

Earth Day Happening at St. Anthony of Padua School

By Susan Cinquemani

Students at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School celebrated Earth Day this year with many fun and educational activities.

Miss Laskowski's kindergarten class kicked off their celebration by learning the importance of recycling. Her class learned how to recycle and spent time sorting the recyclables at school and depositing them in the appropriate bins. Recycling is an ongoing effort by all of the students and faculty at St. Anthony's. The kindergarten students also learned about plants and soil and its important nutrients. They then enjoyed planting herbs and repotting a plant in their classroom.

Their celebration would not be complete without Earth Day crafts! The kindergarten students wrote stories about the earth and then used markers and spray bottles to create the earth on coffee filters. The children also used recycled paper and sticks from the ground outside to make beautiful pinwheels!

The student Garden Club at St. Anthony of Padua School had many special activities to commemorate both Earth Day and Arbor Day. The group had a special guest speaker from the Greenville Women's Garden Club. Sara Conner spoke to the club about the importance and varieties of trees. She will return to the school and help the students plant an oak tree in honor of Earth Day. The Garden Club also studied earthworms and earthworm composting and with the help of local volunteers will be constructing a composter for the garden.

The Earth Day fun continued with a Garden Club Fun Friday activity that included designing and making Earth Day t-shirts and having a snack that included Blue and Green juice. The student gardeners also make bird feeders out of recycled materials and enjoyed a "bird's nest" snack.

While Earth Day marked a day for special activities at St. Anthony's School, the student Garden Club works year round on activities and workshops that positively impact our earth. With guidance from advisor Cheryl Baxley, the students are actively involved in the St. Anthony of Padua community and student garden. They continue to learn about herbs and vegetables and continue their planting efforts in the garden. Several employees from a local branch of BB&T BANK will assist them during the month of May. Through a BB&T grant, these employees will work with the students on projects for the garden that include: building raised vegetable beds, building a composter as well as a garden trellis. The month of May will also be busy for the student gardeners as they get the garden ready for a special event on May 12. The St. Anthony garden has been selected to be part of the Greenville Urban Farm Tour on that day.

St. Anthony's student gardeners were also very excited to find out that the Greenville Women's Garden Club has selected the club for a Junior Gardeners program. Beginning in September, the Women's Club will "adopt" the students as junior gardeners and conduct educational workshops on successful gardening and vegetables. St. Anthony's hopes to have the workshops take place in an outdoor classroom by the garden.

Students at St. Anthony of Padua enjoyed their celebration of Earth Day. They will continue their "green" efforts throughout the year – learning about our earth and striving to make a positive impact!