

Volunteer Spotlight on Shelly Preston

We would like to thank Shelly for all of her time that she gives to help our school and community. For the past 6 years Shelly has been the Chair/Co-Chair of our St. Nick Shop. During her time with the shop we went from selling plastic horse head sculptures and very large "Best Dad" belt buckles (your welcome) to selling beautiful Catholic gifts from Celtic Cross (special thanks to Maureen Debone and Gina Maciag for helping with the transition). Shelly has been active as a room mom and did a great job co-chairing the 5th grade social last year and Little Flowers Dance. Shelly can be found volunteering in many activities at our school including yearbook, Mother's Mass/Brunch, the book fair, retreats, movie nights, teacher appreciation, art room helper, pioneer day, and class field trips. Outside the school, Shelly is and has been involved with Tools for School, Sunshine Committee, O'Conner House, Gabriel Project Angel hotline, Cystic Fibrosis Ambassador and Green Bag Sunday.

We asked Shelly some questions to get to know her better:

Why do you volunteer at our school? Part gratitude and part selfishness :) I am so grateful to the Priests, Sisters, Teachers, Administrators, Volunteers, Parishioners, Parents, and students that help to create a safe and dynamic learning environment for our students that I want to help whenever I am able. I also love getting glimpses of my kids' day and being a little part of their world at school.

What's your favorite part of being a volunteer? Being part of awesome teams that help make the best memories and examples for our kids. The added bonus is that I almost always learn something and/or get to know someone every time I volunteer. My prayer is that all of the kids from OLMC and beyond will learn from the example of people giving their time and talent to help.

Do you have a favorite or funny memory from volunteering? There are truly too many to count! The funniest and most memorable come from the St. Nick Shop. We are constantly amused to learn of Grandma and Grandpa's strong affinity for wine and beer or why big brother or sister is getting a present even though they don't like to play nice. An especially touching story came from a very little customer who said they were buying a gift for their sister who died as a baby. These kids are so full of sweetness. Outside of school but related...One of the best testimonials that I can provide, for volunteerism, is working with Tools for Schools. I was checking in volunteers and the lady working next to me told me how just a few short years earlier she herself was standing in line to get school supplies for her family because they were struggling. Now she is a volunteer helping others!! I'm so proud to be part of a beautiful community that gives a hand up so that people in need can create better lives for themselves and turn around and help others do the same. No matter who we are big or small we all need a helping hand, ear, or shoulder from time to time.

One thing that would surprise someone to learn about me is....I have an uncanny ability to be in the right place at the right time when someone is choking and requires the Heimlich Maneuver. Over the years I've successfully (thank you God) performed the maneuver 6 different times, on choking people of all ages, across 3 different states. Four of the six times were in public with an audience. Two of the six times were at Cafe Patachou, (brunching) once in Clay Terrace and once in downtown Indy. I was also 7 months pregnant with Alex during one, and 8 months pregnant with MaryGrace during another one. It's a whole different experience and skill level with a "beach ball" between you and the person choking.

What is your favorite thing about OLMC school? Carpool... just kidding. My favorite thing about our school is that our Catholic identity is evident as soon as you enter the building just by looking around, talking with our wonderful teachers and administrators, and observing the students and many volunteers. Also (and I'm not kidding) I have an irrational fear of school buses so I'm grateful for carpool in all its (occasionally dysfunctional) glory. Please be extra nice to me if you see me taking deep breaths on a field trip bus!

Shelly's Spouse: Patrick

Shelly's Kids: Alex age 12 – 6th grade, MaryGrace age 8 – 3rd grade, both at OLMC, 4 watching over us

Shelly's hobbies/interests: Travel, hanging out with my extended family, watching my kids play sports, brunching, (if this were an Olympic event I would win a medal), reading, movies, discovering life hacks, working out, Words with Friends, playing Jenga and Spot it, Jigsaw puzzles, and making rosaries

Shelly's Pet(s): Finnegan Scout Preston, our 6 year old Shichon

Shelly's Favorite Food: Italian

Shelly's Favorite Band: *Nerd Alert* I like old music. Chicago, Boston, Abba, The Carpenters, or anything that reminds me of what my parents listened to when I was growing up. We all can't be as cool as Cold Play Leah :)

Shelly's Favorite Movie & TV Show: Little Women 2020 and Downton Abbey

If Shelly could travel anywhere where would she go: Australia

Life Advice Shelly would give: So much advice to give and to learn myself... Be kind always (especially when it is hard) not just to others but to yourself. You are amazing and people need loving most when they deserve it least. Keep the faith!

Shelly's Favorite Inspirational Quote: Courage is not having the strength to go on; it is going on when you don't have the strength.

Shelly's Favorite Bible Verse: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." -Philippians 4:13

"Many hands make light work" – THANK YOU Shelly for being part of the many hands at OLMC!

We appreciate you!