



David Oporta Graduates in Fall Celebration

David Oporta, son of Antonio and Juanita Oporta, graduated from FJS on Friday evening, September 26, at the



David Oporta receives his diploma from Angel Vasquez, school board chairman

school's first ever fall graduation.

Davy selected Bro. Robert Miller, Director of the Mission Training Center in Corona, Queens, as his graduation speaker. Bro. Bob used Davy's name as an acronym for his message, reminding Davy and the audience to **D**are to be different, develop an **A**ppetite for God, remember that he is **V**aluable, live a life of **I**ntegrity, and follow his **D**reams.

After completing his senior year at home over the summer, Davy became the fourth FJS student to graduate with an NYS diploma.

Mr. Nisly Recovers from Severe Heart Attack

On Friday evening, October 31, 4th-6th grade teacher and Assistant Principal, Dwight Nisly, was taken to the hospital with severe chest pain and shortness of breath. There doctors diagnosed him as having suffered a minor heart attack. When the pain reoccurred on Sunday morning, an emergency catheterization was performed and the attack was upgraded to severe as doctors discovered a 95% blockage of a major artery in the upper part of his heart. The artery was cleaned and a stent was inserted.

We join Dwight's wife, Marlene, and his children in praising God for sparing his life and for his swift recovery. After a visit to the doctor on Monday, November 24, the doctor told Dwight he could do pretty much whatever he wanted – probably a dangerous thing to tell someone as energetic as Dwight – and to come back in

three months!

Along the way, the Nisly's experienced God's incredible providence and blessing. The nurse from our congregation who accompanied Dwight to the hospital is an Emergency Room nurse in that same hospital and was able to expedite Dwight's care and the reporting back to the family.

This month at school is full of vacation days – Teacher In-service, Veteran's Day, and Thanksgiving – minimizing the number of days a substitute was needed. We were blessed to have Valerie Mast, a former student and FJS graduate, step in for Dwight while he recovered at home.

In his own words, Dwight said about this experience, "It was a time of experiencing God's cleansing." More complete reflections appear in this month's Principal's Corner.

First Quarter

Honor Roll

Principal's List (97%-100%)

Angel Vasquez, Jr.

A Honor Roll (93%-96%)

Christopher Gochnauer

B Honor Roll (85%-92%)

Kimberly Arevalo

Diane Aviles

George Aviles

Gene DeCamp

Stephanie Guerrero

Lazarina Luna

Emmeline Martinez

Yessenia Oporta



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Students Praise Their Grandparents

Ashly Gavin wrote, "The memory that I remember is my grandma saying, 'Be nice to kids and be good for your teacher.' ... My grandparents like eating healthy. Even my grandpa. He eats the peel of the banana and orange. My grandma would rather have fruit, too. I think her most favorite fruit is Chinese pomegranate."

Emmeline Martinez likes her grandparents because "they love me with all their hearts and I love them, too. They are the best grandparents that I ever had. I like when they call me at six o'clock in the morning and they say 'Happy Birthday, Emmeline!' ... and if you have grandparents, love them with all your hearts."

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And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. 2 Tim. 2:2 (NIV)

FJS is a ministry of Followers of Jesus Mennonite Church.

Principal's Corner

by Dwight Nisly, Assistant Principal



(Editor's Note: Mr. Nisly shared the following thoughts in an e-mail to family and friends shortly after his return home from the hospital following his heart attack. We are grateful for his permission to share them with you.)

How does one adequately exalt His Father and communicate the thoughts of a heart welling with gratitude? For God's glory I'll attempt a summary of those thoughts.

In the early hours of Saturday morning, after admittance to CCU, my mind was actively re-examining life. It hit me pretty hard, and brought some tears, as I realized I wouldn't be at school on Monday morning. I tried remembering the chapel lesson which was interrupted the day before as my heart muscle ached with intense pain as it screamed for oxygen, that I thought was severe heart burn. Then it came back clearly. It was the story of Abraham and Isaac's incredible test of faith. I pointed out that both of them were tested in how thoroughly they trusted their fathers. Abraham was tested in his level of trusting his Heavenly Father, and Isaac's test of faith was with trusting his earthly father. I mentioned that Isaac may have had as active a challenge as Abraham because of releasing his life to the unheard of command of God, according to what his father was asking of him.

It seemed that God's question for me, that early Saturday morning, was "Do you trust me as your Heavenly Father, with releasing your life to me?" It was a new opportunity – releasing my life to our trustworthy Father.

During those early morning hours another thought continued developing in my mind. The similarities of the physical heart and spiritual heart took on cardiac care unit (CCU) dimensions! As I thought about how vital the physical heart was to physical life, it also became clear how vital the spiritual heart is to spiritual life. Cholesterol clogs and is capable of stopping blood flow to the physical heart. When blood flow is stopped, the muscle tissue is deprived of the oxygen it needs, and dies. Thus, clogging brings

physical death, as the heart is no longer able to serve the body. Spiritually, the flow of the Spirit around the spiritual heart is critical to the heart remaining alive and life-giving.

Then it seemed God took me a step further to considering the spiritual cholesterol, or foreign materials that like to attach themselves to the arterial walls of the heart arteries that constrict the flow of the Spirit. Would it be too radical to conclude that a spiritual heart blocked of the Spirit leads to spiritual death? With both the physical and the spiritual heart, the buildup of these deposits is very slow and seldom easily detected before a total blockage. Our culture is very aware of the physical heart and the things that threaten it. But it seems we're incredibly unaware of the threats on the spiritual heart. It seemed God was challenging me with the significantly more serious need of my spiritual heart needing to be cleansed of any clogging and blockage than my very needy physical heart! This early morning insight provided a rich time of confession and release of my spiritual heart to God. It was a time of experiencing God's cleansing. These insights were God's gifts, and wonderful preparation for facing the next days of uncertainty!

The gift of life has fresh beauty! My wife is precious! Family holds fresh delight! When we left our three children behind last Friday evening, I didn't know how to reassure them. Hugging and kissing them, I told them I loved them. It didn't seem fair or right to promise them I'd be alright. I prayed they could have a father in their tender, young years. Simple things like giggles, hugs, kisses, smiles, crawling onto my lap hold a special wonder. Life is a precious gift, and I want to treasure it increasingly, with godly delight! I want eternal priorities to guide my thinking and lifestyle.

A quote that blessed me several years ago has fresh application: "Are the things you live for worth His dying for?"

God bless you for your precious, loving prayers. Your love and concern were and are priceless!

Grandparents Visit FJS

by Angel Vasquez, Jr.

On Wednesday, October 22, 2008, we had our annual Grandparent's Day. Around 11:00 a.m. the grandparents started arriving. They had the choice of watching the grandchildren work or to wait downstairs until lunch.

At 12:00 noon everyone went to the basement to eat lunch. Mrs. Gochnauer and several other mothers made a very delicious meal.

I was happy to have my grandma, grandpa, and great grandpa there.

In preparation for Grandparent's Day, students were given the opportunity to write a short essay about their grandparents. Winners were selected by the faculty and were promised a Chinese meal for lunch.

Aimee Hill – 2nd grade, Ashly Gavin and Shianne Hartzler – 3rd graders, Emmeline Martinez – 4th grade, Kimberly Arevalo – 9th grade, and Nicole Vasquez – 10th grade participated in the competition and selected to read their essays at Grandparent's Day.

After most of the people were finished eating, those who prepared essays for the essay contest read essays about their grandparents (see sidebar for excerpts of two of the essays).

After the essays, Mr. Gochnauer showed a PowerPoint presentation with pictures of most of the students. After that we had a closing prayer and went home.

Students Celebrate Fall in Highland Park

by Sarah C. Gavin

Fall Celebration this year was on October 3, 2008 at Highland Park.

The activities for the day were planned by Mr. Nisly and Miss Detweiler, including human croquet. In human croquet there are two teams which must run through human arches two by two. When the entire team has completed the course, the entire team locks hands and runs through every arch and back.

The other main activity of the day was kickball. For this game we were divided up into four groups led by Mr. Schwartz, Mr. Nisly, Miss Graybill, and Miss Detweiler. As the games were played, the losing team had to play against the other losing team, and the winners played against each other. Miss Detweiler's team won twice while Mr. Schwartz's and Miss Graybill's teams won one game each.

After these activities, the students chose to either go to the playground, the basketball court, or leave. The high school boys and some girls went to the basketball court and most of the rest of

the school went to the playground. Most classes stayed until about 2:45 then left to go back to the school. This was a fun afternoon away from school for everyone!

Two Seniors Teach Younger Students

In order to complete their senior requirements, two FJS students were given the option of doing a Senior Project.

Christopher Gochnauer and Teo Tejada agreed to student teach under the supervision of Miss Graybill and Mr. Nisly. Chris is teaching third grade math and Teo is teaching Phys. Ed. to the 1st - 6th graders.

Both supervisors report that the fellows are doing well. Mr. Gochnauer sees this as an opportunity to give qualified students some real-world work leadership experience before leaving school and the chance to enhance their resume'.

Circle Your Calendar

FJS plans to hold its first ever Spring Banquet at Shady Maple Smorgasbord and Banquet Center in Lancaster County, PA on Friday evening, March 13, 2009.

Plan now to join us for an inspirational and informative evening about what God is doing at FJS!

Tickets to the banquet will be complimentary, courtesy of friends of FJS who will be sponsoring the tables.

For more information on the banquet, or to become a table sponsor, contact the FJS at fjs@fjschool.org or call the school at 718-235-5493.

Box Tops for Education

We're still collecting Box Tops for Education from General Foods products. FJS receives 10¢ for each Box Top label we send in.

For a list of qualifying products, go online to boxtops4education.com and click on "All About Box Tops" and "Participating Products."

Then mail your coupons to us and we'll send them in. Thanks for your help!



Coming Events

Nov. 27-28 – NO SCHOOL.
Thanksgiving Vacation.

Dec. 19 – Annual FJS Christmas Program. 7:00 p.m.
(to be confirmed)

Dec. 23 – Early dismissal. 1:30 p.m.

Dec. 24 - Jan. 2 – NO SCHOOL. Christmas Vacation.



It's not too late to be a Warrior

To date, there are about 40 people signed up to be Prayer Warriors for FJS for the 2008-09 school term.

Prayer Warriors agree to pray every day, if possible, for the school, and receive weekly e-mail updates with news about the school and a list of prayer requests for the week.

To become an FJS Prayer Warrior and receive the weekly requests, e-mail the school at fjs@fjschool.org and put Prayer Warrior in the subject line.

Upper School Elects Student Council

During this election year, grades 7-12 had the privilege of holding their own elections as Mr. Gochnauer and Miss Detweiler introduced the idea of the school's first ever Student Council.

Students gave nominations which were reviewed by the faculty, then



Kimberly Arevalo (left) campaigns for Lazarina Luna.

presented to the students. On the next Wednesday morning the nominees presented a speech about why they should be elected. If they were too scared to give a speech, they asked a friend to give it for them. A. J. and Sarah Gavin even gave out "campaign favors" with their name hand-printed on!"

Elected to Student Council were A. J. Gavin – President, Elizabeth Oporta – Secretary/Treasurer, and Lazarina Luna and Sarah Gavin – Members-at-large.

Student Council is responsible to plan several events throughout the year including a social event for the upper floor in the fall and spring, as well as several chapels. Additionally, they have the privilege of bringing student concerns to the attention of the faculty.

Mr. Gochnauer, Student Council Advisor, said, "I was impressed with how excited the kids were about this whole process and how energetically they participated in it. I'm looking forward to some really interesting student sponsored activities for the upper school students this year."



A. J. Gavin attempts to convince students that they should elect him Student Council President.

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