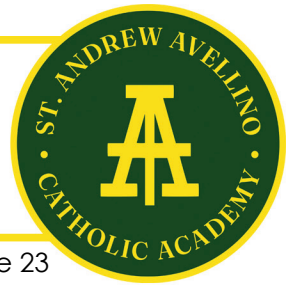


Avellineews!

The Newsletter of the
St. Andrew Avellino
Alumni Association



Special Issue 2024-2025

Volume 23

If you received this newsletter in error, please call us at 718-359-7887 or email us at avellineews@gmail.com so that we may remove the name and address to which this was addressed from our mailing list.

A Message from Ms. Hanna SAA Principal since 2004

It is incredible to consider that the centennial of St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy is next year. Ninety nine years is a long time. But to write from my personal experience, forty years is a pretty long time as well. I started at St. Andrew Avellino as a first grade teacher when I was twenty, (going on twenty one) years old. I was hired by Sister Catherine Colby, the principal at the time. I didn't realize it then, but I was about to get my own education on being a Catholic elementary school teacher and eventually a principal. Sister Catherine Colby really knew how to run a school. She always commanded respect from the students and faculty. (Honestly, I was afraid of her!) She demanded the best of all her teachers. She cultivated a faculty that had a common goal, excellence in education, and to challenge the students to do their best. After Sister Catherine's tenure ended, St. Andrew's had its first lay principal, James Hayden. He had a totally different style of leadership. Mr. Hayden came deeply rooted in Catholic faith but with a more fun loving approach. I learned from Sister Catherine on how to run a school with an iron fist, enforcing rules and regulations, but Jim Hayden taught me that you can do all that and have a good time. Those two influences in my professional life gave me a foundation when I was given the unbelievable opportunity to be the principal of St. Andrew's. I was able to merge both Sister Catherine's world and Mr. Hayden's world to create my own style. I am forever indebted to both of them for their guidance that continues to influence and inspire me to this day.

As worthy and enjoyable as it is to lead St. Andrew's in providing a Catholic elementary education, there are always financial challenges, and it is becoming more expensive every year. At times like Giving Tuesday, as a graduate of St. Francie Prep. and St. John's University, I see so many requests for donations and hundreds of thousands of dollars being donated to these institutions from alumni. A Catholic grammar school education is frequently the foundation of a person's Catholic faith. The Hail Mary and Our Father recited in nursery school and pre-K are the first building blocks of the Catholic faith for so many of us. In many ways, there would be no Catholic high schools and universities without Catholic elementary schools. I do not think it would be an overstatement to say that the foundation of our Catholic faith begins at a place like St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy. That reality further cements the importance of Catholic grammar schools. This is where the importance of the generosity of our alumni comes to mind. Many families cannot afford a Catholic education, or are tempted to enroll their students elsewhere by the lure of free universal pre-K provided by public schools. So, one of our primary initiatives going forward is to have the ability to offer a free Catholic education for young students whose families cannot afford to pay for it. We do not want to take Jesus Christ and his teachings out of the three and four year old programs in our city. With financial



support from alumni, we can afford more scholarships and further enhance our early childhood program. More parents would have the means to give their children a religious foundation from the outset of their children's educational lives. But this cannot be done without the financial support of our alumni. Please be as generous as possible in supporting St. Andrew's...the place where your Catholic faith journey began. I have one more task for our alumni (as your former teacher and principal, I cannot help but continue to tell you all what to do!). Please support as many centennial events as possible. I look forward to seeing alumni

supporting St. Andrew's at these events celebrating one hundred years. It means so much to me, your former teachers, to the school and to the future of catholic education for you all to support the place where your educational and Catholic lives began.

It is an honor to be the principal of St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy. I spent more than half of my life here, and I cannot think of a better, more fulfilling and more fun way to have spent it. The thought that so many generations of children have come through these doors and that for the last four decades, I have been privileged to be a part of their lives is one of the greatest blessings of my life. The sacrifice so many parents have made to afford our students with a Catholic education is humbling. And now, relying especially on the financial support of you generous alumni, I look forward to another century of St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy providing an exceptional Catholic education in the heart of Flushing.

Interview with Christina Hanophy, Class of 1980, President of the SAACA Board

The Avellineews had the pleasure of interviewing Christina Hanophy Ryan, proud alumna of St. Andrew Avellino School, Class of 1980, proud parent of William Ryan, Class of 2014 (the last graduating class of St. Andrew Avellino School), and proud Chair of the Board of Trustees of St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy. Ms. Hanophy's commitment to SAACA over the years cannot be overstated. St. Andrew's continues to thrive thanks to dedicated alumni like her, willing to sacrifice their time to ensure our continued success.

Avellineews: You are the Chair of our board at a momentous time in our history. Please tell us some thoughts on the Centennial of SAA.

Christina: Together, we are on the verge of celebrating a monumental milestone- a century of academic excellence. This remarkable journey of a hundred years has been marked by countless stories of inspiration, community, and spiritual growth. It's a testament to the enduring values of compassion, discipline, and academic excellence that have been imparted to generations of students. As this school celebrates its centennial, it honors not only the past achievements but also looks forward to continuing its mission of providing an exceptional education that shapes the leaders of tomorrow.



Avellinews: Do you have stories of any influential teachers at SAA?

Christina: I can trace who I am today to an encounter I had with a teacher at St. Andrew's, Sr. Marion Keene. I had Sr. Marion Keene in fourth grade for Reading/ELA. I have to say I remember being frightened of her, she was a bigger woman, large feet, sad to say, we used to call her shoes Frankenstein shoes. She wasn't warm and fuzzy. Sr. Marion loved to read. I,

on the other hand, continually failed the reading comprehension tests that were given weekly. I thought I was dumb, and I hated feeling that way. Sr. Marion didn't see it that way, she said I just needed a bit more help. Sr. Marion worked with me in class and after school. Not only did my reading skills improve, I became an avid reader. She kept tabs on my reading list. In the summer, McGoldrick's library had a competition to see who could read the most books. When I won, it was Sr. Marion that I ran to show my certificate. One of Sr. Marion's favorite books was *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*. From fourth grade on I was no longer Christina, I was Gretel, and my brother Bob was Hans. I may have left Sr. Marion's class but not her life. We lived up the block from the school so, even though I graduated, I often would see Sr. Marion. Year in and year out, "Gretel, how is Hans doing?" I would stop by and see her when I came home from college, during law school I would see her on my morning runs as she was on her way to Mass, "Gretel it's cold, going skating?" I asked her for prayers when I was taking the bar, I even had Sr. Marion over to celebrate when I passed it. The last time I saw her was when I went to say goodbye to her, upon being called back to the Mother House in St. Mary of the Springs, Ohio. "Gretel, come into my beautiful chapel, let's pray." Seeing Sr. Marion that last time, a woman, a constant in my life, was hard. But it wasn't the last time I spoke or heard from her, one of my favorite letters of all times was a letter I received from Sr. Marion, "Dear Gretel, The mother house is a wonderful place to be for the old and infirmed- I AM NEITHER!" Quintessential Sr. Marion. Every time I hear the *King and I* song, "Getting to Know You," I think of her, playing that song on her recorder, not very well and singing it, a bit worse than she played, but she did. She got to know me and I am very grateful!

Avellinews: What is a favorite memory of your time at SAA?

Christina: Do you know that feeling when a song comes on the radio and you can sing every word and remember where you were when you first heard it? For me it's *Tainted Love* by Soft Cell. Every time I hear it on the radio I am brought back to my eighth grade graduation trip—destination, Great Adventure, Jackson, New Jersey. I can remember getting on that bus, not even knowing one word of that song. I wasn't really a music buff. Someone had to bring a boombox with cassette, because only two songs were played, as I recall, Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and *Tainted Love*. But *Tainted Love*... I fell in love with that song! By the time we came home from the trip, I was singing it at the top of my lungs. And unfortunately for my kids, when it comes on now, I sing it even louder. What song do you remember? I would love to have alumni write to us and let us know. We'd love to have a playlist for our SAACA Centennial Gala featuring these songs. Drop us a note, we'd love to hear from you.

Avellinews: Do you stay in touch with a lot of SAA alumni?

Christina: I thought the answer to the question at first was no. I only have one person from my graduating class that is still a very dear friend. That is John Kearney (1980). But you know, when I thought further, I cannot define my Saint Andrew Avellino contacts by just who graduated in my year. John's sisters Ellen Kearney Sweeney (1976) and Siobhan Kearney Zianewski (1981) are very close friends. My brother Bob (1979) says that throughout our lives, I have usurped his friends, and that is somewhat true, there's John McGrath (1979), Joe Muratore (1979). Then there are my cousins who also attended SAA, Anne Klein (1966) Louisa Anastasi (1975) to name a couple. And I have to say, in my role as board chair, it is fun meeting more and more

alumni as the years go on.

Avellinews: What is something that you learned at SAA that you carry with you to this day?

Christina: Well, I have two, both involving Sr. Patricia Twohill, who taught me in seventh grade. Sr. Patricia taught Religion and English. The first and foremost important thing she taught me was that when you received Confirmation, it meant that you must take responsibility for your faith. It was no longer your parents responsibility to remind you about Mass—kind of like you were a grownup in the eyes of the Church. I took that seriously, when my mom died several years ago, I said during her eulogy, that the best gift my parents gave me was my gift of faith. It was Sr. Patricia who sparked it, and I am ever so grateful. The second thing Sr. Patricia taught me was my prepositions. As an attorney, I do a lot of writing. There is not a week that goes by that I don't



sing the song she taught us listing all the prepositions, so that I can put commas on the right side. How'd the song go? "Aboard, about, above, across, after, against, along... too many to sing but I remember most of it, but get a bit fuzzy right at the end. I wonder if anyone else remembers it?"

Avellinews: Is there anyone that you really hope to see at the planned reunions?

Christina: Well, you know, when I was growing up, we had a really tight block. It was not uncommon to stay out playing Ringalevio—which we called Ringalerio, until 11:30 p.m. or midnight, while the parents sat on the front stoops drinking some wine. I would love to see the Masek girls, Renee, Jeannine, Suzanne. It's been way too long since I saw them! I would love to see classmates from my year too. About a decade ago we had an unofficial reunion at one of the dinner dances, and I had a blast. I also think it is going to be fun to see my worlds collide—it's family, it's friends, it's long lost people I haven't seen in years, and people who are the closest to me all in the same room at the same time!

Avellinews: Thank you for your time and a special thanks for your hard work and dedication to SAA!

Christina: It is my pleasure to give back to St. Andrew's after all it has done and continues to do for me in my life. My hope is that so many other alumni will remember as well and sacrifice a bit of their time and join us for what will be a truly spectacular celebration of one hundred years.



One Hundred Years, One Hundred Memories

In honor of the St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy Centennial in 2025, our next issue will be a journal that features 100 memories from YOU...our loyal alumni. A few memories are below to inspire you to share your own stories. Please send us your anecdotes in the enclosed envelope or email us at centennial@standrewavellinoca.com.

A Chat with Gerald Lanning, Class of 1952

From time to time the staff of the Avellinews likes to get on a call and chat with our alumni to hear some memories so we can share them. Last month we had a chat with Gerald Lanning....

"I was the last graduating February class in SAA history. Back in the day there used to be 52 kids in a class and one class graduated in February, the other, 1B, would graduate in June. That year, the Catholic high schools decided that they would no longer take any midyear students. The diocese decided that one graduating class a year would be enough I assume. I wanted to go to Xavier, but because they would not accept February admittance, I went to Brooklyn Prep until summer, and then transferred to Xaviar as a sophomore.

I remember the old uniforms. Boys wore short brown pants with a tan shirt and brown tie, for about two years, then graduated to brown corduroy knickers (like old time golfers used to wear) with a tan shirt and brown tie. Then, in fourth or fifth grade you were able to wear long brown corduroy knickers. With the corduroy the way they swished when you walked, people could hear you coming a mile a way as you went down the halls.

I remember the Sunday Mass-- all Masses were standing-room only, packed to the gills, once Mass let out, it was a race across the street to Chutlers Bakery to get rolls. Next to Chutlers was Wrights Pharmacy. Tommy Wright was 6 months ahead of me in school. Between 158 and 159 street was Juvenile Mart and Sam's Candy store and the store to get uniforms.

My favorite teacher was Sr. Peter Damien, because she was so patient and kind. I believe she left the order and became president of the female Notre Dame in the midwest.

Back in the day, SAA was broken up into quartiles. Each quartile had a leader; under that leader was infantry workers (it was run like the military). Each year for the Card Party, this group would go out knocking on doors and raise funds. It formulated a very strong sense of community. I believe when that system was disbanded in the 1980s, it caused an end of community. Back in the day, each card party would raise approximately \$100,000!"

Memories from Joe Sassone, Class of 1953

I started in the first grade in September 1945. The boys' uniforms were brown pants, brown ties and tan shirts. The pants were either long or knickers. My parents chose corduroy brown knee length knickers, with brown knee socks held up by a rubber garter. They were made of iron it seemed, and never wore out. As the years scooted by, I grew to despise the corduroy pants with the great swoosh as all the other guys graduated to sleek long trousers. By grade 6B, I was still in Iron Knickers. February 12 was Lincoln's birthday and a school holiday.



From Left to Right:
Frank Bertrand, John Kalban, Joe Sassone
Front: Frank Penner

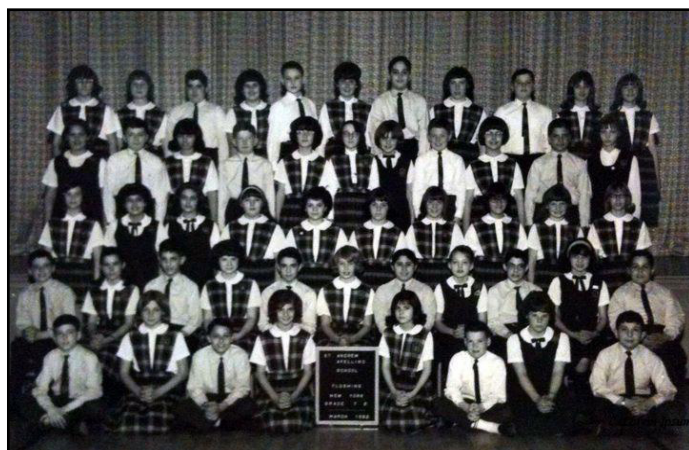
Our nun, Sr. Peter Damian (I think), asked for boy volunteers to come in on the holiday to paint the radiators. Of course, me being an angel, I volunteered. We were handed a bucket of oil based light blue paint and a brush. Setting to work, my first time with a real brush, I embarked on my quest to brighten up our classroom. In the process, I decorated my knickers liberally. As much as she labored, my Mom could not get the knee pants cleaned. So! Off we went to the Quinn Sisters to get my first pair of long uniform pants. I was very happy to be modernized. No more long stockings drooping around my ankles. Now the girls started paying attention too!

Memories of Anthony Rosato, Class of 1967

When I attended St. Andrews (1961-67), I was a member of the Choir (fourth to eighth grade). The Church organist and choir director was Mr. Charles Harmon (quite a famous organist), who served in this capacity for 54 years. In 1992, Mr. Harmon was awarded a Citation Medal "Pro Ecclesia e Pontifice (for the Church and the Pope) from Pope John Paul II for his "outstanding musicianship and dedication". The medal was presented to him by Bishop Thomas Daly at St. James Cathedral in Brooklyn, NY. Mr. Harmon passed away on July 5, 1995. Brother David served as Mr. Harmon's assistant for the years when I was in the choir (Andrean Choristers) - and probably before my time there as well. I have many fond memories of singing in the church's choir loft, and of the many special holidays (Easter and Christmas, especially). Believe it or not, I actually have a record of the teachers during my time at the school! I particularly remember Miss Beyer who had very bright red hair. I recall one event when my brother and I and my cousin somehow found out where she lived, and so we decided to visit her. You can imagine that my mom was not very 'thrilled' about us doing this. Miss Beyer was very kind, and I remember that she then called my mom to let her know about us being there.

Below is a list of all of my teachers:

1st Grade:	Sr. Jeremiah	2nd Grade:	Miss Walicki
3rd Grade:	Miss Jean Beyer	4th Grade:	Sr. Vincent Marie
5th Grade:	Mrs. Cifarelli	6th Grade:	Sr. Mary Daniel
7th Grade:	Sr. Mary Petra	8th Grade:	Sr. Mary Colman



7-2 Class Picture 1966 from Anthony Rosato

Alumni Contributors

Key to Gifts

General Member.....	\$1-\$25	
Avellino Friend.....	\$26-\$99.....	denoted by *
Avellino Patron.....	\$100-\$249.....	denoted by **
Avellino Leader.....	\$250-\$499.....	denoted by ***
Avellino Benefactor.....	\$500-\$999.....	denoted by ****
St. Clementine Society.....	\$1,000-\$1,499.....	denoted by ^
St. Catherine Sienna Society.....	\$1,500-\$2,499.....	denoted by ^^
Deborah Hannah Society.....	\$2,500+.....	denoted by ^^ ^

Class of 1947

Meg Plunkett (Sullivan)**
Hugh Quinn*

Class of 1948

Ann Quinn (Fitz)*

Class of 1952

Mary Flood (Hartel)*
James A. Grimes, MD**
John E. Manning****

Class of 1953

Anna Lennon Hogan
Joseph Sassone**

Class of 1954

Sonia Murphy** *In Memory of Leonard Murphy '54*
Patricia Pepe** *In Memory of Sister Mary Kiernan*
Anne Fitzgerald (Sullivan)**

Class of 1955

Casey Ade
William Gastel**
Monica Golden (Lennon)***

Class of 1956

Thomas J. Fraites****
Ron Gilbert**
Peggy Kelleher
Lydia Kerekes (Zimmerman)* *In Memory of Jacqueline Zammataro '56*
Robert Kilgore***
Kevin Manning** *In Memory of my parents Timothy and Eleanor Manning*
Dr. Eileen Shea (McGiven)**
Susan Sweeney Sheehy***
Edward Zammataro*

Class of 1957

Margaret Kennedy (Lennon)* *In Memory of my husband Jack Kennedy*
Kathleen Hilpl (Heaney)***
John Miller*

Class of 1958

Joseph Gasparri**
Mary Jean Krackeler (Sawyer)**
Albert J. Roessler***
Rudy Rugustin**
Veronica Volkland (McConnell)*

Class of 1959

Francis Duffy*

Class of 1960

Virginia Subirana (Morris)*

Class of 1961

Frederick Sklow** *In Memory of Marie Green*

Class of 1962

John Warkentin***

Class of 1963

Joanne Lee**
Joseph C. Maher, Jr.****

Class of 1964

Edward Kilduff^^ Gift to the Scholarship Fund

Class of 1965

Diane P. Harvey**

Class of 1967

Donald Pirone^^ Gift to the Scholarship Fund

Class of 1968

Henry T. Sarnataro* *In Memory of Vincent Sarnataro, MD*

Class of 1971

James Amato*

Class of 1972

Wanda Prisinzano* *In Memory of Mary Lou Prisinzano*

Class of 1973

Michele Pallai and Vincent Reppuci**
Mary W. Amato Wannop (McCluskey)
Jennifer Russell*

Class of 1974

Thomas Hayden**

Class of 1975

Dominick Avitable***

Class of 1976

Elizebeth Nacinovich (Kennedy)*
Mary Reilly-Jones**
Eileen Sokol**
Brian Sutton^^

Class of 1981

Peter Lane

Class of 1983

Eliza McLoughlin* *In Memory of Eileen Tereasa Mclaughlin - Class of 1990*

Class of 1985

Deborah Colvin*

Class of 1994

Eileen Stephens

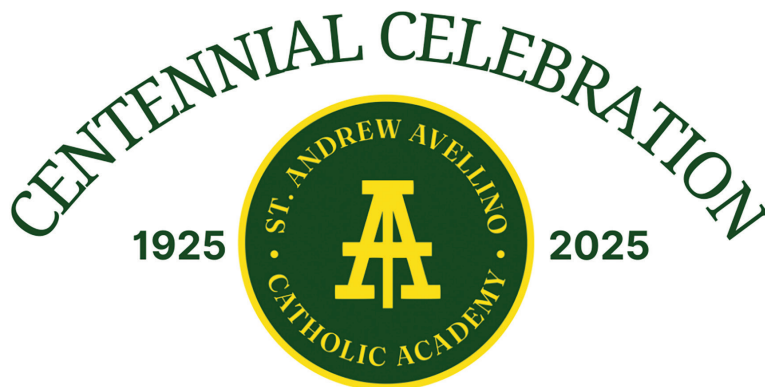
Class of 2004

Angela Barbieri***

Friends of SAA

Kathryn Castelli** Parent of Elisa Castelli '11,
Paolo Castelli '13, and Marco Castelli '15
Anna Cramer** Parent of Julia Cramer '20
Jodi DeGrotta** Parent of Alivia DeGrotta '16 and
Isabella DeGrotta '21
Diana Donnelly*
William Gallagher**
Mary McGonnell*
John Miller* *In Memory of Edna Mallon*

*A special thank you to all of our alumni
for your generous contributions!*



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR CENTENNIAL!

SAVE THE DATES

March 22, 2025 - The Spirits of Avellino Wine Tasting

Unveiling of the Centennial logo, followed by a Wine Tasting event in the Academy Cafeteria. Savor the finest vintages from the regions where St. Andrew Avellino once lived, and reminisce about your cherished memories. For details, please see the flyer in this newsletter.

September 28, 2025 - Centennial Celebration Mass and Reception

Centennial Celebration Mass at St. Andrew Avellino Church, followed by a retrospective and celebration reception in the cafeteria. Reconnect with fellow alumni and relive defining moments.

June 18, 2026 - Centennial Gala: Leonard's Palazzo in Great Neck

An evening of elegance, nostalgia, and camaraderie as we honor our history.

We want to ensure that all our alumni are included in the festivities!

If you are an alumnus/alumna or know someone who is, please help us by updating your contact information in the form below or online at bit.ly/alumni_questionnaire. This will allow us to keep you informed about the details of all the upcoming events and activities planned for our celebration. It will also help us to clean up the outdated contact information in our alumni database.

Please complete and return the form below in the enclosed envelope.

MY CONTACT INFORMATION

Prefix: _____ First Name: _____ Middle: _____ Last Name: _____ Suffix: _____

Maiden Name (if applicable): _____

Home Address: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell: (____) _____ E-Mail: _____

Preferred method of contact: E-mail US Postal Mail Text Messaging

Graduation Year: _____ I would like to volunteer to be my Class' Representative

Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Name and graduation year of your spouse and/or child(ren) who are also alumni (if applicable):

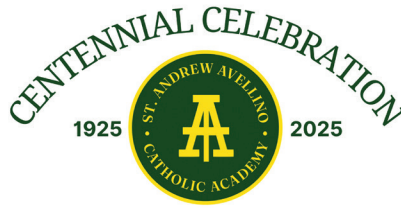
Spouse: _____

Child(ren): _____

I would like to make a donation to support St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to St. Andrew Avellino Alumni Association. Your contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

My gift is in honor of _____ My gift is in memory of _____



THE SPIRITS OF AVELLINO WINE TASTING

March 22, 2025 | 5:00PM | 35-50 158th St, Flushing, NY

Early Bird Pricing Before Feb. 28th: .99 per person (Ages 21+)

After Feb. 28th: \$125 per person

NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR



Join us for an exclusive tasting event guided by sommelier Elana Abt! Immerse yourself in the rich flavors of Italy as you sample the finest vintages from the regions where St. Andrew Avellino once lived. Discover the stories behind each bottle and elevate your palate with this unforgettable experience!

Elana Abt (Sommelier, WSBT 4 Diploma Candidate) Bio

Elana is a Chicago native who has lived in NYC since 2009. She fell in love with Italian wines in 2013, and thus started her long career in the wine industry. She was the wine director of the famed Batali/Bastianich restaurant, OTTO, for five years. then went on to become the Head Sommelier at Quarty Italian for three years. Elana has her Advanced certification in Wine and Spirits through the WSET, and is a fine wine manager for a large distributor here in New York.



Please return completed form below with payment in enclosed envelope or register online at bit.ly/AVELINOWINE

REGISTER FOR THE SPIRITS OF AVELLINO WINE TASTING ON MARCH 22, 2025

Yes, I'd love to attend! # Guests attending: _____ *I am not able to attend. Please accept my donation.*

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Check is enclosed for amount: \$ _____ (please make check payable to St. Andrew Avellino Alumni Association)

Names of Guests: (For alumni, please also include the graduation year)

_____	Year: _____	_____	Year: _____
_____	Year: _____	_____	Year: _____
_____	Year: _____	_____	Year: _____
_____	Year: _____	_____	Year: _____
_____	Year: _____	_____	Year: _____

What's New at St. Andrew Avellino Catholic Academy

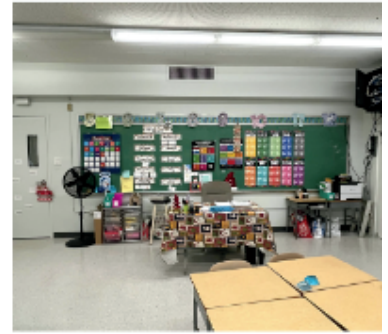
We are excited about our recent renovation of the first floor of the “New” building, a project initiated by our Board of Trustees to enhance our facilities and attract more families to enroll during their visits. This area, which previously served as a computer room, conference room, STEM lab, and science room, has been thoughtfully updated to create a more inviting and functional environment. We believe these improvements will greatly benefit our students and community.

BEFORE

AFTER

RM 110 – COMPUTER ROOM

RM 110 – 4TH GRADE CLASSROOM



RM 112 – CONFERENCE ROOM

RM 112 – 3RD GRADE CLASSROOM



RM 114 – STEM LAB

RM 114 – NEW ART ROOM



RM 116 – SCIENCE ROOM

RM 116 – NEW STEM LAB





Saints Door Decorating Competition

For All Saints Day, Fr. Gregory McIlhenney recently challenged our students and staff to a door decorating competition themed around the saints. Each class showcased their creativity by decorating their doors to represent a chosen saint, while also demonstrating their knowledge about the saint's life and significance. The class with the most impressive door decoration and the best understanding of their saint was awarded a special prize: a McDonald's lunch with Fr. McIlhenney. The competition fostered teamwork and learning, making it a memorable experience for all involved.



St. Cecilia
by 8th Grade



St. Dominic
by 7th Grade



St. Therese of Lisieux
by 6th Grade



St. Augustine
by 5th Grade



St. Francis De Sales
by 4th Grade



St. Gabriel the
Archangel by Nursery



St. Juan Diego
by 1st Grade



★ WINNER – St. Elizabeth of Hungary by Kindergarten ★



St. Francis of Assisi
by 2nd Grade



St. Sebastian
by 3rd Grade



St. Agatha
– Nurse's Office



St. Peregrine and St. Thomas
More – SAACA Office



St. Catherine of
Bologna – Art Room



Bl. Carlos Acutis –
STEM Lab



St. Dymphna –
Social Studies