



CROSSROADS

*Holy Family Catholic Academy
December 2021*

Aloha families and friends of HFCA!

December is here, and with it comes the most wonderful time of the year for many of us, and certainly a busy time for our school community as we prepare for Christmas. Our students are reminded to keep Christ central to Christmas through various activities that include creating ornaments for the Church Christmas tree, attending mass during this season of Advent, and our December service project, among many other class activities of the same theme.

We thank you for being part of our community, and we'd like to wish you all a Merry Christmas!

Celeste Akiu, Principal

December Service Project

During December, HFCA will be raising funds to benefit the Hawaii Chapter of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation through our Coins for Cancer event. Families and community members are invited to donate any amount (coins, bills, checks) through December 15. Each homeroom will create a class poster, which will be displayed on the fence adjacent to the car line, and a prayer wall by the Health Room will honor loved ones who have lost their battle with cancer, as well as loved ones who continue their cancer journey. All HFCA students will participate in a walk to show their support on Friday, December 17.



NEW HIRES AT HFCA



Aries Reyes
Preschool Assistant Teacher,
Long-term Substitute



Condrad Timothy
1st Grade Assistant Teacher



Jonnae Taiafi
4th & 5th Grade Math Teacher



Martin Metzger
4th & 5th Grade Language Arts Teacher

Welcome!

Making God's Goodness Known. Educating for Life.

NOVEMBER COVID-19 CASES AT HFCA

Total Reported: 0

School Spread: N/A

During the month of November, our school community had **zero** positive Covid-19 cases reported. To date, our campus has not experienced any cluster spread of the virus.

If a HFCA student tests positive for Covid-19, or comes in close contact with an individual who tests positive for Covid-19, parents must notify the Principal AND Health Room Coordinator via phone and email immediately:

cakiu@hfcawhawaii.org, 808-423-9611, ext. 302
abonilla@hfcawhawaii.org, 808-423-9611, ext. 305

All general Covid-19-related questions should be directed to Principal Akiu.

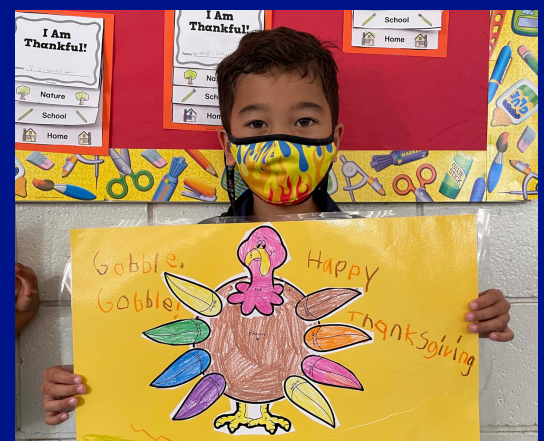
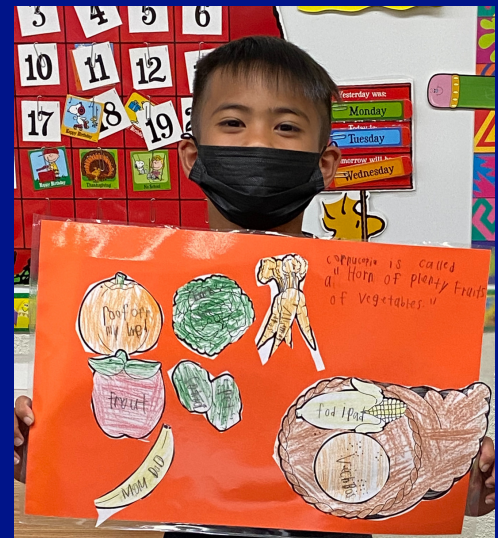
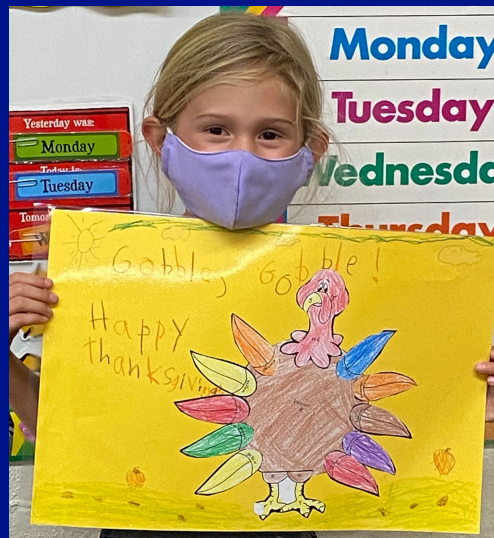
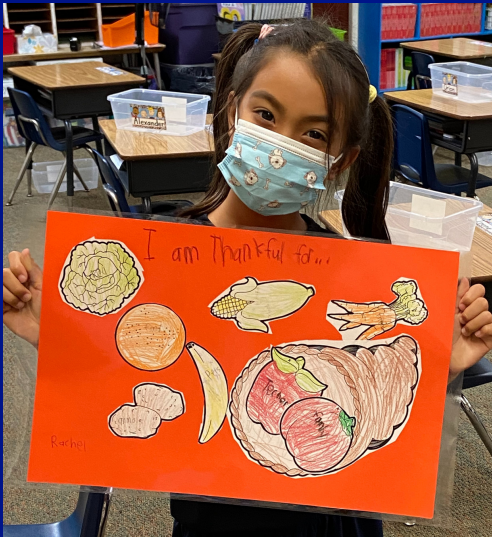
P.E. Shirts for Sale

HFCA grey P.E. shirts (new, never worn) can now be purchased for \$5 to support the Student Activities Fund. This shirt can be worn as a P.E. uniform top for the 21-22 school year, and will be considered spirit wear after that. Please use this [link](#) if you are interested in ordering a shirt. Mahalo!



Class Spotlight - 1st Grade

Our 1st Graders recently made the sweetest placemats for assisted living residents at The Plaza at Mililani and Kaneohe, just in time for Thanksgiving. Mahalo to Mrs. Vargas (1B) and Mrs. Flores (1A) for helping your students understand the value of remembering our kupuna during the holidays and acts of kindness.



Staff Spotlight: 15+ Year Employees

We are so blessed to have 10 staff members who have worked at HFCA for 15 years or more. If you add it all up, that's 211 years of experience, wisdom and love for our school community. We'd like to take a moment to thank them for the many years they've dedicated to Holy Family, and share some of their memories and interests.



Phyllis Gay - 15 Years

Mrs. Gay is our Before School Care (BSC) and After School Care (ASC) Director, who joined HFCA in 2006 shortly after her home parish of St. Philomena temporarily clustered with Holy Family. She also works as a Teachers Assistant throughout the day. When you ask her what has kept her at HFCA for so long, she's quick to say the wonderful students and life-long friendships she has made with her coworkers. Her fondest memory is the Christmas program, and everyone coming together to sing and celebrate. Mrs. Gay can't wait for the Fall Festival to return, to once again feel the incredible sense of community on campus. In her free time, she likes to shop, go to the beach and spend time with her family.



Simeon Pascua - 15 Years

Mr. Simeon joined the HFCA family in 2006 as a Maintenance Technician. Simeon lives close enough to walk to work, and is often first on campus, making sure that everything is in order before the students and staff arrive. He is quiet by nature, has a knack for keeping our plants alive, and someone that we can always count on when called upon with a task. He enjoys being part of the HFCA 'ohana and enjoys gardening, walking for exercise and watching TV. We're truly blessed to have him here.



Julie Stevens - 15 Years

Ms. Stevens is our third-grade teacher who joined HFCA in 2006. After teaching in Santa Monica for several years, she and her sister decided to move to Hawaii for a year; they both felt a connection to the islands from annual family trips to Maui. Ms. Stevens sent out resumes to several schools, and interviewed at HFCA while on a Spring Break trip -- and the rest is history! She has remained at HFCA because of the fabulous staff who've become friends, amazing parents who showered her with support and kindness and 'the best students on the planet.' Ms. Stevens can't wait until the May Day program returns, and when she's not at the school, you may find her paddle boarding, reading and traveling.



Jeff Fontanilla - 16 Years

Mr. Fontanilla is our Business & Facilities Manager, and joined our school after Holy Family was temporarily clustered with St. Philomena during the 2004-2005 school year, when staff spent the year supporting both schools/parishes. He held a similar role at St. Philomena from 1991-2005. Mr. Fontanilla had considered Priesthood before meeting and marrying his wife, so working for a Catholic Church and school provided him the best of both worlds with a fulfilling career he had hoped for. Jeff's fondest memory of HFCA is working at the 2018 Fall Festival event with his wife Christine, who lost her battle with cancer shortly after. He looks forward to future Fall Festivals and Bingo, when pandemic-related restrictions are lifted. In his spare time, Mr. Fontanilla enjoys traveling, cooking, gardening and participating in practical shooting competitions.



Ed Galacio - 18 Years

Coach Ed is our P.E. teacher, who joined HFCA in 2003 when our late pastor, Father Mullen brought him onboard. Holy Family is the perfect fit for him, because it's his home parish and his fondest memories of the school are when his own children attended HFCA. Coach Ed looks forward to when all sports can resume on campus (no surprise there!) and enjoys the gym, beach, Church, watching sports and catching up on sleep in his free time.

Staff Spotlight: 15+ Year Employees Cont.



Casey Domingcil - 21 Years

Ms. Casey is the lead teacher in our Noah's Ark class and has worked at Holy Family since 2000. She describes the school as her "home away from home" which makes sense considering her mom previously worked as an Assistant in the Preschool. It's the feeling of community and support from her fellow coworkers and families that keeps her here after all these years.

Ms. Casey's fondest memory is her very first year as lead teacher, when she took over the role with short notice; the support she received from the families of her students is something she will never forget and forever be grateful for. She looks forward to the Fall Fest resuming and being able to gather together as a community. In her spare time, Ms. Casey loves going to the beach and watching Netflix.



Malia Paulos - 24 Years

Malia Paulos is our Accounts Receivable staff member who originally joined HFCA as an Administrative Assistant for our Preschool, where she worked for 10 years before moving to the Business Office. And after all these years, the flexibility of working for a school, and the people of HFCA (co-workers, parents, students) continue to make it a good fit for her. Mrs. Paulos' fondest memory of HFCA is when her three children attended the school, and being here to experience all their activities and accomplishments. Like many of her colleagues, she looks forward to the return of the Fall Festival.



Lorna de Leon - 25 Years

Ms. Lorna is currently our 2nd Grade Teacher Assistant, and has worked in many positions at HFCA since joining the staff in 1996. As an immigrant from the Philippines, Ms. Lorna took a chance of seeking employment at HFCA when she first moved to Hawai'i. A position wasn't open at the time, but she was able to volunteer at the school through a special program offered by the State of Hawai'i, and was hired full-time three months later. HFCA is like a second family to Ms. Lorna and she felt welcomed, loved and appreciated from the moment she joined the staff. Her fondest memory is working for the Preschool for 20 years, and the chance to organize the annual Christmas program; she can't wait until both the Christmas program and May Day festivities can resume on campus again. You may also know Ms. Lorna as our esteemed car line coordinator each afternoon. When she's not asking you to "move up" (ha ha) she likes to sing, shop and sleep.



Michele Guarino - 25 Years

Mrs. Guarino is our grade 3-8 Religion Teacher who has been part of our Holy Family 'ohana since she was two years old! She received her First Holy Communion from one of the original priests, Father Mann, and also knew the founding priest, Father Sherry. She officially joined the HFCA staff in 1997, and has worn many hats, including after-hours cleaning staff, teachers assistant and middle school Spanish teacher. Mrs. Guarino is also an adjunct Spanish instructor for Hawai'i Pacific University's (HPU) Military Campus programs Pearl Harbor location. Her fondest memories of HFCA are the lifelong connections she has made with students and staff, and she can't wait for a staff Christmas party when we can all gather again. Mrs. Guarino loves bargain hunting at Ross and TJMaxx, Hallmark movies, and the happiness of Christmas music.



Debbie Gibo - 37 Years

Mrs. Gibo is our Teacher Mentor who has held many positions at HFCA, dating back to her first role as Kindergarten teacher in 1984! At the time she was looking for a position outside of the DOE, and a friend recommended applying to Holy Family. Mrs. Gibo later developed and directed the After School Care program, worked as a Reading Enrichment Teacher for grades K-8, 3rd grade teacher, RTI Coordinator and Director of Student Services before her current position as Teacher Mentor to new and returning teachers. It's a good fit after all these years, because Mrs. Gibo was given the freedom to do the job she had always envisioned. Like many of her colleagues, her fondest memories are from when her own children were students at HFCA and she can't wait until we can resume all the Catholic Schools Week activities. When she's not at the school, you may find her reading, shopping or chatting with her grandsons on Zoom.

WELCOME BACK WILDCAT ATHLETICS!

We are so happy to announce that some of our athletic programs are back on campus through special skills clinics and friendly scrimmages. During the past few months, HFCA has offered cheer, basketball, and volleyball clinics for students in the 3rd - 8th grades. In addition, a girls volleyball scrimmage was held with Sacred Hearts, and our boys basketball team scrimmaged with both Damien and Mid-Pac, respectively.

To ensure the health and safety of our athletes and coaches, spectators are not allowed on campus during these events, but the games have been live-streamed via social media. HFCA is committed to providing a co-educational athletic program that promotes the health, wellbeing, and development of our young student-athletes. We look forward to the return of the Catholic School League (CSL) and the Christian School League (CSAL), as competitive after-school sports programs for grades 4-8.



Mahalo to our PTG Volunteers!

Mahalo to the parent volunteers who keep our Parent Teacher Guild running! Did you know you can purchase gently used uniforms from the PTG year-round, including spirit wear like our 'vintage aloha' shirt for \$3 via this [link](#)? Email ptg@hfcahawaii.org with any questions.

Jennifer Espiritu, President

Years Served on PTG Executive Committee: 2
Children at HFCA: Ridley (Kindergarten) and Aiden (2nd Grade)

Maureen Paparo, Vice President

Years Served: Newly elected - congrats!
Children at HFCA: Michael (4th Grade)

Melissa Krul, Secretary & Representative to the School Board

Years Served on PTG Executive Committee: 2
Children at HFCA: Claire (4th Grade) and Colette (Kindergarten)

Karl Sakai, Treasurer

Years Served on PTG Executive Committee: 2
Children at HFCA: Kelli (5th Grade)

Jessica Waller, Member at Large

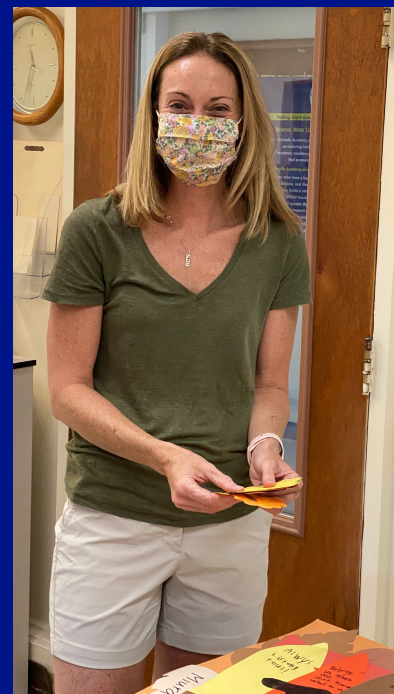
Years Served on PTG Executive Committee: 2
Children at HFCA: Avyanna (2nd Grade)

Makale'a Gushikuma, Member at Large

Years Served: Newly elected - congrats!
Children at HFCA: Alika (2nd Grade)

Kau'i Kane, Member at Large

Years Served: Newly elected - congrats!
Children at HFCA: Ka'ena (Kindergarten)



Let Us Pray

Almighty Father, you so loved the world that you sent us your only begotten Son to be our Savior. Fill our hearts with love and compassion, and inspire us to make a spiritual pilgrimage to Bethlehem this season of Advent, to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Jesus with the humility of the shepherds who greeted him at the first Christmas. We ask this through the same Christ, our Lord.

- Father Rheo Ofalsa

Holy Family Catholic Church

Monday - Friday

Mass - 8am

Saturday

Confessions - 3:30 - 4:30 pm

Mass (Sunday Vigil) - 5 pm

Sunday

Masses at 8:30 and 11 am, 7 pm

Seating is limited to 250 persons with social distancing. Masks are required. We don't require reservations, and invite you to join us on a 'first come, first served' basis. We invite parents, grandparents, and friends of HFCA to join us for mass any time!

Q: What traditions does your family have to keep Christ in Christmas?

"A family tradition that I had as a child, and one that I practice with my own family as a parent, is to wait until Christmas morning before placing baby Jesus in the manger. We take turns doing this every year." - **Mr. MacMaster, Assistant Principal**

"My family goes to church on Christmas eve or Christmas day." - **Gregoria Macias, 5th Grade**

"Every year, we adopt a less fortunate family through Helping Hands Hawaii, and fulfill their wish list. We began this tradition when my oldest son was three years old and this is our 24th year." - **Mrs. Motonaga, KA Teacher**

"Every night we read a bible verse on the Jesse Tree." - **Liam Hussey, 7th Grade**

"We usually attend the midnight mass and sing Christmas carols. We help our family in the Philippines continue the tradition of feeding the poor children in the community and giving them goodie bags on Christmas Day." - **Mrs. Miguel, 2A Teacher**

"My family sets up a nativity on a table in our living room." - **Karys Shimizu, 7th Grade**

"While saying grace, we each share what we are grateful for and there's never a dry eye when we close our prayer with Amen." - **Ms. Akiu, Principal**

"My family does a family prayer on Christmas eve before bed." - **Sophia Bein, 7th Grade**

"We choose two children to buy gifts for from Holy Family Church's Angel Tree every year." - **Mrs. Guarino, 3-8 Religion Teacher**

Holy Family Catholic Academy (HFCA) is a co-ed, parochial, private school for students in preschool through 8th grade, located near the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport. HFCA offers both on-campus and virtual learning programs, as well as before and after school care. Focused on rigorous academics in a faith-based environment that is inclusive and affordable, HFCA accepts applications for new students year-round. For more information please visit www.hfcahawaii.org or call (808) 423-9611.