

St. Anthony Catholic School "95 Years of Excellence!"

Looking Back! Adeline Loerwald shares her memories of the past and hope for the future.

2012-2013

When Jacob and Conner Smith and Brooke Bartels stepped into St. Anthony Catholic School this fall, they continued a tradition started by their great-grandmother, Adeline Schumacher Loerwald, 90 years ago. Adeline Loerwald, a 1930 graduate of St. Anthony Catholic School, was honored Monday, January 28, 2014, as the oldest living graduate.

St. Anthony School celebrates 95 years of Catholic education, and Adeline Loerwald has seen a lot of change in the course of her 95 years of life. She visited the school as guest speaker for Catholic Schools Week and related many memories of her experiences to the school children.

Among those in attendance were Jacob and Conner, the sons of Nate Smith and grandsons of Claudia Smith, and Brooke Bartels, daughter of Danielle Bartels and granddaughter of Pat Simmacher, who are the fourth generation to attend St. Anthony Catholic School.

Adeline Loerwald was born one of four children. She had seven children, 5 girls and 2 boys, who all attended St. Anthony School. She has 29 grandchildren, 58 great-grandchildren, and 5 step great-great grandchildren.

As Mrs. Loerwald looks back on her life and Catholic education at St. Anthony School, she is grateful for the role her faith played and the Sisters who were her teachers. She is truly a walking, talking history book for the school as she shares not only the data and facts, but also the funny little stories we all love to hear.

She recalls with fondness how Catholic schools influenced her personality and her character and made her a better person who learned to love God and always to pray.

She remembers being a student of St. Anthony School when classes were held at the St. Francis House, a convent on Hwy 385, and walking with her books and school supplies to the then newly constructed red brick school, which is now the Deaf Smith County Museum. She especially enjoyed the church picnics where she ate so much; she could hardly eat anymore, until they brought out the homemade ice cream. She said she wanted some so badly, she went ahead and got an ice cream cone, which dripped on her clothes before she even finished it.

She reminisced about her classmates and the things they did when in school. How the Sister reacted when a child placed a horned-toad in the palm of her hand, and she had never seen such a creature. How they loved to jump rope and roller skate. How there was no school cafeteria and everyone packed their lunch of bread and butter or sometimes bread pudding and a piece of meat or an apple. How she only had five dresses and one pair of good school shoes. Her stories were enchanting to our students and there just didn't seem to be enough time to hear all she had to tell. She described in detail what the school children should look for on their visit to the museum during the week.

Mrs. Loerwald was asked what advice she had regarding faith and family. She did not hesitate as she replied, "First, remember who made you and why He made you. Love is important. When you speak be gracious, listen to your parents, always love God, family and friends and be charitable to those who have less." She was asked what her hope is for the future of St. Anthony School she said, "I hope that the school will just continue developing the children's faith and making them good citizens; that it will continue to grow and keep its academic and spiritual advancement of the children."

When asked for what she wanted to be remembered she said, "For being a good person and living the way God wanted me to."

"As St. Anthony School continues to celebrate its 95th Anniversary, having a family with four generations of its members attending our Catholic school the entire length of their elementary education has to be incredibly rare. We are proud to honor and preserve the rich heritage and legacy of St. Anthony Catholic School and welcome families to share their stories of the history of our school."

~ Linda Aranda 
Principal

