

Crabs, and Sharks, and Whales! Oh My!

By: Mrs. Fran Natalicchio

On Thursday, February 6, 2020, the National Aquarium visited Saint Peter's School, bringing with them an assortment of artifacts and live animals. The students prepared for this visit by creating a large, colorful mural of various sea creatures that included turtles, blowfish, jellyfish, crabs, and rainbow fish. When the much-anticipated day came, the aquatic learning experience was divided into two parts: first, whole group presentations in the Parish Hall, followed by small, hands-on sessions in Saint Peter's STREAM lab. In the whole group presentations, students learned about the life of the shark. One student donned a shark costume as a visual, and the National Aquarium presenters discussed the different senses of a shark and explained how these senses help to navigate life in the sea.



After receiving training from National Aquarium staff, parent volunteers manned lab stations that offered small groups an interactive learning experience. Students were able to compare prehistoric shark teeth to present day shark teeth. They were also able to “comb” the fine plates of a baleen whale, and even able to pet a live horseshoe crab, hermit crab, and sea urchin. The students enjoyed learning incredible facts, such as a baby whale gains one pound an hour, while a lobster gains one pound every seven years. Learning about the complex life in the ocean gave the students a new awareness of

God's aquatic creatures. Next time they go to the beach, they are sure to impress with their newfound knowledge!

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