



Holy Redeemer School

4902 Berwyn Road • College Park, MD 20740

301-474-3993

www.holy-redeemer.org • school@holy-redeemer.org

March 12, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As I'm sure you all know, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has spread to the DMV and so has panic about the virus. While the frequent updates we receive about the virus from our many news outlets can be helpful and informative, they can also be quite overwhelming. As adults, we know how to differentiate fact from speculation and, for the most part, can understand the information we are being given when we watch or read the news. However, this is not necessarily true for our kids. They are still learning a lot of things and that includes how to process information and what to do with it. Because of this, we cannot and do not expect them to fully understand news and information intended for adult audiences. As parents, we unfortunately cannot shield our kids from this news 24/7. Even if we do not let them watch TV, they might overhear adults talking about it or hear about it from other students at school. What we can do is make sure we are at least giving our kids the facts and letting them talk to us if they have any questions or concerns. Please be mindful, there is no need to tell them every piece of information you acquire about this virus, but not sharing any information at all can cause your child to develop fears from what they have heard on their own. Below are some things to keep in mind when talking with your kids about the Coronavirus:

1. Be aware of your own anxiety and concerns and be mindful of how much your children look to you to show them how to behave and react in certain situations.
2. Model good hygiene practices for your children and have regular conversations about the importance of washing our hands, covering our coughs, etc.
3. Make sure you are familiar with the facts so that you can correct any misinformation that your child comes to you with. This can help reduce anxiety for yourself and your children.
4. If you have children of all ages, keep in mind that what you share with or say to your older child may not translate the same way to your younger one. If you have a middle schooler, you might be able to share more specifics about the virus with them, such as specific numbers and other data. Younger children will need more general information, such as, "There is a new virus, kind of like the flu, that we are still learning a lot about. Scientists are working hard to help figure out a way to get rid of it and doctors are helping those who have it. Most people who get it, may get sick and not feel well but then get better. We are going to make sure we wash our hands really well to help us and our friends stay healthy."
5. **When tensions are high, we sometimes find it easy to blame someone. It is extremely important that we do not stereotype or place blame on one group of people for "starting" the virus. We can also not let our kids assume that any students returning from trips or staying home from school have the virus. Bullying (this includes exclusion) and negative comments made toward any of our students should be reported to us immediately.**

Thank you for your continued support during this time.

Blessings,

Mrs. Katrina Fernandez
Principal

Excellence in Education with the Power of Faith