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The Vatican Express — Jasper parishes combine efforts for Vacation Bible School

By PAM FREYBERGER, CRE (St. Joseph Church, Jasper)

All aboard the Vatican Express! The parishes of St. Joseph and Holy Family in Jasper joined together to make St. Joseph Parish Center look and feel like Vatican City from the eyes of the children. Pam Freyberger and Mary Altman, DRE's of the parishes, chose to use Growing with the Saints most recent Vacation Bible School program called "Vatican Express Catholic Kidz Camp." The program is rich in teaching about the tradition and history of the Catholic faith.

One of the valuable reasons for using Growing with the Saints Catholic Kidz Camp programs is that lessons include scripture and tradition and are designed to keep the interest of children ages 4 through sixth grade. Each day included breakout sessions of music, crafts, Bible stories, lessons, snacks and games.

Deacon Christopher Droste began the week by narrating the story of St. Jerome and his role in translating the Bible.

The gym was transformed into St. Peter's Square which included St. Peter's Cafe, the Sistine Chapel and Michelangelo's Loft.

During lesson time throughout the week the children learned about St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel, the role of the papacy, and Pope Benedict XVI.

Parents reported that their children came home from Vacation Bible School talking with excitement about what they had learned. Tad Reinsch, a seventh grade helper, was inspired to look online to learn more information about the Swiss Guard.

The children also learned about their Catholic faith through the music. Amy Seger, one of the lesson leaders, said, "This is the best music for Vacation Bible School that I have ever heard. So much about the Catholic faith was taught through fun, contemporary songs."

The children also learned about Eucharistic Adoration. Deacon Droste gave a brief talk on the Eucharist and the children sat quietly and prayed for five minutes.

Teaching the children about Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was a beautiful way to end the week by introducing the children to pray quietly in the presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.



Maude Drew, a fourth grade parishioner from St. Joseph Church in Jasper, blows through a bubble cup which was made for each of the participants during an outdoor activity at Vacation Bible School. ***Click for a larger version.***