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Committed to Excellence In Education



### Make a Difference in Children's Lives

Your support is very appreciated. Together we can continue the exciting transformations taking place on Pleasant Avenue.

- \$5,000: Supports writing staff development for grades K through 8
- \$1,000: Provides a scholarship for a deserving MCHR Student
- \$ 500: Finances new textbooks for one classroom
- \$ 250: Provides books for one classroom library

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My enclosed check payable to Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card for the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (circle one) Visa MC AMEX

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Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School relies solely on the generosity and goodwill of individuals, corporations, and foundations. Please help us meet our goals!

All contributions are tax deductible. You will receive confirmation of your donation.

We are also grateful for in-kind donations of art supplies, sports equipment, puzzles & toys for Pre-K, and gently used books for the Library.

**Please send checks to:**

Eleanor Killian  
Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School  
371 Pleasant Avenue  
New York, NY 10035



## Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School Pleasant Avenue Press

For our parents, alumni, and friends

Dear Friends of Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School:

It seems like just yesterday that the bell was rung for the first day of the school year and now the halls are filled with the sounds of children singing Christmas carols.

As you read this current edition of the Pleasant Avenue Press, I know that you will take pride in the accomplishments of our students. I hope that you realize the important role that you play in their lives now and the lasting impact that you make on their futures.

Thank you for your generosity, support and sincere interest in Mt. Carmel-Holy Rosary School. God bless you and your families. Have a wonderful Christmas and holiday season!

Sincerely,  
*Suzanne Kaszynski*  
Principal

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#### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF MCHR'S ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

If you would prefer to receive your copy of The Pleasant Avenue Press, please email MCHR's Director of Development Eleanor Killian at [EKILLIAN@MCHRSCHOOL.ORG](mailto:EKILLIAN@MCHRSCHOOL.ORG) with your name and email address.

### Art for a Better World: Dominic Tagliatella Helps MCHR Artists Shine

Dominic Tagliatella, a beloved role model to the entire MCHR community, was internationally recognized for his generous spirit and remarkable work with the Katherine M Tagliatella Foundation at the Arts for a Better World art fair in Miami, Florida. The event, which hosted 40,000 guests, constitutes the domestic component of Art Basel, the largest art fair in the world held annually in Switzerland. Selected as the evening's co-chair for his exemplary support of our fortunate school, Mr. Tagliatella presented a special booth dedicated to MCHR along with the Mayor of Miami. Given that Mr.

Tagliatella is a Vincent Van Gogh aficionado and connoisseur, the booth was designed as a model of the very room in Auvers, France where the artist drew his last breath. The exhibit included school statistics, photos of students, and even eight MCHR student paintings modeled after Van Gogh's work. MCHR feels a deep sense of gratitude for Mr. Tagliatella and the KMT Foundation's support. We are constantly amazed and inspired by all that they accomplish, both for our school and for the world.

### Racing for Charity: MCHR Supports Ronald McDonald House

This November, MCHR joined 28 other schools and over 1,000 runners in the **Ronald McDonald House Fun Run** in Central Park. Through the support of family members and friends, 34 students raised a grand total of approximately \$6,000. This is the most our school has ever raised for the Fun Run! On a sunny fall day, students ran with mile-wide smiles as fellow students, parents, and MCHR faculty cheered them on. Through their participation in this event, students learned the importance of philanthropy and community service. Many students felt honored to support the Ronald McDonald House Charities, which provide a "home away from home" for families of children with cancer as well as a supportive, nurturing community. The charities allow parents to remain close to their children during

hospital stays, regardless of location or cost. To prepare for race day, students trained weekly in Jefferson Park in East Harlem and waved to our favorite neighbor, Rao's Restaurant on the walk to practice!



MCHR Runners pose with Ronald McDonald in Central Park

#### Make a Difference in MCHR Students' Lives

- \$5,000: Supports writing staff development for grades K through 8
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- \$ 500: Pays for new textbooks for one classroom
- \$ 250: Provides books for one classroom library

You will find a contribution form on the last page of this newsletter. For more information please contact Eleanor Killian, Director of Development and Operations at (212) 876-7555 ext. 1 or [ekillian@mchrschool.org](mailto:ekillian@mchrschool.org)

## Sports Angels Host a Truly Divine Evening

Four of MCHR's students experienced a life-changing night at the Sports Angels September 20<sup>th</sup> event. **Sports Angels**, a nonprofit organization devoted to providing children with athletic opportunities, generously provides uniforms and equipment for the annual Inner-City Scholarship Fund Junior Committee basketball league. Accompanied by Kerry Hughes from the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, Grade 7 student Ismaila Mariko and Grade 8 students Issaka Goita, Prince Hunt, and Dorlyn Pierre ventured to the University Club in Manhattan and shared their stories and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the Junior Committee basketball league.

Following their speeches, the crowd gave them all a standing ovation awestruck by how articulate and genuine the MCHR young gentlemen

were. The students had the privilege to meet many esteemed athletes and sports enthusiasts, including former Major League Baseball player Bobby Valentine. As if that wasn't enough of an unforgettable night, Mr. Valentine graciously bestowed his 9-11 memorial pin to Issaka Goita. Our star struck student will always remember meeting his hero and treasure the one of a kind gift forever.

On behalf of the entire MCHR community, thank you to Sports Angels, Kerry Hughes, Inner-City Scholarship Fund Junior Committee, and Bobby Valentine for making our students' dreams come true!



Issaka, Dorlyn, Prince, and Ismaila revel in the spotlight with Bobby Valentine

## Academic Accomplishments Remain Outstanding

MCHR continues to build upon an already strong academic foundation through exciting academic initiatives and extracurricular opportunities. As the 2011 New York State Test results show, our students continue to outshine charter, public, and Catholic schools on both a district and citywide level.

Here at MCHR, we strive to improve our scholastic standing and provide the most comprehensive, well-rounded education possible. Several new curricular enhancements enable us to broaden students' horizons and boost achievement throughout the grades.

MCHR's new Kindergarten - Grade 3 Mathematics Program gives students additional academic support in mastering rudimentary concepts and theories. By taking a conceptual rather than a linear approach to learning, the initiative will give students the confidence and knowledge to comprehend essential number

properties and continue improving their grades and test scores!

In last summer's newsletter, MCHR reported the exciting news that our school received a grant from the Italian American Committee on Education to launch an Italian Language Program.

Now the students are exploring the neighborhood's cultural heritage by building their Italian vocabulary in bi-weekly classes, sometimes even through song! Perhaps for this spring's *An Italian Evening with Rao's Restaurant* benefit, MCHR students will serenade guests in Italian. Bellissimo!

2011 New York State Examinations				
Percent of Students Passing with Subject Proficiency				
Subject	Grade	MCHR School	Average of other Public Schools in Same District	Average of other Charter Schools in Same District
English Language Arts	Grade 4	92%	51.50%	58.70%
	Grade 6	93%	37.70%	55.30%
	Grade 8	97%	26.00%	51.40%
Mathematics	Grade 4	100%	58.30%	69.30%
	Grade 6	93%	47.40%	91.30%
	Grade 8	97%	44.60%	82.00%

## Keeping Kids Healthy: MCHR Revamps Our Nutrition Program



Mrs. Butleroff-Leahy teaches students about the importance of portion control and maintaining a balanced diet

MCHR is proud to announce its involvement in "MYPLATE! The New Food Guide Musical Program." Grade 3, 4, 5 students have been dancing their way to a healthier lifestyle through this unique nutrition education initiative. The program works in conjunction with Michelle Obama's newly revised 'Food Plate,' which has replaced the 'Food Pyramid' as a more wholesome representation of dietary guidelines.

Through in-class lessons centered around healthy eating habits and highly active dance routines, students acquired a comprehensive understanding of how to nourish their minds and bodies. These rehearsals culminated in an original nutrition-inspired musical that the students performed with professional Broadway actors. Helen Butleroff-Leahy, a former Rockette and certified dietitian has been

leading students in mastering musical numbers complete with everything from hula hoops to the YMCA dance!

The "MYPLATE! The New Food Guide Musical Program" goes hand-in-hand with MCHR's efforts to offer healthier options for students. As of this year, students enjoy daily healthy snacks ranging from carrot sticks to fresh fruit. By practicing these healthy habits, MCHR students are sure to have a recipe for success!



## Spotlight on an MCHR Role Model: Ms. Eileen Solomon Stops by for a Visit



Ms. Solomon and Talaysia share a sweet moment

Thanks to the **Inner-City Scholarship Fund Be a Student's Friend Program**, twenty-seven MCHR students benefit from the support and encouragement of generous sponsors. Eileen Solomon, one of our school's BASF mentors, stopped by Pleasant Avenue to personally check up on Grade 2 student Talaysia Griffin. The pair shared stories discussing everything from Halloween costumes to pet fiascos. Ms. Solomon graces MCHR with her presence several times a year and we always treasure the time she spends with us. We feel truly blessed to have wonderful friends like Eileen Solomon cheering our students on!

### Exciting Summer Experiences



Grade 7 Student Kalyn Hicks discovers nature's wonders

The Rye Nature Center gave 24 fortunate MCHR students the opportunity to experience a week-long summer program in the beautiful outdoors of Rye, New York. Founded in 1959 as a "Land for Learning," the Rye Nature Center spans 47 acres of forest, field, pond, and stream, providing a natural laboratory for ecological study. For example, students built shelters out of sticks and leaves they found while exploring the campsite. Students learned about environmental resources while engaging in stimulating experiments and forging new friendships. MCHR would not have been able to partake in this program without the support of John Van Rens and Michael Gerstner who helped provide transportation and chaperones and, of course, the Rye Nature Center for granting MCHR this opportunity. Thank you for making Rye Nature Center a possibility!

MCHR's Honors Violin Ensemble wowed an 800-person crowd for the August 4<sup>th</sup> St. Francis Food Pantries & Shelters benefit. Held in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel's majestic grand ballroom, the event proved to be an unforgettable day for students and guests alike. The Honors Violin Ensemble performed *Habanera* from 'Carmen' accompanied by the opera singer Allison Leahey, pianist Phil Tambakis, and Alex Parker and Christina Quez, MCHR ballroom dancers. Our school feels privileged to have been part of such an important philanthropic cause and would like to thank Mrs. Florence D'Urso for recommending us.



### MCHR Program Updates



Reach for Regis students Prince Hunt and Misael Cruz

► **Reach for Regis:** MCHR students Prince Hunt and Misael Cruz have been involved in the Reach for Regis mentoring program since Grade 5. REACH provides academic and leadership development through weekly Saturday classes preparing participants for competitive Catholic high schools throughout New York City. The program even sends students to the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania for an intensive, three-week summer camp. Misael has reaped immeasurable benefits thanks to Reach for Regis: "I understand my schoolwork better and I feel confident about entering high school!"

► **ICSF Junior Committee:** Thanks to the Inner-City Scholarship Fund Grade 6, 7, and 8 students play basketball on Tuesday evenings at Our Lady Queen of Angels School. Without the Junior Committee, MCHR would not have the opportunity to experience the athletic and collaborative spirit team sports encourages.

► **Library Connections:** MCHR was awarded a \$5,000 grant to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and enhance library resources.

► **New York Piano School:** A total of 20 MCHR students began piano lessons with the New York Piano School this fall. In the spring, students will showcase their musical talents at an annual recital.

► **New York City Chess:** On Friday afternoons, students are learning to master the cunning and clever game of chess. The MCHR chess team will soon compete against other schools at exciting tournaments.



Tyler Gaston perfects a melody

### Stepping Outside of the Classroom: Academic Adventures Pique Students' Intellectual Curiosity

MCHR continually searches for ways to expand our students' knowledge and awareness of their surroundings. This fall students have traveled throughout New York learning about everything from submarines to farm animals to immigration. Here are highlights from our adventures beyond Pleasant Avenue!



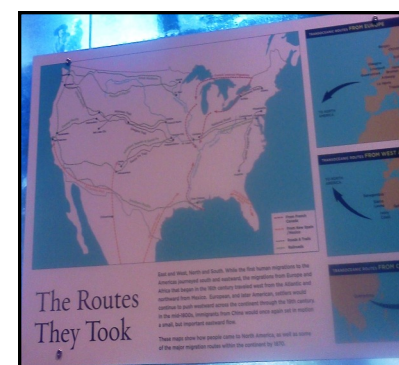
The Pre-K classes and Kindergarten ventured to **Green Meadows Farm** in Queens and experienced the joys of seeing, touching, and interacting with nature's wonders. Despite the gray skies, our young learners loved the multi-sensory exposure to adorable farm animals and beautiful wildlife including sheep, ducks, cows, horses, chickens, pigs, and rabbits. The students actually milked cows themselves and gained a genuine appreciation for life on the farm.



Thanks to the **Gilder Lerhman Foundation**, Grades 7 and 8 came aboard the **Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum**. The day brought textbooks to life as students explored the mind-blowing USS Intrepid CVS-11 aircraft carrier. Witnessing such a feat of technological innovation through interactive exhibits, historic footage, and original artifacts enabled students to understand a time when the future of the free world hinged on these great ships.



Grade 6 students visited **Ellis Island** to learn about the history of New York City's demographic makeup. Seeing the Statue of Liberty and the Ellis Island Museum opened their eyes to the challenges immigrants faced when the Big Apple was just a burgeoning urban center. Students were even able to search city records to find their own ancestors who brought their families to the United States many years ago.



"Ellis Island is a magical place because it holds the memories and stories of millions of immigrants from all walks of life."

-Naya Solomon, Grade 6 Student