

Happy 2nd week of Advent!



December 6, 2020

Dear Parents,

As we celebrate the second week of Advent, we call upon the peace that radiates from the second candle. I am sure that I am not alone when I say that the mind, the heart, the body and the soul are being pulled in many directions these days and we are all in need of the peace that only God can give. Let us take the time to stop and pray and allow this peace to consume us each day this week ... if only for a few minutes. The mind races and is pulled in many direction but if we pause for a few moments and let God enter in, the peace that only He can give will come.

I thank all of you who have followed our guidelines to quarantine or stay home for the good of us all this past week. It is always such a blessing to make it through another week. We completed day 60 on Friday which brings us to the completion of one-third of the year. This is a huge accomplishment! As the numbers double and triple, our mantra will always be to do what we do for the health and safety of everyone. I know that it is tough and great sacrifices have to be made to keep children home but it is really important to remember that we are dealing with a virus that has so many unknowns. Each person in our community has a role to play to keep us open for the long haul and I thank you in anticipation for making this a reality week after week. Please read updates from Nurse Reilly. She is in constant contact with the department of health, local nurses in Catholic schools and also national nurses' associations. She has her own medical consultants also from our school community- past and present- and they keep her informed of current CoVid-

19 news. Guidelines change daily and Nurse Reilly has kept up with all of the updates. She is a blessing to us!

The lead up to Christmas 2020 is so different but we are trying our best to instill that sense of awe and wonder in the students as we move closer to the Holidays. I am happy to say that it is beginning to look, feel and sound like Christmas. The bulletin boards are beautifully done. The elf on the shelf will be coming out of quarantine soon as he has had to do his civic duty. The music in the lobby is adding to the atmosphere and I hope that despite all that is happening that we can enter into the spirit of Christmas for the sake of the children.

My heart is overwhelmed with gratitude for the love and the care and the time that went into making sure that we could have two traditional school events this past week. I know that there were many curve balls thrown and uncertainties welling up, but what the children experienced was truly heart-warming. I am so grateful to the committees for pushing ahead and making it happen. No rain, no wind, no cold will stand in the way of your love for your children!

The Christmas Shop was a delightful event and it went really well. Social distancing and mask wearing have become so much a part of the norm that there were no issues. The little shoppers were so focused and so thrilled to enter into an experience that has been missing for the past 8 months. What Caitlin Villa, Danielle Glacken and Alexandra Ward did to make this even happen is nothing short of a miracle. The gifts they provided were very varied and of great quality. I thank them and thank their committee for pushing through with the Christmas Shop. This event requires a year-long commitment to shopping, decorating and wrapping and it is so heartwarming that we have parents willing to do this. The helpers on the day were wonderful and were really patient with the professional shoppers who need to spend time examining each item. The decorations were so festive and the shoppers were as intent and as intense as in years gone by. A repeat of this event will be held on December 15th and 16th to accommodate those shoppers who were out this past week.

The Nor'Easter on Saturday morning did not deter the Breakfast with Santa Committee from providing an extravaganza of festive tents that mimicked what would have been provided in the gym in previous years. The parking lot was transformed into a FAO Schwartz-like atmosphere and creativity oozed out of every tent. Santa was the real deal and brought much happiness. Natalie Polce, Jen

Nolan and their wonderful committee really nailed it in terms of providing the children with a memorable event. A shout out to the dads also who assisted with set up and take down. And thanks to our own Mr. Tom is always in the midst of helping! As the cars wound their way around the parking lot I was moved by the sense of awe and wonder radiating from the children. It was cold. It was chilly. But the smiling eyes kept twinkling! It has been a difficult time for the children, but because of your love for them they have been resilient and noble in all circumstances these past months. It brings to mind the song: "There Ain't no Mountain High Enough..."

A big hurrah to all of our teachers who continue to work diligently to make it happen for your children and bring us to this point with great pedagogy and great love. I see them! I hear them! I feel them doing their very best to make sure that your children do not miss a beat. They have been soldiers on the front line. They are masked up all day -except for eating time- and they really have given their all for the sake of their students. Transcripts for the 8th graders have been sent to many high schools and I am so impressed with how well these students have done in this time of CoVid-19. They have been focused and on target in their work and they have put their best foot forward. Whatever high schools gets them will be very lucky.

We are three weeks away from Christmas. Let us enter each day being aware of the many blessing that we have despite the darkness that threatens to take our light away. Your children have been huge blessings since school began and I pray that each family is felling their joy and excitement! Be well!

Blessings,

Sr. Noreen