

Local School Teaches More Than Academics

By Tracy Rolling 01.JAN.09

Students at Ramona Lutheran School (RLS) are learning more than mathematics and language arts. They're learning how to help others with their own blessings.

Since August, the students have passed an offering plate during their weekly chapel visits. Tossing into the collection a few coins each week, the students have quickly accumulated almost \$700.

"All of the donations came from the children," said fourth-grade teacher, Jackie Fisher. "A student might ask their parent what they can do to earn some extra money, but they don't ask the parent for a donation."

Following this tradition since the school's inception, teachers and staff designate an organization to support financially each quarter.

"This quarter we picked the Michael Job Girl's Orphanage," Fisher said. "It's a haven for daughters of persecuted and martyred Christians in India."

With a mission to rescue, care for and educate girls ranging in age from 1 to 18, the orphanage focuses on equipping them with a college education and a theological degree. This is so they can return to their native state, working and spreading the Gospel as a way to honor their parents.

"Not only did our students raise the money for the orphanage, they prayed for them as well," said Fisher, who originally learned about the need in an e-mail.

A poster in the shape of a thermometer was created to help the students measure their giving. Fisher estimates the school has raised between \$25,000 and \$30,000 during the past 23 years.

"Little gifts can add up to a great amount," she said, listing a few of the ministries they have donated to at home and abroad.

"We've given to Athletes in Action, a Campus Crusade for Christ ministry, to reach sports fans around the world for Jesus. We've also contributed to the hurricane victims, local fire victims, bought mattresses for an orphanage in India, and donated to a school in Vietnam.

"We're hoping the students will learn that Christ taught us to be generous, to give from our own blessings and abundance."

Principal Nancy Knight's philosophy is to hold what you have with an open hand so that God can use it.

“God blesses us when we give to others,” Knight said.

“Our students are learning the spirit of giving and also the spirit of God.”

A check was mailed last month to the orphanage and plans are underway to find the next ministry in need.

For now, RLS will continue to provide a nurturing Christ-centered education for approximately 90 students in kindergarten through eighth grades, and 40 students who are enrolled in the Montessori preschool program. Funding is privately provided, based on tuition, and a parent organized Booster Club lends support by organizing activities and fundraisers, such as an annual golf tournament held every spring.

“We have smaller class sizes, which make for more individualized learning, and we follow the state standards, keeping our lessons focused on Christian beliefs,” said Fisher. “From science to history, each subject can honor God.”

Open enrollment begins in early spring. To learn more, call 760-789-4804 or visit www.ramonalutheranschool.com.