



The Atonement Academy
CATHOLIC + CLASSICAL

March 25, 2020

Dear Lower School Families,

In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates states, "The beginning of a work is the most important part." Speaking about the education of young children, Socrates' remark is apropos of our starting Remote Learning this week. While initiating Remote Learning has not been without its hiccups, we started slowly, with limited subjects and minimal technology and, with your feedback, have been assiduously working out the kinks in our modest beginnings so to ensure the success of the whole endeavor. With everyone's patience and cooperation, I believe we are off to a strong start.

I do want to emphasize that the main focus of the beginning of our Remote Learning this week is to ensure that both parents and teachers are successfully able to make the electronic handoff of assignments and homework. Please continue to make use of Mr. Patrick's expertise (and eagerness to assist) by contacting him at dpatrick@atonementonline.com with any technical difficulties with downloading, scanning and uploading assignments. Also, continue to contact your child's teacher as often as necessary for any questions or concerns about assignments. I know they are yearning to help, stymied as they are by not being able to teach your child in person. As we move toward the end of the week, we will be using the feedback we receive about our start to Remote Learning to improve the process going forward. In these trying times, we want to do the best we can to make the process as stress-free as possible.

Now that we have a few days under our belts, if you have not done so already, I would encourage your child to have a designated study area, a quiet place where your child can work in an orderly, quiet and focused manner. Equally important is having a regular schedule. A schedule will help your child make the best of use of his or her time, not just for schoolwork, but perhaps even more importantly, for the broadening and ennobling possibilities that more abundant free time affords. Just because our regular routines have contracted does not mean our souls cannot still expand.

I recommend therefore that some part of that schedule include a time for prayer. Presciently, Cardinal Robert Sarah in his *The Power of Silence* notes that in the face of evil man's defenses are often just but exclude the "strongest weapons" - silence and prayer - because "man wants 'to do', but above all else must 'be'." Considering how little we may now 'do', take time out with your child to pray, "the noblest, most sublime, and most vigorous act, which elevates man to the level of God."

Please know I am available to you and will be praying for you and your family in these difficult times.

Sincerely Yours,

John Creech
Dean of Lower School