Day on a Thursday for Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 October 13<sup>th</sup>: NO SCHOOL for Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 October 16<sup>th</sup>: NO SCHOOL  
 October 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>: Block Party!!!  
 October 27<sup>th</sup>: Halloween Parade  
 October 31<sup>st</sup>: Halloween Shirt Day  
 November 1<sup>st</sup>: School Mass on Wednesday  
 November 8<sup>th</sup>: Half Day on Wednesday for Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 November 9<sup>th</sup>: No School for Parent/Teacher Conferences  
 November 10<sup>th</sup>: No School for Veteran's Day

Discipline with Purpose Focus Skill: Asking Questions (while continuing with Listening and Following Instructions)

## Meet the Fabulous Courtney Gee

God has blessed me all my life. I was born and raised in Tucson to a kind and Christ-centered family. I am the eldest of three children. I remember taking care of and teaching my two younger brothers after school. During high school, I worked at Happy Trails Christian Preschool as assistant chief, the Pre-K classroom aide, and even the Kinder Summer Camp teacher. There, I discovered my passion of teaching children and my pathway in life.

In 2003, I moved from my parents' home to my husband's home when I married Raymond Gee, a native Tucsonan, U of A alumni, and teacher, too. After graduating from the University of Arizona, I began my elementary teaching career by teaching Kindergarten in the Sunnyside School District. There, I taught Kindergarten for seven years and second grade for two. I received much training in different reading curriculums and language development. During this time, God blessed me with two handsome boys, Tobey and Ty. I discovered my most rewarding and challenging role – being a mother. During my last year in Sunnyside, the school that I was teaching at was closing down. I wondered what path my career would take when I heard about a job opening at a Catholic school. I decided to interview and the rest is history. God led me to my current position as the Primary Reading and Spelling Teacher. This is my fifth year at St. Cyril School, and I am blessed to be here.

Outside of school, I enjoy cooking new foods and recipes with my family as guinea pigs, cross-stitching, and reading. As a family, we enjoy hitting the attractions and restaurants in Southern California. If you intend to visit Sea World this year, you might catch the Gee Family there during school breaks.

# CLASSROOM HAPPENINGS

## Reading & Spelling:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: In August, I individually tested each student (at least once) to determine their independent DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment). The DRA tests both reading fluency and comprehension. I conferenced with each student so that they know what level of books in my classroom are their 'just right' or 'challenge' books.

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Students worked on short vowels and consonant blends (sl, st, bl, etc), segmenting and blending sounds, partner-reading routines, retelling, and reading for fluency.

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Students worked on distinguishing long and short vowels, continuing partner-reading routines, retelling, rereading for fluency, and focusing on accuracy, fluency, smoothness, and expression.

### **COMING SOON:**

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: We will read, retell, and re-read for fluency. We will also use story maps to help us retell. We will work on adding details from the text when answering questions. We will learn how to read and spell words with long vowels with the silent e.

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: We will work on adding details and evidence from the text to our own written answers. We will work on the different ways to spell the long vowel sounds.

In mid-October, I will reassess students with the DRA to see their growth since the beginning of the year. Students will then set goals on how they will improve their reading levels.

**Science:** Students have been investigating the properties of air by observing how air interacts with various materials. Students have been constructing parachutes and will observe how air resistance slows the descent of a parachute.

## Language Arts:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Our first graders are developing into excellent "editors"! We have been studying sentence structure and checking our work for correctly placed capitals, ending punctuation, and sentence fluidity. Writers Workshop is quickly becoming our favorite time of the week. The students are working on publishing their first book. They are incredible authors!

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Our second graders are writing away! We have been reviewing telling, commanding, and asking sentences in our grammar unit. We have incorporated Thinking Maps to help organize our thoughts, brainstorm more details, and create a plan for our writing.

We recently began an author study on Janet Stevens. Her books, including *From Pictures to Words: A Book About Making a Book*, have already given us many ideas for our own stories.

**COMING SOON:** Our next grammar unit will focus on nouns. We will also be writing how-to pieces and finishing our fall Haiku.

## Social Studies:

Our students enjoyed learning about the United States Constitution. We were so inspired by our Founding Fathers we decided to write our "Classroom Constitution and Bill of Rights"! We will continue learning from the Constitution as we study the three branches of government.

## Math:

1<sup>st</sup> Grade: Students will represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction. They will reason with shapes and their attributes. They will understand that fractions are used to name equal parts of a whole, use mathematical language to tell the place or position of something and practice various pattern rules.

2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Students will add and subtract 10 from a 2-digit number using mental computation, create a design with a given value using pattern blocks, count by multiples of 1s, 2s, 5s, 10s, and now 3s and 4s.

### **Coming Soon:**

Fact families for addition and multiplication, reading the thermometer to the nearest 5 or 10 degrees and creating number sentences to represent the word problem.

## Religion:

Our students will be studying the Rosary and will be able to explain why it is important. Later this month, students may bring in their own Rosary to show in religion class.