



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

A NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

Rev. Timothy J. Cusick, Pastor
Marcel De Maio, Ed.S., Principal

2015 - 2016 HOLY FAMILY ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

WORLD WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ADOPTIONS

May 3, 2016

Last month, the Holy Family School community celebrated Earth Day in a very special way. On April 22, students added something green to their school spirit outfit. In addition to this proposal to create awareness about the importance of protecting our planet, part of the proceeds of the fourth quarter school offertory went towards the adoption of two animals from the World Wild Foundation (WWF). This initiative incorporated different subject areas and school clubs. During science classes, seventh and eighth grade students researched the WWF website for the animals in danger of extinction in order to write persuasive paragraphs to convince their classmates to adopt their chosen animal. Each seventh and eighth grade class went through internal voting and decided on four adoption candidates: Bonobo, Red Panda, Amur Leopard, and Pygmy Elephant.

After the four animals were selected, our School Astronomical Society (HoFAS) designed ballots for the school wide voting, a flyer for Friday Folders, and a short presentation that they shared with the school community during Monday Morning Assembly on April 18. On April 22 (Earth Day), all students from PK through 8th grade voted to choose the two animals to be adopted this year. The two animals selected were the Red Panda and the Amur Leopard. The school Nature Club helped HoFAS by counting votes from second, third, and fourth grade classes. Student Government Association was involved since the beginning of the school year when they agreed on adding the proposal for a green day and the WWF animal adoptions to the school schedule. Besides the Science and English disciplines, students incorporated Mathematics and Technology. With the results obtained from the school wide voting, seventh and eighth grade students spent time during science classes to create bar graphs and pie charts. They created spreadsheets of the voting data and used statistical analysis software to create a bar graph and pie chart. The Seventh grade classes also created species charts of the Red Panda and Amur Leopard with the eight levels of classification for living things: domain, kingdom, phylum, class, order, family, genus, and species.

Last but not least, there is a meaningful Religion component in this initiative. Pope Francis on the Encyclical on the Environment exhorted us to "...be protectors of creation. Protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment." Protecting God's creation is precisely one of the themes of the Catholic Social Teachings and the HoFAS mission statement. We also modeled St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology, who saw God's creation as part of his brotherhood and was a man of action. St. Francis of Assisi also urges us to be a community of action by "starting doing what is necessary; then doing what is possible; and suddenly doing the impossible." The Holy Family community has a deep respect and reverence for God's creation and understands that being stewards of Creation is a requirement of our faith.