



Peanut Butter and Jelly Project



SAINT CATHERINE ACADEMY

Where learning and caring lead to personal best

Saint Catherine Academy is a school in the Diocese of Bridgeport for students with special needs. We offer an education program for students who are 5 to 21 years old with multiple disabilities including intellectual disabilities. We began in 1999 with 4 students on the grounds of the Catholic Center in Bridgeport. In 2007, we moved into our new building in Fairfield, CT.

Our program is a combination of academics: math, reading, social studies and religion; vocational studies: career class and work experience and life skills studies: cooking, social skills, art and music.

We learn from our teachers and we learn from each other. “Ours is a very special school”, says Mina.



Mina is a classroom assistant in the pre school class at St. Ann School in Bridgeport, CT. This is part of her vocational program at Saint Catherine Academy.

Students at work



Jennifer uses discs to help her study multiplication and addition.

Kelly puts the beads on a rosary as part of a class project.





Every year, we do an annual Christmas Pageant that is based on the Christmas Story and the birth of Christ. It involves our whole school and it is our gift to our parents and friends of Saint Catherine Academy.



We learn from our teachers and from each other.



Our artwork is on display at the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, CT. This year, we made African Wish Pots and hands to go with the theme of Christmas in Africa.

Every year, we act out the Stations of the Cross to get ready for Easter. We all take turns carrying a cross just like Jesus did. It is a really good reminder of how much he loves us.





We use computers to help us learn how to read.



Our library is a great place to read a book or pick one out to take home with us.



We go on fieldtrips – this one was to the Peabody Museum in New Haven, CT.

Mrs. Cooke's Class



Mrs. Cooke, Josh, James, Mina, Jadea. Joseph, Adrian, Miss Darlene

Who are we?



Joseph is 14 years old. He likes sports, especially soccer. Joseph likes to make jokes. He can speak 2 languages- English and Spanish. He is also good at Art. He is a good swimmer and has won medals in the Special Olympics.



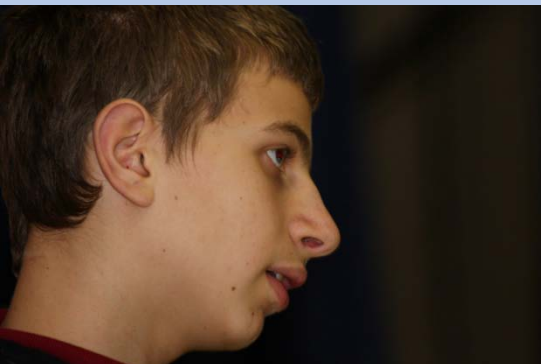
Adrian is a 17 year old who is a great friend. He is funny and is a people person. Adrian likes coffee, sports talk, WWE, and he is great with children. He is a hard worker at all of his jobs including Starbucks.



James is a cool and funny 17 year old who likes WWE, History, mummies and all things spooky. He is a great swimmer, and has won medals in the special Olympics



Mina is 17 years old. She is very talkative. She loves school. Mina has a great memory and can remember dates and schedules like no one else. In her free time she enjoys going to restaurants, dancing and listening to music.



Josh is 16 years old. He loves to be outside, and he is knowledgeable in computers, weather, and current events. He also was a swimmer in the special Olympics.



Jadealiz is 18 years old. She is always nice to everyone at school. She is a good friend, has crazy dance moves, she is cool, and honest. She loves to share and she even gave all her Halloween candy away to the students at school.

“Feed the Hungry”

Our class is involved in a school wide project called “Peanut Butter and Jelly” Fridays. This is our fourth year doing this project. We first got involved when one of our teachers who taught our career class talked to us about how many people cared about our school and our students. We receive a lot of support – people give their time and money – to make our school a very special place.



We decided that we needed to do something to give back to our community. So when this project was described to us – we said YES!

“So many people give to us. We need to give something back,” says Adrian.

About the Project

Once a month, on Fridays, the whole school – all the teachers, aides and students get together with two or three volunteers from Fairfield County Chapter of the Order of Malta. We call this *the P B and J Project*.

We set up 4-5 tables in the gym with 25 loaves of wheat bread, 6 big jars of peanut butter, 6 big jars of grape jelly, sandwich bags, gloves for our hands, knives, spatulas and aprons.

We put on music – fast – “Rockin’ Roll” music to keep us moving. And we start at one end with the bread – pass it to the next group that spreads the peanut butter – pass it to the group that spreads the jelly – then to the group that puts the tops on the sandwiches who pass it to the group that cuts the sandwiches in half. Finally, the sandwiches goes to the baggers – they put each sandwich in a bag and seal it and put in the big bag ready to go... to Merton House, a soup kitchen in Bridgeport.

This process goes on until we have made 300 sandwiches and let out with a loud cheer!

Some Facts about the PB and J Project

Began in 2008

Involves the whole school (20 students, 10 staff) and 2-3 volunteers from the Order of Malta

Total Sandwiches: 8,400*

Total Peanut Butter: 165 jars of 40 ounces – 6,600 ounces*

Total Jelly: 165 jars of 32 ounces – 5,280 ounces of grape jelly*

Total Bread: 825 loaves of wheat bread*

WOW!

* Numbers calculated by Joseph and Adrian



“We do not exist for ourselves”

Thomas Merton

Thomas Merton tells us to look to others. This project helps us to be closer to Jesus by feeding the hungry. It is what Jesus wants us to do and we are happy to have a project like this to help the poor in our community.

The Thomas Merton Center is part of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County. The soup kitchen feeds between 225-250 people a day. “We reflect to the individual and the community our shared responsibility to love and support one another,” states their mission statement.

“We feel closest to Jesus on Peanut Butter and Jelly Fridays, “ says Mina.



Our class interviewed some students from other classes to learn what they do on Peanut Butter and Jelly Friday and how they feel about it.



Kelly was interviewed by Mina

How do you make a peanut butter and jelly?

“Get bread, put peanut butter on then add jelly; put the top on the bread. “

Do you like making PB and J for the poor people?

How does it make you feel? “It makes me feel good.”

How does PB and J smell? “I think it smells good.”

Who are you making PB and J for? “We are making them for the poor people at the Merton House.”

What do you like about PB and J Day? “It is fun to make the sandwiches.”

What is your job? What do you have to do? “I cut the sandwiches in half.”



Jennifer was interviewed by James

How do you make a peanut butter and jelly?
“Put jelly on the bread and then put the peanut butter.”

Do you like making PB and J for the poor people? How does it make you feel? “I feel happy when I make sandwiches.

How does PB and J smell? “I think it smells very good.”

Who are you making PB and J for? “We are making them for the poor people at the Merton House.”

What do you like about PB and J Day? “I like making the sandwiches to help people.”

What is your job? What do you have to do? “I spread the jelly.”



Jonathan was interviewed by Adrian

How do you make a peanut butter and jelly?

“Grab some bread and peanut butter and jelly and spread them together.

Do you like making PB and J for the poor people? “Yes. I makes me feel good inside.”

Who are you making PB and J for? “We are making them for the poor people at the Merton House.”

What do you like about PB and J Day? “I like making the sandwiches.

What is your job? What do you have to do? “My job is to put the peanut butter on the bread.”



Sr. Anne Marie Dorff, SSND

Do you like making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the poor? How does it make you feel? I do like doing this because I know that so many people do not have enough to eat. Making sandwiches for them makes me feel like I have helped someone in need.

How does peanut butter and jelly smell? I think when you walk into a room you know right away and you start to feel hungry.

Who are you making these for? Our diocese tries to help the needy by asking people for help. We help by working together to make sandwiches for people who go to lunch at the Merton House.

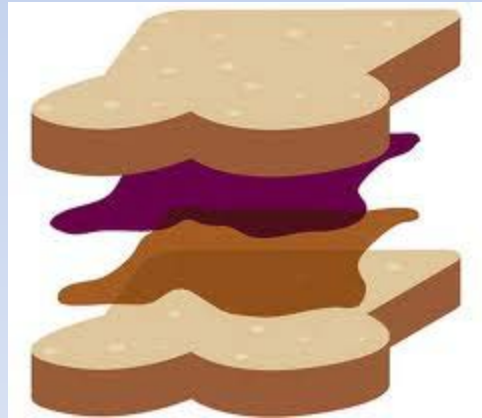
What do you like about PB and J day? I love to see how our students work together and are so pleased knowing they have helped someone in need.

What is your job on PB and J day? My job is to organize students, volunteers and staff to know what they are responsible to do. I need to make sure that the bread and peanut butter and jelly are ready when they come into make the sandwiches. I also try to keep the tables clean and make sure everything is bagged and ready to go to the Merton Center.

Reporter: Adrian

How to Make the Perfect Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich

Get two pieces of bread; spread peanut butter on both sides of the bread; add jelly to one side; put the two sides together. Then cut it in half, bag and Enjoy!



“For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat”

Mathew 25

For many students at Saint Catherine Academy, this project is not easy. It requires focus and fine motor skills that many of our students struggle with. The sandwich making is an act of love to help the poor and hungry. This project is a perfect partnership between the Order of Malta volunteers, Saint Catherine Academy students and staff and Thomas Merton Center. With the assistance and support of the Malta volunteers, our school gets to complete a community service project every month and the clients at the Merton Center get a healthy lunch!



“Never Give Up – Be Strong”

Josh from Mrs. Cooke’s class



Kay, Betsy and Barbara, volunteers with Malta join James, Mina and Josh, from Mrs. Cooke’s class just before the project starts in September

