

# MI CLASE ES TU CLASE

## Lower School Spanish Newsletter

November 2015



November 1st and 2nd mark two very important days on the church's calendar: All Saint's Day and All Soul's Day. These are particularly important in Mexican culture and tradition: Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead in English. These two days are to remember and celebrate the lives of our loved ones who are no longer with us. In Mexican culture, they believe their loved ones return to earth to celebrate and spend time with their families. The bright, colorful calaveras (skulls) have many purposes on the day of the dead, dating back to ancient Aztec traditions. Many people paint their faces as a calavera to ensure that they won't scare their family members who are returning. Many of my students decorated calaveras, and chose to bring in photos of their loved ones and pets to decorate an altar in our classroom. Their empathy and compassion towards each other (ALL AGES) has blown me away this week. Father Michael did a special Day of the Dead and All Souls Day sermon on Monday morning and the chapel was decorated with beautiful calaveras. It was so wonderful for the children to see it all come together. I am so proud of them!

Two of the greatest misconceptions Americans have about Day of the Dead are: 1. It is a scary holiday AND 2. It is a Mexican version of Halloween

## Ratoncito Perez and the Tooth Fairy

Pre-K through 3rd grade learned about one of my favorite creatures in Latin American/Spanish traditions this month! Ratoncito Perez is a friendly adventurous mouse that comes to collect children's lost teeth (dientes) in other parts of the world. We read a book about the first time the Tooth Fairy and Ratoncito Perez met and how they had to work together to reach the goal of getting a tooth. It was wonderful to see the kids start talking about differences in cultures and traditions all over the world. In Italy, this mouse is called Topino, and in France, Le

Petit Souris. Yay for culture!



**“It is sometimes sad to think about but mostly it is nice to talk about the happy memories we have of them. I like Day of the Dead.”**



- STUDENT IN PASCAL

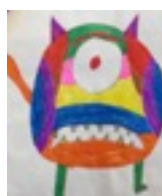
Pascal is my featured class of the month. This 1st grade class' excitement is SO contagious. They walk in to my classroom and tell me every week how much they love Spanish. Yesterday, without any prompting or instruction, the kids walked in and went straight to the altar. They admired all the different photos and drawings and found their own. I stepped back and watched as they began to share stories of their loved ones with each other. This went on for about ten minutes before I gathered them all together. They asked if we could spend more time sharing stories and celebrating the lives of our pets and families. It was so special. It changed my plans for the day but their empathy, excitement and compassion towards each other was SO moving. Way to go Pascal class!

## Celebrating Halloween en la clase de Español

Halloween is one of my favorite holidays! My friends in Colorado said they are relieved I have finally found a place (New Orleans) that loves excuses for costumes as much as me!

In the younger classes we spent our Friday learning different spooky vocabulary as we did Halloween yoga. Then we colored calabazas (pumpkins) and practiced our colors in Spanish. Their favorite yoga pose was the casa espantosa (haunted house), probably because it was the one I wasn't flexible enough to do, and continued to fall around the class each time I tried.

The older kids have been working hard the past few classes to write their first short stories in Spanish! This is a HUGE task and gives them a great sense of accomplishment when they are finished! They've written stories about Monsters they drew for homework. Here is a short sample of one. I didn't grade them on perfection, because remember, grammatical/spelling accuracy doesn't matter right now! Communication is the key! They all did so well! This story was not edited, so if you read Spanish you can see how well this student communicated his messages. If you can't, well you can see how awesome this student writes after just 13.5 hours of Spanish with me!



“Hay un monstruo arcoiris. Se llama Bob. Bob vive en casa espantoso. Bob tiene casa pequeña. Bob siempre esta enojado. Bob tiene uno ojo. Su ojo es muy grande. Bob va a Walmart. El es muy rapidamente.” 2