

November 5, 2009

Brothers and Sisters in Catholic Education,

In this weeks' communication packet you are receiving a flier about a chance for us to 'win' \$100,000! However, as you would expect, there is some work involved to be a winner. As the flyer explains U.S. Cellular is giving each of ten schools nationwide who earn the most 'votes' the cash prize. "All you need to do" (where have we heard that phrase before?) is stop into any U.S. Cellular store between mid-November and mid- January, register to receive a 'code', then go to any computer, go online, enter your code and vote for *Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic School*. Any adult can register for a 'code', anywhere there is a U.S. Cellular store, and vote for us. Each 'code' can only be used once, which means any computer can be used more than once as long as a different 'code' is entered. Each individual can only receive one 'code'. So your uncle in Seattle can vote for us and your 'BFF' in New Jersey can vote for us, etc. I believe it is within the realm of possible for us to make this happen if we all make a creative effort to 'reach out and touch someone' (wrong commercial?). No purchase is necessary. We are not too small (a Catholic school in Iowa won last year) and we are not too out of the way (a Catholic school in Wisconsin Rapids was a winner last year). Please help! \$100,000 would go a long way to help secure the future of Our Lady's School.

As they would say on 'Monty Python', "... and now for something completely different ...", The first quarter is coming to a close the day your receive this packet. I have been reviewing the attendance records and I admit to being concerned. During the first ¼ we have had several children with 4 or more absences for varied reasons. This means these children are missing 10% of their classes. Not even thinking about the State truancy laws, this rate of absence is really unfair to the student who is not here to learn from the teacher and the interchange with classmates. It is also taking away teaching time when the teacher needs to give special assistance to the child who is not here. I am looking at eleven children who have at least the 4 absences, whether excused or not. That's equal to 20% of our school population. Now, I realize I promised I would relax the rules a little bit due the national health emergency. However, as I look at these attendance patterns I am concerned that we may be dealing with something else. I certainly hope we do not have any students who are intimidated to come to school because of something negative going on here. If that were the case I would hope to be informed about it so that I can resolve it. No child should ever be afraid to attend any school, especially a school with a belief foundation as we have.

And, *once again*, something completely different – we are starting our food collection drive next week. We will collect the usual types of food products until November 20th. Please help out as you are able. Hopefully, we will be the cause of someone having a happy Thanksgiving because to the efforts of the students at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic School.

May our Lord, and His mother, whom we have named our school after, watch over you and those you love. Say a prayer for our military folks who will be away from home this holiday season.

Your Servant,

Rick Erickson, PhD
Principal/Administrator

"Here I am Lord; I've come to do your will."
M.P. Ward