Benefit Dinner Honors Our Lady

Over 700 supporters and friends of St. Ambrose Academy came together on Saturday, December 13 to celebrate Catholic education at the 8th Annual Benefit Dinner honoring Bishop Robert Morlino. The event featured special tributes to Our Lady of Guadalupe: an appearance by the Danza de Pluma del Consuelo dancers and the missionary image of Our Lady, an exact replica of the tilma image touched to the actual tilma, St. Juan Diego’s woven apron.

Sophomore Tony Brown demonstrated a lot of poise when he shared from the podium his own life-changing encounter with Our Lady of Guadalupe, including how she interceded for him when he had a life-threatening infection. Tony assured those in attendance, “I want you to know that my classmates and I are seeking to follow Our Lady, who leads us always to Our Lord.”

Rev. Francis “Fr. Rocky” Hoffman of Relevant Radio gave the keynote address. He focused on the mission of Relevant Radio: to instruct Catholics in the faith so that they can become saints. It didn’t escape anyone’s notice that St. Ambrose shares the same mission, forming young men and women in particular.

Junior Sadie O’Leary kept the momentum going by sharing how St. Ambrose has shaped her as a student, actress and Catholic. She thanked the crowd and assured them that she will live out her Catholic faith as an adult, something that cannot be taken for granted.

Crowning the evening in thanksgiving to Our Lady for her blessings, senior Matt Marsland sang a beautiful rendition of Ave Maria. Our Lady of Guadalupe, intercede for us!

St. Ambrose presents… *The Music Man*

Meredith Willson’s *The Music Man* is coming to St. Ambrose! More than 50% of the student body (95) will be singing and dancing this April to tell the story of Harold Hill, the dishonest salesman who charms and is charmed by a small Iowa town. Also, two sibling pairs will be harmonizing in the show, two brothers in the barbershop quartet and Mrs. Paroo and Winthrop for the famous “Gary, Indiana” song.

Veteran parent volunteer Diane Marsland has a big job as show producer: “This is the most dance-heavy musical we have tackled so far.” But, Diane has the help of her talented choreographer daughter, Jenny. Other parents have key roles with co-directing, set design, stage management and orchestra coordination. Student producers include Mary Donohoe as the student stage manager, Ava Balzer as the dance captain, and Maria Marsland as the assistant choreographer.

*The Music Man* will be an all-hands-on-deck effort. Co-director Margie Watson, once the female lead in *The Music Man*, says, “I’m looking forward to sharing my love of music with our St. Ambrose students so that they can bring this fun and entertaining show to all of you!”

Buy your tickets today online (www.ambroseacademy.org), by e-mail (tickets@ambroseacademy.org), or by phone (608-698-1571). Showtimes are listed above in the Save the Date section.
Alumna Profile:
Anna Schiedermayer Kohlrust

Anna Schiedermayer Kohlrust, St. Ambrose Class of 2009, had a big year in 2014. She graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville in May with a B.S. in Nursing. In July, Anna married T.J. Kohlrust, a college classmate who is now finishing his master’s thesis in Philosophy and Bioethics. Shortly after their wedding, Anna found out that she is expecting a baby in May 2015. With the start of the school year, Anna began tutoring at St. Ambrose as part of a grant from the Raskob Foundation. Then, in October, Anna passed her state board exams to become a registered nurse.

In the midst of the craziness of life, why tutor at St. Ambrose? Guidance counselor Chris Galvin asked Anna for help, knowing Anna’s talent in tutoring. Anna couldn’t resist working with students: “I really love the kids.” She appreciates the “glimpses of progress” for her students working on skills like time management. Surprisingly, the greatest impact of Anna’s tutoring was in her own spiritual life: “I have learned that it’s not about me; I’m an instrument. Hopefully, I’m opening myself up enough for God to work through me. [On my own] I don’t have the perfect words to help the kids in the perfect way.”

Anna credits St. Ambrose with forming her spiritually when she was a student too. Although she always had a personal relationship with God, the study of Catholic doctrine at St. Ambrose made her delve more deeply into her faith, learning teachings that she’s never forgotten.

Congratulations to Anna for living out her Catholic faith authentically as a Christian, wife and mother!

St. Ambrose Wish List

- Ambassadors willing to share the school!
- Amazon gift cards (for printer ink)
- OfficeMax gift cards in any denomination
- Sets of bold color dry erase markers
- New or gently used laptop computers
- Reams of plain white printer/copier paper

St. Ambrose Benefactors:
The Hoang Family

As Saigon, Vietnam fell in 1975, Huan Hoang’s family, by a twist of fate, found themselves escaping on a barge to the United States with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Huan’s parents and their 5 children settled first in La Crosse before moving to Madison when the oldest child began attending UW-Madison. Although they had nothing, Huan’s parents sacrificed to send each child to Catholic school; the youngest child attended Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Monona, where Huan’s son Stephen is now in first grade.

Huan and Judi, who met at UW-Madison, have carried on Huan’s parents’ commitment to Catholic education. Judi explains, “It is important to have strong Catholic schools so that children can learn their faith, have the freedom to talk about Jesus, and share the beautiful richness of the faith.” The Hoangs have seen their 8th grade daughter, Michelle, blossom at St. Ambrose, growing in maturity and sharing the beauty of her faith with others through the Schoenstatt movement. The Hoangs can be seen supporting every St. Ambrose event as well as fish fries, spaghetti dinners and benefits at Immaculate Heart of Mary School. For Huan, it’s worth it: “The church is ‘missionary’ in nature. St. Ambrose is equipping our students AND families with the tools to be missionaries.” The Hoangs are amazing examples of sparing no sacrifice for Catholic education!

Note: We profiled the Hoang family back in 2009. Since then, Stephen joined the Hoang family through adoption. Last school year, Michelle enrolled at St. Ambrose. Huan is a pharmacist. Judi works as a post-adoption resource specialist for Catholic Charities.