Founded on the Franciscan faith…
Preserved with parent pride…
Sustained by staff and student spirit…

“A picture is worth a thousand words…”

We count our blessings for the wonderful four decades Sts. Simon & Jude School has served our parish community.

In this edition of the “Spirit” newsletter, we have compiled a photo album to showcase a vignette of many of the activities enjoyed during our 40th Anniversary year.

Please accept our gratitude for all the involvement and resources you’ve shared with our students and families. Whether it was something as simple as contributing a single bag of candy for “Trunk-or-Treat,” a fabulous donation to our “Silent Auction,” or an afternoon spent volunteering in the classroom, we appreciate the gift that is YOU!

So sit back, relax, and stroll down memory lane with us as we share with you “A Year in the Life of Sts. Simon & Jude School!”

Fr. Dan and Fr. Michael celebrate their 50th birthdays with a special song.

Sarah and Jacob Rojek make sure their beloved pet, Triton, receives an extra hug after the the “Blessing of the Animals” in October.

Michael McCormick, Corey Nerhus, Patrick McCormick, Dylan Lybarger and Andrew Lytle prove how much fun waiting in line for the rides can be at the Fall Festival.

The O’Brien family can attest that “Trunk-or-Treat” is for all ages! Jennifer O’Brien and her children (l to r): Darren, Delaney and Darcy, pose briefly before filling their candy bags!
These ghostly goblins from the fifth grade enjoy a few spooky Halloween snacks during “Trunk-or-Treat.”

Kindergartners Michael McCormick, Corey Nerhus, Patrick McCormick, Dylan Lybarger and Andrew Lytle groove with the 60s theme on the 40th day of school celebration, “A Blast From the Past!”

In a special tribute to “The Beatles,” third grade students Chase Foreman, Dylan Alacantara, Keegan Coleman and Mateo Rivera rock ’n roll to the tune of “Twist and Shout.”

Fourth grade students taught the assembly about television programs that were popular in 1967. Can you recognize the cast from “I Dream of Jeannie?”

Mrs. Patty Chasteler and the seventh grade class pose with an “out-a-sight” 1967 Mustang. The Hargreaves family shared their “vintage ride” with the school for the day’s special celebration.

Mariah Murga, Hannah Heydorff, Sonja Schlobohm and Danielle Rini pause briefly during the sixth grade field trip to Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park in November.

The second grade class lines up in Colman Hall for their presentation of the classic tale, “Stone Soup,” followed by the delicious meal depicted in the story.

Cast members of the Christmas Pageant, “Believe,” surround little Isabella Ybarra Webb, who portrayed the role of the baby Jesus.
Volunteer parents were the key to making our school retreat, “Journey With Jesus,” a huge success. Top row: Mr. Halverson, Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Nalty, Mrs. O’Hara, Mr. Saeman, Mrs. Shively, Mrs. Velardi. Front row: Mr. Higa, Mrs. Karcher-Hayden.

Miss Domenici’s 3A students celebrate “Read Across America Day,” a national program held annually on Dr. Seuss’ birthday. The students show off their special ears modeled after the story, “Horton Hears a Who.”

Eighth graders use teamwork to build a human pyramid at the retreat. From top to bottom pictured are: Paige Catton, Savannah McClafferty, Sydney Strabala, Victoria Coutinho, Natalie Clarke and Tiana Kiriaki.

Mrs. Mullins, retreat coordinator, and Fr. Dan Lackie enjoy the spirit of the day.
Second grader, Alexandra Henry, enjoys an outdoor activity during the retreat.

Always a heart-warming event, the fourth grade “Mother’s Day Tea” is eagerly anticipated by both the moms and the students. Mrs. Traci Heydorff and her son, Luke, enjoy time together at the tea.

Natalie VanTilborg and Emily Mullins proudly model their authentic early American costumes during the second grade “Old Fashioned Day” event.

Meredith Saeman and Davis Hombrecher wear their Sunday best to assist with the May Crowning celebration.

Room 3A shows support for our troops! Pictured above (the tall one!) in the center is Specialist Ryan Magnino of the United States Army. Last September, the students and Ryan became pen pals. They were treated to a “surprise guest appearance” in their classroom when Ryan was home on leave.

Sarah Beringer and her mother, Mrs. Marianne Beringer, take pleasure in the delightful surroundings at the fourth grade “Mother’s Day Tea.”
A group of second grade students carry flowers in honor of our Blessed Mother at the May Crowning.

The first grade boys’ relay team, Cole Kleha, Kyle Briggs, Garret Hemphill, and Michael Riley, practice their “handoff” before the big race at the annual PAL Track Meet.

Sarah Riley runs the 100 meter race to bring home a 2nd place victory at the PAL Track Meet.

Maureen McLandrich, Nica Taglieri, Alyssa Ross, and Erin Hanson warm up for the big race.

The first grade boys’ relay team, Cole Kleha, Kyle Briggs, Garret Hemphill, and Michael Riley, practice their “handoff” before the big race at the annual PAL Track Meet.

Our Dolphin Cheer Squad celebrates another victory at the Knott’s Berry Farm competition!

Mrs. Andrews and Mrs. Tiedt line up the entire kindergarten class for the traditional “Alphabet Parade.”
Alex Scurr, SSJ graduate of the class of 1999, recently completed a four-month tour and life guarding assignment in New Zealand as a participant in the California/New Zealand Lifeguard Exchange.

After a lengthy selection process, Alex was chosen over many qualified candidates to cross train with the New Zealand life-guards. For the past eight years, Alex has been a seasonal lifeguard and Junior Lifeguard instructor for Newport Beach. In addition to learning the ways of the New Zealand guards, he became certified on the inflatable rescue boats used so frequently along the rocky, reef laden coastline that is so vastly different from southern California’s coastlines. An essential component of this exchange program is to enable lifeguards to learn new techniques and take this knowledge back to their homeland.

While piggybacking the best Kiwi lifeguards all along the New Zealand coast, Alex was also able to maneuver some recreational surfing in between! Since the summer New Zealand sun sets well after 9:00 P.M., there was plenty of opportunity to rock climb, bungee jump, train in helicopter rescues, and compete in lifeguard contests, a huge aspect of New Zealand’s lifeguard culture.

“Alumnus Saves Lives Down Under!”
So, if you’re out enjoying the fun and sun on the beach in Newport this summer, look around for our “international lifeguard” alumnus! Alex summed up his epic encounter by saying, “It was the most rewarding experience of my life… one that I will surely never forget. Lifeguarding in New Zealand is very different, and the skills I have learned while abroad have already proved useful lifeguarding at home this summer.”

This past January, representatives from the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Washington D.C. came to Southland Ballet Academy and held auditions for their Summer Intensive Program. They were so impressed with what they saw that Tyler was invited to attend their Summer Intensive Program, and was also awarded a scholarship! Tyler will be leaving for Washington D.C. this summer where she will live on campus and dance up to eight hours a day, six days a week, for three weeks. In her spare time, she will participate in field trips all over our nation’s capital.

Tyler’s resume speaks volumes, both for her experience, and for her excellence. Tyler and her duet partner, Mariah Vega (also of Southland Academy), entered into the semi-finals for the Youth American Grand Prix last February. Over 4000 students auditioned for the semi-finals that were conducted in nine major U.S. metropolitan areas, Japan, Mexico, Italy and Brazil. Tyler and Mariah were two of the 477 ensemble members, and 360 solo members, selected for the Youth American Grand Prix Finals in New York City. The girls traveled to New York this past April, and competed alongside dancers from throughout the United States and 26 other countries!

Tyler and Mariah also competed in the Spotlight Dance Competition in Long Beach where they not only won First Place in their category, but also First Place overall! Additionally, they received a special Judges Award entitled “Most Inspirational Dancers.” These highly talented young ladies also competed in the Starbound Dance Competition in Manhattan Beach. The girls earned High Gold, which is First Place in their category, and First Place overall. The final competition of the year was the Showstoppers Dance Competition at the Disneyland Hotel during Memorial Day weekend. While many of us were lazily enjoying that 3-day weekend, Tyler and Mariah entered the Junior Duet/Trio division, where their “Black Pearl” performance earned them a “platinum” score, as well as First Place in their category!

We are very proud of Tyler’s many accomplishments, and we wish her well in her future endeavors. When she becomes a world-famous ballerina, we will be able to say, “We never doubted it for a minute!”

Alex Scurr (left), graduate of the class of 1999, recently completed a four-month tour and lifeguarding assignment in New Zealand as a participant in the California/New Zealand Lifeguard Exchange.

A Beautiful Beginning for a Beautiful Ballerina!

Tyler Donatelli, a 6th grade student at Sts. Simon & Jude School, has been dancing since the very tender age of 3. Tyler began her formal dance training at Southland Ballet Academy in Fountain Valley at the age of 5.
Thank you for adopting our classrooms!!!

- Check Capital Management
  575 Anton Blvd #500, C.M., 92626
- Dr. Victor Carlos
  23961 Calle De La Magdalena, L.H., 92653
- Experian
  475 Anton Boulevard, C.M., 92626
- James Toner DDS
  17542 Irvine Blvd #C, Tustin, 92780
- Modesto & Awilda Guadalupe
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- Murphy Financial Services
  10801 Walker Street, Cypress, 90630
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- West Coast Switchgear Inc.
  13840 Struikman Road, Cerritos, 90703

Alumni News
Are you an Alumni of SSJ? Let us know what you are doing. Send your news to SSJ Alumni Association c/o Sts. Simon & Jude School, 20400 Magnolia Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92646

The “Spirit” Newsletter is published bi-annually and is always looking for new and exciting information. The Spirit contains articles about events, people and interest to the school that are not discussed in the weekly “Tuesday Communication.” If you have a topic of interest or would like to write an article for this publication, please submit it to the school for consideration. As the saying goes, “A picture is worth a thousand words,” so photos describing the article must be included with a submittal. All submittals may be sent via email to csmith@ssj.org or brought into the school office.