

St. Peter RC School holds outdoor graduation ceremony for 8th grade class

St. Peter R.C. School held an outdoor celebration of its eighth grade class on Monday, June 22, abiding by the governor's rules for social distancing and graduation ceremonies. One dedicated parking space was reserved for each of the participating 16 students. This squared-off section provided them with a space to sit, stand and take a bow; and allowed one family-occupied vehicle to park in front and watch the program.

Principal Maureen Ingham and new St. Peter R.C. Church administrator the Rev. Cole Webster served as emcees for the event. Ingham presented diplomas and was joined by teachers in doling out more than a dozen class awards.

Keynote speeches were provided by class President Joshua DeSilva, salutatorian Alexia Seider and valedictorian Marissa Gibas.

Ingham said the goal was "to make sure we helped them create some memories to take to all of the different places that were going to attend next year."

"This year, although in a very different type of ceremony, we bid farewell to the grade 8 class; the 17 young men and women who will leave St. Peter Roman Catholic School and move on to high school," she said. "They have been 'real troopers,' even while missing so many of the fun traditions that go along with being the senior class in the building. But ... it is important to know that the teachers and the parents and the Home School Association



and the staff worked hard, and were creative and understanding as they planned the final evening for graduation as seen in these photos.

"Through the rain, we saw the smiles and the tears of students and parents ... and even the principal! Happiness and sadness, fear of the unknown and excitement for the challenges that lie ahead ... all so real and evident in our great Class of 2020. Remote learning was their past three months and may very well be their future. We are proud of each and every graduate ... of their skills, their talents and, most importantly, their hearts.

"Their names, their high school choice and their favorite saying is included here. As our SPS theme played out this year, each name included here is a wonderful 'Child of God!'"

√ **Gideon Abbondanza**, Lew-

iston-Porter High School

"Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

√ **Amaya Avojan**, Lewiston-Porter High School

"I've learned that it's not what you have in your life, but who you have in your life that counts."

√ **Natalie Bonnette**, undecided

"My motivation might seem trivial compared to yours, but I can't lose either. I have to live up to the hopes of those who supported me."

√ **Joshua DeSilva**, St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute

"There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

√ **Reece Gall**, Mount St. Mary's Academy

"Hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work!"

√ **Marissa Gibas**, Lewiston-Porter High School

"You will always have me."

√ **Olivia Hopkins**, Lewiston-Porter High School

"Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world."

√ **Jack Ingwersen**, Wilson High School

"I am a man with few words and I wish to have a mildly successful life."

√ **Kaliopie Krassopoulos**, Wilson High School

"Life is like a camera. Just focus on what's important, capture the good times, develop from the negatives, and if things don't work out, just take another shot."

√ **Ty Mangione**, Cardinal O'Hara High School

"SUCCESS isn't owned, it's leased. And rent is DUE every day."

√ **Robert McCartney**, Cardinal O'Hara High School

"Try my best ... be my best ... learn to YouTube."

√ **John Robinson**, Lewiston-Porter High School

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

√ **Camila Santiago**, Cardinal O'Hara High School

"Being happy is not having a perfect life. Being happy is recognizing that life is worth living despite all of the difficulties."

√ **Alexia Seider**, Nichols School

"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory."

√ **Alexander Thom**, Lewiston-Porter High School

"Winners are not people who never fail, but people that never quit!"

√ **Ava Vanoni**, WNY Christian Academy

"This is life and imperfection ... don't ever be afraid of that!"

√ **Elizabeth Wagner**, Niagara Falls High School

"I want to be a singer or a doctor, and always remember St. Peter's."

Ingham said St. Peter's "graduated," or moved up, 48 preschool students the following night in a drive-by motorcade ceremony led by the Lewiston Police Department. A similar celebration for kindergarten graduates was scheduled for that Wednesday evening.

'In the Loop' with the Lewiston-Porter Board of Education

School board sets different meeting types, preparing for new year

BY **JODEE RIORDAN**
Board of Education President

The Board of Education met Wednesday to organize for the 2020-21 school year. The board welcomed new board members Charlotte Huebschmann and Jennifer Klemick, administered the oath of office to the new and reelected members, and elected board leadership. It is my honor to continue to serve as board president, with Danielle Mullen as vice president.

The Board of Education will be busy throughout July: In addition to the organizational meeting, the board will conduct our annual re-

treat on Wednesday, July 15, and Thursday, July 16, and then hold our regular business meeting on Monday, July 27.

This is a good time to review, "What is the difference between an 'organizational meeting,' a 'regular meeting' and a 'retreat?'" Let's take a look how each is unique and important:

The organizational meeting is the first, and arguably the most important, meeting of the year. It takes place, by law, between July 1-15. The Board of Education seats new members and elects board officers to lead for the coming year. All required annual

public business of the district and the board is conducted, including all annual appointments, designations, agreement and authorizations.

Each month, the Lewiston-Porter Board of Education conducts two public meetings: In 2020-21, meetings will be held on the second and the fourth Monday of the month at 6 p.m. At the first, the board meets and focuses on specific topics with a work session. The work session includes presentations and an opportunity for in-depth research and discussion on key issues. The agenda may also include the board conducting business (approvals and appointments) that requires action prior to the regular meeting. From January through April, work sessions are focused on budget, and additional meetings are scheduled.

At the regular business meeting, on the fourth Monday, the board conducts all required busi-

ness: district operations; policy administration; administrative, pupil and personnel actions. Meetings also include recognition of students and faculty, presentations, administrative and committee reports, and an opportunity for community and board member comments.

Each summer, the Board of Education retreat dedicates two days to strategizing and planning for the upcoming school year. We review our strategic plan, our roles and responsibilities, our facilitated board self-evaluation, and the progress of board and district goals over the past year. We then explore challenges and set goals for the upcoming year, committee and liaison assignments are made, and work session topics are planned.

The annual board retreat is an excellent opportunity for the board to really focus on our charge, to review the work of the

past year and to plan for the new. Taking the time to evaluate progress, to review and refresh priorities and goals, and to focus energy and intention is crucial in every organization. The board retreat is extremely important as it sets the plan of action, and the tone, for the upcoming year. This year, our agenda will be focused on the pandemic, proposed reopening plans and implementation of the new strategic plan 2020-25.

Board members are also involved throughout the year with regular (policy review, facility planning, finance review, health and wellness, district safety/emergency response, and audit committees) focused committee work (code of conduct and strategic plan steering committees). We also sit on district advisory councils (Key Communicators, fine arts, athletic advisory, and STEM advisory council), in addition to serving as liaisons (PTSA, special education and environmental). We also collaborate with other school boards and districts through representation in the Niagara-Orleans School Boards Association (NOSBA) and New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA). Committee members and liaisons report out to the full board.

Thank you, Lewiston-Porter, for supporting the work of the Board of Education. We will work hard to safely return to school in the fall, and to keep you informed and engaged throughout any and all challenges of the 2020-21 school year.

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The Reverend Ashlin Marchese, Pastor
The Reverend Thomas R. Mason, Pastor Emeritus

- Outdoor Worship at 9:00am on June 28th, July 5th, and July 12th at the church.
- Online worship can be viewed at MessiahLewiston.org

Sunday School / Adult Bible Class 9:00am
2nd Sunday in September to third Sunday in May (Dates can vary)
Messiah Lutheran PreSchool Rose Aloian, Director

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