



SAINT JAMES CATHOLIC SCHOOL

FAITH † FAMILY † RESPONSIBILITY † RESPECT

525 E. 14th Street † Crete, NE 68333 † 402-826-2318

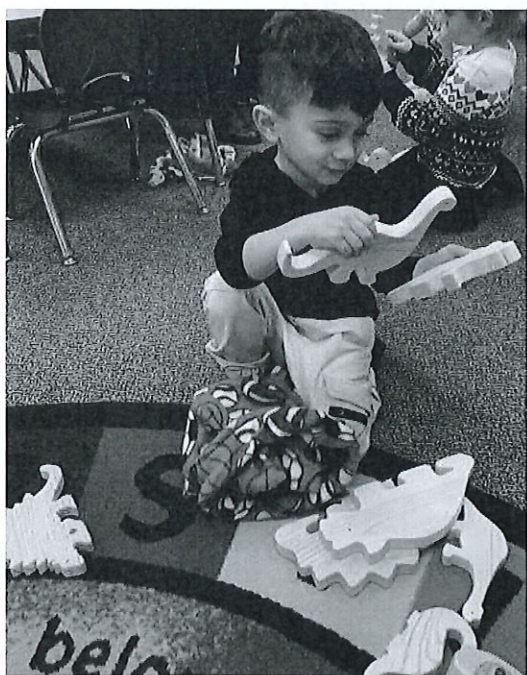
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J.M.J.A.

Dear Parents,

December 20, 2023

Early last November, a gentleman from Beatrice stopped by the school and asked to talk with me. In the hands of this bulky bright-eyed man was a hand-carved toy car with wooden wheels. He told me that he knew of a group of people who loved to make toys for children. They would make a toy for each child in our school, though they wanted to remain anonymous. Looking at the beautiful creation, I responded that every child in our school would be happy to receive such a gift.



The boxes arrived on the night of the Christmas program and, to our delight, were filled not only with cars, but also with farm animals, jungle animals, dinosaurs, fish, tops, and all sorts of clever wooden games. What a marvel to think that each toy was made by hand.

Such gifts are too special to be given thoughtlessly. So, we found the story of *The Toy Maker* and had our sixth graders act it out for the rest of the school. The story is enclosed in this packet, and I hope you will take a moment to read it. You might also ask your children what they remember about the story or, better yet, have them act it out with you. *The Toy Maker* teaches, through analogy, that God our Father works daily to make good and beautiful gifts specifically designed for each of us. His gifts are often refused, but occasionally someone says, "Thank you!" and becomes happy.

After hearing the story, the teachers chose a gift for each child to receive. Look for pictures on the school Facebook page to see how well they welcomed the presents.

We ended the time with Christmas carols, placing the baby Jesus in the manger, and saying, "Thank you" to God our Father for all His gifts, and most especially the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Savior, and King.

Thank you for sending your children to St. James School! Merry Christmas and may the Infant King bless you and your family!

Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

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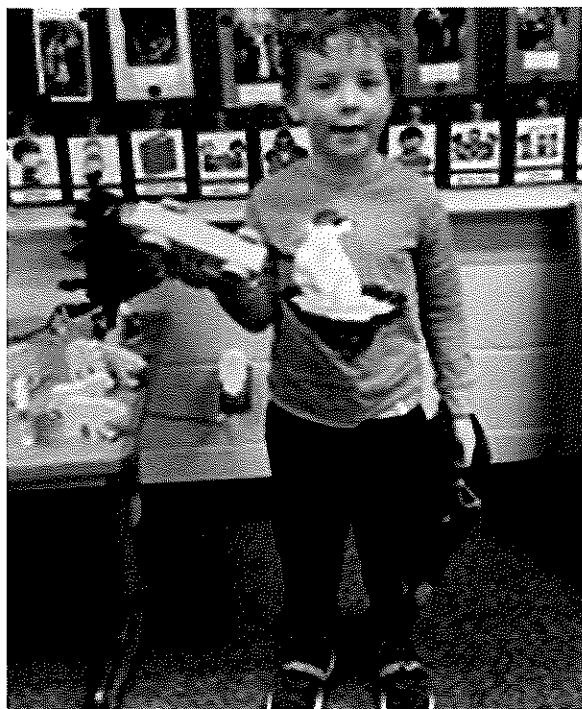
School Closings: St. James School will follow the Crete Public Schools for school closings and late start days due to dangerous weather conditions. Call School Closing (402) 826-7890 or, in Spanish, School Closing: (402) 826-7888. If the message says that Crete Public Schools are closed or have a late start due to inclement weather, know that the same is true for St. James School. Our announcement will also be on KLKN-TV Channel 8 and KOLN.KGIN TV Channel 10/11.

No School: There is no school this Thursday, December 21 – Wednesday, January 3. Enjoy the Christmas holiday!

Coming Home Today: Lunch balances, The Toy Maker story

Upcoming Dates:

Wednesday, December 20	Last day before Christmas break. Full day of school.
December 21-January 3	Christmas break. No school.
Wednesday, January 3	Retreat morning and work afternoon for faculty and staff
Thursday, January 4	School resumes
Friday, January 5	5 th and 6 th field trip
Tuesday, January 16	6:30 pm SFA Meeting
Sunday, January 28 – Feb. 2	Catholic Schools Week
February 7	Kindergarten Preview



The Toy Maker

Narrator: In a small village on the edge of a forest there lived a toy maker. The toy maker made toys all his life. He could make almost anything out of wood. He made toy cars and toy trucks and toy helicopters. He made toy animals and blocks and all kinds of other things. One day some children asked their parents if they could gather by his window and watch the toy maker. The parents said, "Yes" and so they went up to the window and they watched the toy maker make his toys. They also looked around the room at all the different toys. When the toy maker noticed that they were watching through the window, he went outside and gave his toys to each one of the children.

Toy Maker: "Hello to you!"

First Boy: "Hello."

Toy Maker: "I have been making toys all my life. It's what I love to do. And this one is a very special toy and I made it just for you."

First Boy: "But I wanted a truck . . . and these wheels are much too small. I wanted something better than this. I don't like this toy at all."

Narrator: He left the car in the toy maker's hand and the little boy walked away.

Toy Maker: "Hello to you."

First Girl: "Hello."

Toy Maker: "I have been making toys all my life. It's what I love to do. And this one is a very special toy and I made it just for you."

First Girl: "But I don't want a duck. I'd much rather have a doll. The head is too big, and it has wheels instead of feet. I don't like this toy at all."

Narrator: She left the duck in the toy maker's hand and the little girl walked away.

Toy Maker: "Hello to you."

Second Boy: "Hello."

Toy Maker: I have been making toys all my life. It's what I love to do. And this one is a very special toy and I made it just for you.

Second Boy: "But I wanted a different train. The smokestack is much too tall. The wheels are too big, and the train is too short. I don't like this toy at all."

Narrator: He left the train in the toy maker's hand and the little boy walked away.

Toy Maker: "Hello to you."

Grateful Boy and **Grateful Girl:** "Hello."

Toy Maker: "I have been making toys all my life. It's what I love to do. And this one is a very special toy and I made it just for you . . . and you."

Narrator: The little girl and boy paused, and they started to look around. They noticed some trees that were cut down nearby.

Good Girl: "Did you cut down those trees yourself?"

Toy Maker: "Why yes. That is where I get the wood to make my toys."

Good Girl: "Your arms must be tired."

Narrator: Then the little boy noticed some of the toy makers tools.

Grateful Boy: “Do you make all these toys with your own hands?”

Toy Maker: “Why yes! I make each toy by hand using these tools.”

Grateful Boy: “Your hands must be really tired.”

Narrator: Then the little girl noticed some food left out on the table.

Grateful Girl: “Was that supposed to be your lunch?”

Toy Maker: “Why yes. I skipped my lunch. I wanted to hurry so I could finish these toys for all of the children.”

Grateful Girl: “You must be very hungry. Why do you work so hard?”

Grateful Boy: “Why do you want to make all these toys?”

Toy Maker: “I have been making toys all my life. It’s what I love to do. And the toys I gave you, well I made them just for you.”

Narrator: The little girl and boy looked at the toy maker and they looked at the toys and they said,

Good Girl and Good Boy: “Thank you.”

Narrator: Do you know that God our Father is kind of like the Toy Maker? God our Father loves us and He has worked very hard to give us lots of blessings. If you take the time to look around, you will be able to see how much God our Father loves you and all the things He has done just for you.

“Praise Ye the Lord. O give thanks to the Lord for He is good and His mercy endures forever.”