



MAR QARDAKH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MQIS- *Where Students Get a World Class Education!*

Parent Newsletter

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March, 2021



His Excellency Archbishop
BASHAR WARDA
Governor of the School

*An International Baccalaureate
School in the Heart of Ankawa-
Erbil, Kurdistan-IRAQ*

Volume 1

Community Service Class

Issue 3

Governor's Corner- The month of March has been rather overwhelming with tasks and responsibilities. Thanks to Almighty God for the energy provided, we have been able to accomplish a lot not only for our school commitment, but for the future of Christians in Iraq. His Holiness Pope Francis's visit to Iraq hopefully will have a significant positive impact on tolerance and coexistence in peace and prosperity for all 'brothers' in Iraq – land of Abraham. Our staff and students participated in his Holiness Mass in Franso Hariri Stadium where they were interviewed by the international media and seeing your children on TV was truly a joyous moment for me, feeling proud of their talents and commitment to life successes. As a result of his Holiness visit, we had two American delegation visit the Archdioceses of Ankawa which focused on our future generation- Education. Thanks to hard work of our principal Ms. Hala at MQIS, we managed to meet and greet the two delegations in a productive matter. Consequently, we received commitment that they will work with us cooperatively and collaboratively to ensure academic success for all of our posterity. First, we had the delegation from Chesterton Network in establishing a Catholic High School where our students will be able to develop a love for Jesus Christ, but with their cohesive Grade 9-12 curriculum our students will do very well in the SAT or other external exams required for university admission either here in Iraq or abroad. This delegation met with parents, students and staff and they are excited to work with us on this mission. We met with the KRG Minister of Education, Mr. Alan and thanks to Mr. Faim we secured a license to open such school in our midst. During this time, we also hosted a delegation from Franciscan University of Steubenville from Ohio, USA. The MQIS school administration and I met with them and kindly requested that they provide us at least 10 teachers starting August 2021. The teachers including a friar/priest I requested for religious education, will work together with the Chesterton administration so these teachers receive PD-Professional Development training to ensure that they will be able to implement the curriculum in such a matter that will enable our students to excel academically and be successful in whatever university they will attend. Happy Easter to all.

PYP 5A&B- Projects in Progress

On St. Patrick's Day, Wednesday, March 17th parents of PYP5 prepared food for all students to have lunch. The proceeds of this will be used to fund the projects of the students in PYP5A&B. Eight groups have already been formed to research and prepare projects on the following eight topics: Climate Change, Pollution, Pandemic, Endangered Species, Waste Management, Natural Disasters, Deforestation, and Over Population. Researching, planning and working together on these projects, students will acquire a wealth of knowledge including developing positive attitudes i.e appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, respect and tolerance. These projects help students improve various skills such as communication, social, research, and self management. Good luck PYP5A&B on your mission to a superb exhibition towards end of May beginning of June.



On Sunday, March 7th at the Franso Hariri Stadium, his holiness Pope Francis conducted a mass in the presence of 10,000 people starting at 4:00pm. MQIS MYP 3 and 4 students had VIP passes where they were seated near the stage where his Holiness conducted the mass. As the Pope arrived in his Popemobile, as a result of one of the MQIS staff member's initiative, people began shouting VIVA PAPA as he was passing by. Prior to His Holiness arrival at the stadium, the MQIS staff and students began singing and dancing with the nuns. Our Excellency Archbishop Bashar Warda towards the end of the mass made a historic speech in English thanking his Holiness for coming to Iraq and inspire Christians to remain in their ancestral land-land of Abraham and predicated coexistence and tolerance. Students and staff of MQIS were picked up by buses at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chaldean Catholic Parish

On Tuesday, March 9th, the Delegation from Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio-USA made up of Franciscan Friar, Dave Pivonka, president of the university, Dr. Daniel Kempton-Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Dr. Tif-



fany Boury, Director of the Masters in Catholic Leadership met with his Excellency Archbishop Bashar Warda and Ms. Hala, to discuss a plan of bringing at least 10 teachers from this prestigious university to come and teach next academic year. Details of the agreement were discussed and both parties agreed to the terms and conditions. A tour of the school was provided to the guests and they were impressed with the students, staff and the school.

Principal's Corner- As you were made aware on March 11th and Sunday, March 14th school was closed due to the Kurdistan Holiday and Covid 19. Please be advised in person, on line or hybrid, I assure you, your children will continue to get a world class education ensuring that they acquire all the necessary skills and concepts they need to move on to the next grade level come August 2021. But your support is needed to work with our teachers to ensure academic success for our children. I like to encourage you to ensure that your children devote at least one hour to completion of homework assignments. It is imperative that you set a time where either you or your wife can just sit next to your child to ensure that they complete their assignments. Homework is basically to review what they have learned that day and prepare them for the summative exams. As you all know, during the month of March we had all sorts of different activities but all was related for the betterment of your children and their future. We have missed several school days in March due to the Kurdish Nowruz and as a result of students will have to catch up with their classes because as you know due to Easter Holiday, school will be closed on Thursday April 1st, Sunday, April 4th and Monday, April 5th. Students are scheduled to return to school on Tuesday, April 6th. Happy Easter and God Bless MQIS Family!

On Monday, March 8th, at 11:030am, the Chesterton Delegation from USA- Mr. Andrew Youngblood, Ms. Amy Hunt and Ms. Laura



Bramon Hassan had a meeting with all MYP students of MQIS regarding the opening of a high school for 2021-2022 academic year. Mr. Andrew spoke to students about the curriculum that will enable students to do well in the SAT external exam required for university admissions. The courses are intertwined and the teacher serves as a facilitator. This is a four-year program with sequential and integrated curriculum with high level day to day lesson plans. The classical curriculum combines a broad liberal arts education with a strong emphasis on development of Christian virtues and appreciation of beauty. The three-pillar model- **Intellect-** western thought from physics to philosophy, **Character-** cardinal virtues, prudence, temperance, fortitude and justice; and **Spirituality-** to know God, love Him and serve Him. Students asked questions about the test and Mr. Andrew answered and also explained that in the 9th grade they can take PSAT. He advised the students that they can take the SAT as many times as they like and use the one with the highest score once they get to the 12th grade. The meeting lasted until 12:15.

Chesterton Delegation from USA

On Thursday, March 4th at 5:30 pm, the Chesterton Delegation from the USA made up of Amy Hunt, Andrew Youngblood and Laura Bramon Hassan along with Mar Qardakh International school principal Ms. Hala and Mr. Fahmi, head of Ankawa Ministry of Education, met with about 80 parents to discuss the opening of a Catholic High School here at MQIS. Students would not only get a Christian education but will be enabled to do well on the SAT exam- an external test required by local and international universities along with school's transcript and the high school diploma. Ms. Hala interpreted for parents and Mr. Fahmi



responded to questions parents had about Kurdi-



stan Ministry of Education. Earlier that day, the Chesterton Delegation along with Ms. Hala and Mr. Fahmi met with Kurdistan Minister of Education- Mr. Alan in order to ascertain the school license. The outcome of the meeting was positive considering not only parents of MQ MYP 3 and 4 were present but also parents of soon to be high school students of other schools in the Archdiocese school district were present. The School MYP Coordinator also spoke about how his excellency had asked him to review the curriculum – thus saying that students not only will develop love for Jesus Christ through this curriculum but also students will do very well in the College Board SAT test.

International Student/Teacher Exchange Program Coming Soon at MQIS

With the opening of the new Chesterton Academy High School here at MQIS in September 2021, not only will the Sister to Sister Talk Across the World will continue but this will contribute to the establishment of the International Student Exchange Program where these girls will be able to visit each other and attend each other's school. In addition to having this, we are also planning to have a Teacher Exchange program with the Chesterton Academies in the USA and Italy where teachers will be able to come and teach at MQIS for one semester and our teachers go and teach at their schools for one semester. All this is to benefit our students here and also our brothers and sisters abroad. We want to encourage them to visit their ancestral land and have them witness that here it's not what it used to be when their parents or grandparent fled for their lives. Also, for our students to go abroad is to confirm that life is no better abroad.



Sister to Sister Talk Across the World

Through the efforts of our principal, Ms. Hala- our female students in MYP 4 at MQIS meet with Chaldean sisters in Michigan through Zoom and discuss various topics including what is life like in American and how things have changed here in Ankawa and elsewhere in Christian Communities in Iraq since 2013 and His Holiness Pope Francis visit truly confirmed this new revelation. The objective of this program is to create a connection between the young girls in Iraq and those in the US through literature and discussions on various topics. Overall, is to empower the sisters to read and expand their vocabulary, while helping them about the worlds outside of their own. The smell of a new book. Getting lost in a bookstore. Characters becoming heroes. This is the joy of reading. As technology enhances and social media becomes more important – books lose their charm, and reading becomes more of a chore and less of a hobby. What started as a simple idea – to inspire young people to start reading again, has grown into an opportunity for a deep connection between sisters separated by countries. The Mar Qardakh Mission serves to inspire new readers and connect our students in the diaspora to girls in our homeland. These young women profoundly learn from each other, reading, talking, sharing, and cherishing the written word. Currently, we have five students from America meeting weekly with students from Mar Qardakh School. In this term, we discuss the novel *Seven Daughters and Seven Sons*. This story originates from an Iraqi folktale and tells the story of a young woman caught between tradition and ambition. Buran, the hero in the story, attempts to save her family, but most do so by defying them. As the story unfolds, we weave through Buran's adventures in our homeland and learn about her struggles. Most importantly, we read how she overcomes societal norms by daring to be different. As we talk about these books, we also draw a connection to our personal stories. Often, the girls will discuss their own conflicts, passions, experiences, and how it relates to the books they are reading. We hope that this program will help keep these conversations alive. Our goal is to inspire these girls to build their future, form lasting relationships, and enrich their community.



Individuals and Societies (I&S) Class Learning About Natural Disasters

By Dima Kharboosh, Matilda Ramzi and Mereet Oghanna

On Tuesday, March 16, 2021, MYP 3 students had a summative presentation related to their I&S unit about natural disasters. In the presentation, students picked a specific natural disaster that happened in history and made a power point about it, explaining the causes and consequences of the natural disaster they picked. For example, The Nepal earthquake in 2015, the Great Chinese famine, and the great Sendai earthquake and tsunami. They also expressed the negative and positive effects of the natural disaster they picked. The students were able to give brief and useful information about the disasters they chose. The rest of the class wrote feedback on a paper given to them by their teacher, Mr. Leonard. On the paper, there were three points to answer: what did you like about the presentation? What can they improve/ develop? And at least a fact that they learned from their classmate's presentation.



Our Design Project By Hanel Hader

MYP Students in Ms. Saveen's design class are working on **3 R's Project**- recycling, reduce, and reuse. The group, Hanel, Mattias, and Sebastian are working on a fountain with flowers and plants all over it so the bottles won't show. It will be nicer because it will show like it's a rain forest and we will make the water continue with water pressure so the water won't stop at It all. w i l l keep on going up and down and we will put two small windmills made out of paper and sticks each one on each side so it will look more natural and when the air hits the windmill it will turn it. They are making it out of bottles so they won't need, paper, cardboard, straw, plants, and flowers to put around the fountain. It won't be simple. This is applying critical thinking skills and creativity. Other student groups are applying higher order thinking skills to try and recycle, reduce and reuse.



Ms. Matilda's PYP5B Assignment

Since our fourth unit is about Matter in our Life, students were asked to conduct an experiment on liquids using a funnel. The purpose of this homework experiment was to see how liquids with different textures and thickness behave and how long it takes them to travel through the funnel so that the students have a deeper understanding of matter in our life and the properties of the liquid state of matter. One student stood out. Her name is Jozyan Marwan. She was organized, had all her tools for the experiment on display, and presented her work well. She used three liquids in her experiment: Milk, Cooking oil, and Honey. The outcome was that milk was the fastest to travel through the funnel, followed by cooking oil and honey.



Project in PYP3A

As a part of "How the World Works" theme in Ms. Danar's class, the pupils focused on science regarding planting a bean by using a jar, cotton, beans and some water. After exploring the way of how the plant and the bean grows the PYP3A students were really excited to apply and see that by themselves in the classroom. This was truly a hands on learning experience for our pupils in a lively classroom. Pupils were so excited they had trouble controlling themselves for getting the job done in a most effective and efficient manner. Seeing the passion kids had on this project truly was refreshing. This prompted the teacher to do more hands on project for the class. This is what is known in the academic world as differentiated instruction. Keep up the good work teachers!



Costume Day at MQIS

By: Maryam Siraj Qas Mati-MYP4

On Wednesday, March.10.2021 Mar Qardakh International School celebrated Kurdish day by wearing the Kurdish costumes. The girls wore a traditional long dress made up with a lot of colorful clothing over it a jacket or vest, and colorful belts. All through this style has changed, nowadays, old women wear darker and muted colors, though young women and girls wear brightly colored traditional dresses. For the boys who also wore Kurdish clothes as plain shirts and vests or jackets over their shirts. The clothing is done by a



large belt or sash tied around the waist, with a turban around their head, and traditionally a dagger tucked into the big sash at the waist. It was a nice

Tri-Lingualism at MQIS

English is the Medium of Instruction at MQIS for core subjects. However, Arabic at MQIS is taught as an IB second language; meeting and exceeding



KMofE requirement for the Arabic language. Kurdish Language and Social Studies in Kurdish are also taught as required by the Kurdistan Ministry of Education. Ms. Shayma, Mr. Sanar and Ms. Byara do a great job of teaching Kurdish and Arabic using a dual language approach unlike other schools in Kurdistan. Our students will be ready and prepared to be tri-lingual future leaders and be caring, contributing, citizens wherever they go. Passionate about learning, our students take education seriously and have intensified efforts not only in doing their homework but putting their best into doing well in all classes.

Ms. Rana's PYP4 A&B Students

Students in design class learned about Modern Buildings. Afterward, students were asked to draw modern buildings using warm and cool colors on the background and the combination of various elements studied in one painting which explains the modern structure.



MQIS PYP1A Showing Their Talents to PYP4

On March 10th, 2021 in PYP1 Room A, pupils finished science units 1&2 related to plants and ourselves-humans. Ms. Setta's pupils began to collect all relevant information learned through the two units they covered. During one week of school, pupils worked on preparing a presentation to PYP4 students of Mr. Fadi's class and that of Ms. Shahad about the importance of each part of the bodies and how they work. Rayan spoke about the importance of the hair, eyebrows, eyelashes, the iris and the pupil. Whereas Bella talked about the sensory of organs. But Belen spoke about the importance of the nose and ears while Mirka talked about the importance of the mouth, teeth and how food gets digested in the stomach while our Dr. Williams spoke about the importance of teeth for speaking clearly and giving the viewers a beautiful smile. Leon spoke about the tongue while Rowad



spoke about the importance of the neck and the shoulders. As for the hair, Joseph spoke about the hair on the arms and legs, and the significance of the legs, knees, ankles and toes. Rami talked about the importance of the hands and fingers whereas Roland asked questions about how scientists make observations. Elona and Yoram explained how to differentiate between living and nonliving things as Rivak concluded by speaking about parts of the plants.

John Mac's Students Study the Campus

On Tuesday March 16 PYP3b students had an activity called recognize their campus for the purpose of discovering how the plants contain 4 spheres hydrosphere, atmosphere, lithosphere (geosphere) and biosphere, by absorb-



ing their nearby environment and writing the words for water, life, air and rock in their notebook to know about how the four major parts works together as a complex system. That allowed students to come to their own answers and follow up with explaining and defining the terms of lithosphere (geosphere), hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere.

Spring Has Sprung

March 21st is the beginning of Spring Season. With Newroz and most important holiday in Christianity, the resurrection of Jesus Christ- Easter holidays break, are clear indications that spring has sprung in this part of the world. The sunshine, higher temperatures, flowers, grass and even the look on people's faces you can tell we are in different season of the year. Happy healthy and safe spring to all members of MQIS family. God Bless!



Stars of the Month -PYP1-5

Every month we select the best of the best students at MQIS who stood out not only in attendance but academics and leadership in



our classes. The following students were selected by their homeroom teachers as stars of the month who met this criteria. We congratulate them for a job well done. Belen Zanko Skharia-PYP1A, RayanRamiz Nader -PYP1A, Oshan Arkhawan-PYP1B, Rashel Yousif-PYP1B, Maren Remoon-PYP1B, Mathio Senan Butros-PYP2A, Bella Zanko Skharia-PYP2B, Yohan Bassam Muncer-PYP3A, Meena Yousif Bakos-PYP3B, Ramel Romio Ewan -PYP4, Adam Robert William-PYP4B, Virona Shwan -PYP5A and Jozyan Marwan-PYP5B

Students of the Month MYP1-4

Students in upper grades are selected as students of the month not by one teacher but by



all their teachers. Teachers meet every month and discuss which students stood out during the month in the area of attendance, summative exam results and student leadership including supporting the teachers for their hard work and commitment to the student academic achievement. Congratulation to the following students: Mina Remoon -MYP1A, Maria Evan -MYP1B, Yara Yohana-MYP2A, Yara Thamer-MYP2, Ibrahim Nasseer-MYP3 and Marina Slewa-MYP4

Employee of the Month

Our principal Ms. Hala, selects the employee of the month for going above and beyond his/her call of duty to ensure academic success for all students in a clean, safe healthy teaching and nurturing learning environment. This month the employee who stood out is non other than our school secretary Ms. Mariana Kakony who goes above her call of duty to ensure a smooth school operation.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MARCH BORN MQIS Students

Alberto Aymen Saeed-PYP1
RowaidZaedNaffi-PYP1
Mirka Wisam Yousif-PYP1
DanyBashareHekmat-PYP2
Gabriel Rofu-PYP2
Stella Nihad Kareem-PYP
Fidor Firas Polis-PYP4
YazenSamirYaqoob-PYP4
Dawood Rimon Jirjees-PYP
Baz Wisam Yosif-PYP5
Fadi Luay Najah-PYP5
Yerevan KevorkAntranek-PYP5
Pamela Shamoon Yousif-MYP1
MeronNaffi AbdulAhad-MY
Astella James Yalda-MYP2



