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No. 5



SAINT MICHAEL

Messenger

SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL
Santa Rosa, California

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This One was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one thing came into being that hath come to be. St. John 1: 1-3

THE THIRD GRADE CLASS BEGINS THEIR STUDY OF HOW THE WORLD BEGAN

This year our youngest class, comprised of eight and nine year olds, began their formal study of history with the beginning of all history, the creation of the heavens and the earth. As has been our custom over the last several years, we emphasized in quick succession God's work during each of the Six Days of Creation with paintings and science study. Each day found the children intently painting some aspect of those Days mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis and copying the text from the Bible. Through simple yet intriguing science experiments, we investigated the properties of air, water, and earth.

For the Third Day of Creation we began observation and



Icon depicting the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the Fourth Day of Creation.

study of seeds, nuts, flowers, plants, fruits, and trees. It was only on the Fourth Day of Creation that we began a study of light, since the light we can study here on earth is the light from the sun, which was created on the Fourth Day.

Consideration of fish and fowl filled our work for the Fifth Day, including a delightful and informative class on ornithology by a visiting professor! For the Sixth Day we painted pictures of both the creation of the animals and the crea-



Gregory Skopp, visiting ornithology professor

tion of man. To commemorate the Seventh Day in which God rested, the entire school took a trip to the beach!



A watercolor painting of the creation of the creatures of the sea on the Fifth Day.

In conjunction with this study of creation, and the subsequent history of mankind, as revealed in Genesis and other books of the Old Testament, we also studied food, clothing and shelters throughout the world. Our study followed the question, “After the Fall and banishment from

Paradise, what did Adam and Eve need to live on earth?”

In order to learn about food production, we planted a 4’x 12’ plot with wheat last spring, and harvested it during our work on the Third Day of Creation, in which God created seeds and grasses. We threshed, winnowed and ground that grain into flour and baked

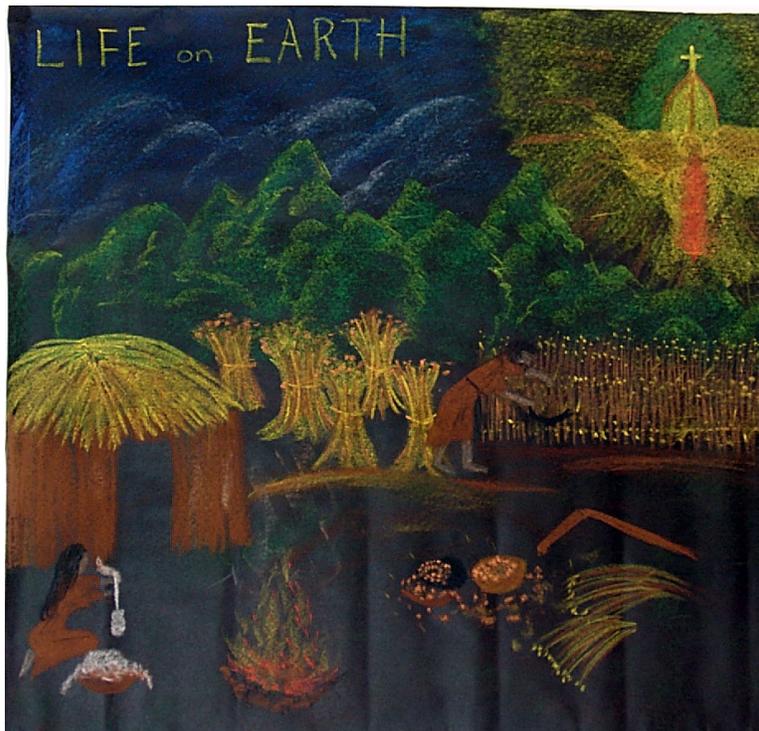
it into bread. This was a challenging and surprising amount of work!

We also studied seeds and growing plants. Wheat and other seeds were sprouted, and we observed the differences and similarities between several kinds of grains, seeds and beans. This led to investigating the many kinds of foods eaten throughout history and around the world. This autumn we emphasized grains. We will make cheese later this year and plant a garden in the spring.

A simple study of botany was begun by making bark and leaf rubbings of many trees. Field trips have also supplemented our classroom studies.



Corn and beans sprouting



"Life on Earth," a blackboard drawing.

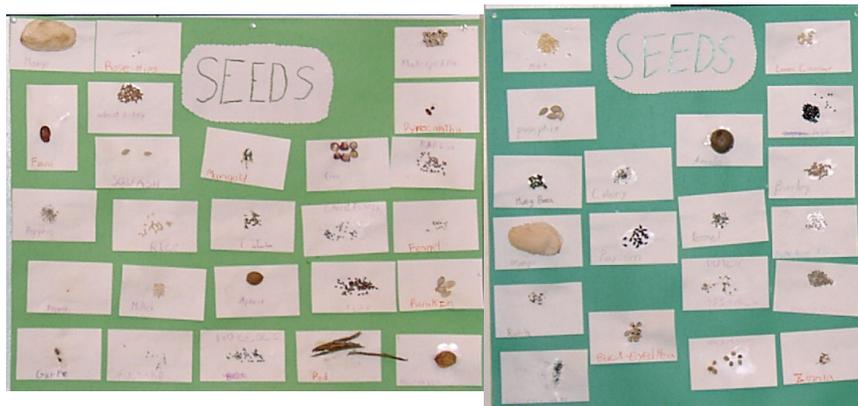
Our approach to learning is not for the sake of acquiring *information* alone, but is with respect to the *formation* of the child's whole being. Whenever possible, we engage the children in the actual work and activity involved in living here on earth. It is this work with their hands that helps to form their hearts, their minds, and their wills in constructive and helpful ways.



Rebekah Tolbert and Nicholas Hoffman help the younger children grind the wheat they have grown and harvested.

Through digging, sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, grinding wheat, and baking the flour into bread, we find not only an ability in ourselves to actually accomplish something *meaningful and worthwhile*, we also come to intuitively understand history, the roots upon which we build as individuals and as a community or culture. This generates an appreciation for the past, for others who labor, and for the goods and materials we receive and from which we benefit. An appreciation for what has gone before us builds gratitude in the heart and establishes a sense of belonging, and of understanding one's own place in life. +

SEED CHARTS MADE BY THE THIRD GRADE CLASS





Student Reports



The Beach Museum

By Alicia Krueger and Rebekah Tolbert

We went to the beach to celebrate the Seventh Day of Creation. Some of us, the younger girls, started collecting sea creatures that had been washed up on the shore. We collected four jellyfish, sand fleas as big as your fist, crabs and beautiful shells. We called our collection “The Beach Museum.”

The type of jellyfish we saw was Moon Jellies and was a clear purple-pink in color. The largest one was fifteen and a half inches in diameter. The jellyfish are not in the picture because we were not sure if they were alive and did not want to kill them.



Student Reports

Our Visit to Bale Grist Mill

By Danny Foster, Camden Ramsay, and Nicholas Hoffman



The Bale Grist Mill in Calistoga was built in 1846. The original wheel was twenty feet in diameter. Later they upgraded the mill and included a larger wheel. We went on a field trip to this mill and when we arrived we took a tour.

The tour started at the thirty-seven-foot wheel where the miller told us a little of the history of the mill. Next we went in to the mill and the miller showed us the gears and told us how they worked. He also explained how the mill had alternating wooden and metal gears. He told us that the wooden gears were easier to replace than the metal gears, and wooden gears would snap before the metal gears if the mill ever jammed. Another reason not to use all metal gears was because metal gears rubbing together make sparks. This is dangerous in a mill because flour dust is very explosive.

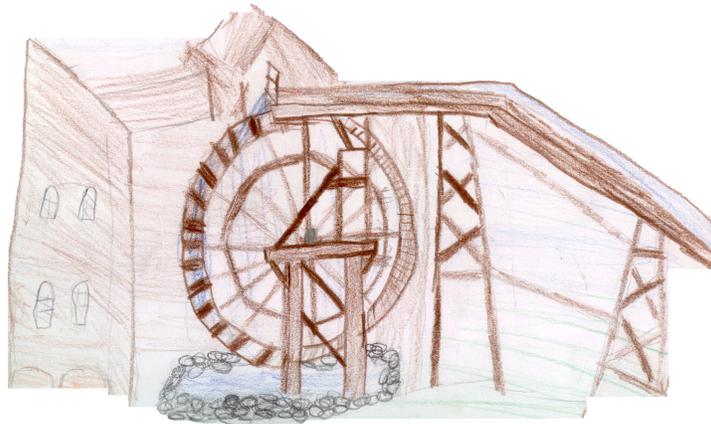
We learned many other interesting things during our tour. We learned that each millstone weighed a ton. The phrase “Keep your nose to the grindstone” comes from a mill. A miller must keep his nose

Student Reports



to the grindstone to make sure that the flour is not burning.

The Bale Grist Mill was very important in the settlement of California. When gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1849, thousands of people from all over the world flocked to California. This increased the need for flour to feed the ravenous miners.



Student's drawing of the waterwheel at the Mill.



Taking time to draw in our sketchbooks while visiting the Mill.



Student Reports

Harvesting Olives

By Eugenia Killinger, Aneliese Ramsay,
Helena Woolums, and John Tolbert



Olives are raked out of the tree onto sheets spread on the ground.

Our neighbor across the street, Mrs. Papola, invited us to harvest olives from her tree. We spread sheets under the tree and extended rakes with poles so that we could reach higher in the tree. Then we commenced to rake down the olives. We harvested about seven gallons of olives and then sorted them into categories of ripeness.

Olives right off the tree are horribly bitter and almost inedible. They must be soaked in

salt water to eliminate the bitterness. Usually lye is used at the beginning of this brining process, but we did not use it because of its caustic nature.

We poked holes into each olive to allow the brine to more easily penetrate them. Then we started the brining process which usually takes about two weeks.



One of the first jobs was to sort the olives by color and ripeness.

Student Reports



Every day we change the brine. It has taken longer than expected to brine the olives, but they should be done soon, and hopefully we will have the nerve to eat them.

The olive has been cultivated for thousands of years, not only for its delicious fruit, but also for its highly prized oil. The olive tree, native to the Syria-Palestine region, was one of the most important natural resources in Biblical times.



Pouring salted water over our seven gallons of olives is a daily task that is shared by all.



Student Reports



A Field Trip to the Potato Farm

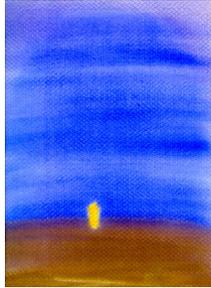
By Leo Woolums

One day the younger two grades went on a field trip to a potato farm. We were introduced to a potato farmer and his team of horses. The farmer showed us many farm machines and how they were used. Among the machines that the horses pulled were a plow, a feather harrow, and a claw harrow. The plow dug up the earth and turned it over. The claw harrow broke the clods of earth into smaller pieces, and the feather harrow broke up the clods into even smaller pieces. He also showed us what he was going to use to harvest the potatoes. The machine he used only dug up the potatoes, so we helped him collect them. He gave us each a bag of potatoes to take home.



Nicholas Hoffman collects the plowed up potatoes.

THE FARMER'S YEAR



*Throughout the year
The farmer toils
To reap the gold
Hid 'neath the soil.*

*He plows the stubble,
Drags it bare,
And leaves it to
The winter's air.*



*When frost and ice
Give way to spring,
His plow and harrow
Out he'll bring.*

*And when the tilth
Is freed of weed,
The farmer goes
To sow his seed.*



*Then winds of heaven
And gentle rain
And summer sun
Will swell the grain.*

*The green then turns
To living gold
In harvest bounty
Manifold.*





Young people must be made to distinguish between helpful and injurious knowledge, keeping clearly in mind the Christian's purpose in life. So, like the athlete or the musician, they must bend every energy to one task, the winning of the heavenly crown.

St. Basil of Caesarea (+379)

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