

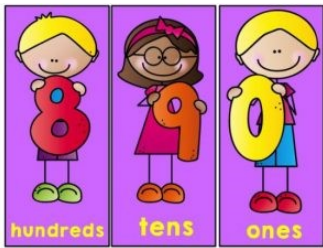


Dear First Grade Parents,

I hope that you had a restful and blessed Christmas vacation. As most of you know by now, on December 16 my family grew by two feet as we welcomed the arrival of our son, Samuel Lisandro Barrios. With a weight of 7 lbs. 15 ounces and a length of 20 inches, he is



a healthy bouncing baby boy that I can't wait to bring to first grade so he can meet the children. As you know, school will resume on Wednesday January 3. It is time to look forward to some of the special activities that January has in store for first grade.



In math, first grade will be focusing on place value to the one hundreds place. With the use of games, math centers, and white boards, we have begun to play jeopardy style games to strengthen recognition of place value. We will continue to work on computation with the use of manipulatives and number lines. We will also continue to explore time and begin to look at shapes as well.

Our religious studies this month will be focused on the idea that we all belong to a parish family. As participating members of the church, the children will begin to identify with other members of the church and begin to understand their role as members of a parish community. I encourage you to engage the children in conversation about what it means to worship and praise God as active and participating members of our faith.



# Phonics

First grade will continue to develop their reading skills by continuing our study of phonics. The children review blends and digraphs daily and are working diligently to improve their fluency. We will be reading stories that will encourage

the use of proper inflection as well. These stories go hand in hand with our writing as well. This month's focus will be sequential and persuasive writings.

January has some very exciting projects for social studies as well. We will be focused on Martin Luther King Jr. and his "I Have a Dream" speech. The

children will be working on understanding the impact he had on laws and the history of our nation. Through various projects and activities, the children will gain an understanding of how important it is to appreciate everyone's differences as well as similarities.



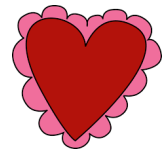
Finally, our study of science will lead us to the arctic as we study the weather and animals that live in this particular part of the world. We will be looking at penguins, polar bears, and reindeer. As well as the weather that makes this part of the world so cold.



January will bring much excitement to the first grade classroom. Next week, the children will begin to prepare this month's school mass. Typically, kindergarten and first grade lead the mass held on Grandparents Day--which is the culmination of our Catholic Schools Week celebrations. As we move closer to the end of January, some of the children will be taking home various parts of the mass to read and practice in preparation for our mass.

All the children will participate in the choir and some will have extra duties to be shared with Kindergarten. The Mass is scheduled for Friday, February 2, at 10:00 a.m. This is also a half day. I will be in the classroom on this day to welcome the grandparents and help the children show off their amazing work!

Later this month, I will be sending out information about our Valentine's Day celebration to be held in February. I will contact the room parent and she will, in turn, get in contact with you.



I wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of some important dates. Friday, January 5th is a minimum day; children not picked up will be sent to daycare. Monday the 16th is Martin Luther King Day and there will be no school on this day. There will be a school mass on Tuesday, January 16th. On Sunday the 28th of January, after the 10:00 a.m. mass, Holy Trinity will host an open house which will also kick off Catholic Schools Week which will culminate on Friday with Grand Parents Day and a mass lead by kindergarten and first grade on Friday, February 2nd. This day will also be a minimum day. Again, children not picked up will be sent to daycare.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you for your prayers and well wishes for my family. I truly feel blessed to be a part of the Holy Trinity family which is a loving and caring community. Having the opportunity to work with such amazing children and parents is a true blessing to me.

Mrs. Barrios