To begin each new school week, the principal of Assumption School, Mrs. Julie Olson, circulates among the staff and teachers some reflections to set the tone for the next few days in school that she calls the Monday Morning Memo.

She always opens her memo with a little cartoon to lighten the mood and diffuse any tensions that might be brewing. Most of the memo is about upcoming special calendar items and events so that the staff might be prepared and ready to lead the kids through them.

Once in a while, Julie departs from the newsy items in the memo to get a little philosophical, to give a little food for thought, a little guidance to us, her colleagues.

Just last week, I was struck by something she shared. She wrote, “As this quarter comes to an end this week, I would like each of us to think about this last quarter and what we can do to improve our classroom and school. A few examples that I am working on are keeping comments on my students’ papers positive. For example, instead of “Messy Work!” which is negative, I will write “Please Try To Be A Little Neater.” Another is when I am asked by a fellow staff member to do something I have not had to do in the past and makes me nervous, to just do it. We ask our students each day to do something new and we ourselves need to do that too. I know it is hard, but we can do it! This is a great
time to do some inward reflection and see if any of this would be helpful for you.”

I think the point the principal was making to her teachers and staff is that we have to be about sharing a greater truth with the children, to show the warmth and welcome God shares with us in His Kingdom by the way we welcome and treat children in the classroom every day. I think the principal’s message to the teachers was loud and clear: “In this school, we’re saying to the kids and their families - you have a place prepared for you, as the Lord has a place prepared for you in heaven.”

I think that’s good advice not only for teachers in a Catholic school, but for us People of God in the Church, “Saints-in-Training”!

It’s up to us to be like the saints and say yes to all that God has prepared for us, to create a Kingdom, a Church where all are welcome in this little bit of heaven on earth and, through my attitudes, through my actions, to let people know who might not have much of God in their lives, God loves you, the Church welcomes you, and heaven has a place prepared just for you.