

## Pequannock's Holy Spirit School Celebrates Its Diamond Jubilee

By Henry M. Holden.

**H**oly Spirit School's 60th Anniversary Gala was held on Saturday, Oct. 14, at the Legacy Castle Banquet Hall, in Pequannock, from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Holy Spirit had planned for the 60th anniversary

for the last six months.

"We had about 350 people show up," said Tara Morstatt, chair of the 60th committee. "Families, former teachers, alumni, parents' classmates, and friends joined us to commemorate an important

milestone in the school's history, and pay tribute to its current principle, Sister Marie Antonelli, MPF."

The school was established in 1957, under the auspices of the Diocese of Paterson.

"Over the past 60 years, the school has grown in many ways but has remained true to its mission: to nurture our students spiritually, academically, and emotionally," said Antonelli.

Eight pastors and six principals have been a part of the school and Antonelli has been a continual presence



Photo by Rebecca Hausleben.



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over many of those years.

"She was a very young teacher at Holy Spirit School in 1957," said Morstatt. "She spent six years here, then moved around, and came back as principal in September 1984.

She has been our principal for the past 33 years."

"In the 1960s, I had 66 children in my fourth grade," said Antonelli. "Today we have 23 to 24 per classroom, and that's ideal. When I came back as a principal,

we had 135 students. During this current academic year, there are 227-students, celebrating the school's 60th anniversary."

Placing Holy Spirit's 60th anniversary into a religious context, *cont. on page 9*

### Holy Spirit School...

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Antonelli quoted the Filippini's founder, St. Lucy Filippini, who said, "The Church of God is not a restful garden, but a working vineyard."

Antonelli said, "We have evolved with the times, going from a paper and pen environment to the high-tech world of iPads. There have been so many changes over the years. We went from no technology to so much technology. Technology has really come alive here. Today all our classrooms have smart boards, Chrome books, laptops, computers, and we have iPads for all the children. All the devices belong to the school and they stay in the school. The children don't take them home. And, cell phones are not permitted to be used during the school day, or in the classroom.

"We have adapted our curriculum to educate and sup-

port those entrusted to us with knowledge and understanding of our ever-changing world," she said.

The school continues to grow spiritually and academically.

"We have the same challenges as any other Catholic school, but we have succeeded because of the strong support of our faculty and staff; pastors, both past and present; Holy Spirit parishioners; parents; alumni; and benefactors," Antonelli.

"Holy Spirit School accepts the challenge of fulfilling our mission as a Catholic school," she added. "Our aim is to educate the children's mind, strengthen their God-given intellectual powers, satisfy their soul with knowledge of their faith, and strengthen their body with organized physical activity."

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