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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### ST. DOMINIC'S LEGO ROBOT WINS STATE, HEADED FOR WORLD COMP

BY BETH DONZE

St. Dominic School recently captured its second consecutive "FIRST LEGO League" state title, prevailing against 53 other teams from across Louisiana.

As state champions, the school's "Virtual Dragons" team – composed of seven fifth-graders and three seventh-graders – will travel to Atlanta in April to vie against the world's top

teams. The annual competition challenges young people between the ages of 9 and 14 to design and program working robots made out of LEGOs.

"The goal is to get the robot under the bridge, over the dynamometer and around



St. Dominic School's "Virtual Dragons" team (left) will take its winning "Dragon Wagon" robot (right) to an international competition in April. Team members built the red ramp to help their robot navigate over its biggest obstacle: a rotating "dynamometer." (Photos by Beth Donze)



the walls to pick up cargo without knocking anything over," explained seventh-grader Madeline Reineke, noting that this year's theme – transportation – requires competing robots to move over a "playing field" that mimicks an automobile test-track.

In the statewide competition, held last November at St. Mary's Dominican High, robots scored points by picking up "cargo" as they traveled to a target destination; conversely, robots making the timed, 2 1/2-minute cargo runs lost points if they knocked over warning beacons, dropped cargo or became snagged

in one of the field's many obstacles. The St. Dominic team members said this year's biggest challenge was getting their robot over a rotating "dynamometer" – a device that stops a car's forward progress so the number of miles-per-

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ARCHBISHOP RAYMOND

### INCLUDE GOD IN NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Happy New Year! We are now in 2010, already 10 years into the new millenium. How time flies!

If you have made a New Year's resolution or if you intend to make one, I ask you to consider including God in the promise and asking for his help.

Here are some questions that might help guide you in making a good resolution:

- How can I better appreciate myself and the gifts that God has given to me?
- How can I better use the gifts that God has given to me?
- Do I spend time each day just talking with God

and thanking him for my life, my gifts, my family and those who make a difference in my life?

- What can I do to show others that God loves them and that I appreciate their love and concern?
- What can I do at school and among my friends to show them that I care for them and that Jesus holds them in a special place?

It seems to me that we live in a time in which we do not say "thank you" enough; we do not spend enough time quietly reflecting on how much God has given us and listening to what God is asking of us.

Maybe a good New Year's resolution would be just to spend a few minutes in prayer with God before going to bed each night, to look over the day and thank him for his presence and his many gifts.

I hope that 2010 brings many blessings for you and your family.

### LOUISIANA'S FIRST LADY VISITS ST. CLETUS

On Dec. 16, Supriya Jindal visited St. Cletus to celebrate the Gretna school's purchase of additional interactive whiteboards, laptop carts and other teaching tools designed to facilitate and enhance classroom instruction. The technology boost was made possible by a \$10,000 grant from AT&T and a matching grant from the Supriya Jindal Foundation for Louisiana's Children. To date, Jindal's foundation has awarded interactive whiteboard systems to more than 60 classrooms across the state.



After announcing the grant, Jindal invited St. Cletus first-graders to use the interactive whiteboard technology to practice their math and science skills in a game called "Jindal Jeopardy." Assisting the First Lady (at left, and above) is first-grader Max Kass. (Photos by Beth Donze)