



2019-2020

Made for Greatness

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI – Encyclical Spe Salvi (Saved in Hope)

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March 24, 2020

Good morning,

The teachers and I had our Google Meet faculty meeting yesterday. We all shared the many ways we are connecting with families and trying to "teach" remotely. There have been many emails sent and replies sent as well as phone calls made. There are many interactive websites that we are finding to help kids to learn without needing parents right there with them. As teachers shared, we gathered lots of resources just from each other. This week and next, the teachers are invited to a ZOOM video conference with teachers across the Diocese of Cleveland to talk about how to best help kids (and parents).

We have heard from some parents about how it would be easier for students in grades 5 & 6 and 7 & 8 to have all their assignments on one document. We hear you and we are going to be working on that. There was also a request that the teachers of younger students use either Class Dojo or Seesaw as the platform, but not both. The first grade teachers explained that Seesaw was being used for lessons and Class Dojo was just a way to connect. However, they will look to see how they can streamline things for you. Mrs. Bentley has recorded herself teaching math and posting the videos in her Google classroom and Mrs. Gerity is going to try that as well. A number of teachers have recorded themselves reading a story to the kids. Mr. McKay just emailed me that he just had a 30 minute Google Meet session with one of his students to discuss math. I hear that many kids and parents are being creative with assignments as well. A third grader recorded her report for her diorama and emailed it to the teacher! She had a lot of fun doing that with her dad.

If you still need a Chromebook, we have some left. You will have to email me so that we can set a very specific time for you to come to the office. I will not have more than one parent/family at a time. This would be considered an appropriate outing in the Governor's order to stay at home.

Mrs. Rabatin, Mrs. Bronstrup, Mrs. Bittinger and Mrs. Hansell are all being trained today through PSI so that they can interact with students in face-to-face, real time. After the training, I am sure they will reach out to those families of the students they serve.

Mrs. Rabatin is offering her counseling services to any families that would like to connect due to the stress of social distancing, not being with friends, or overall anxiety. Please email her at [srabatin@saintcharlesschool.org](mailto:srabatin@saintcharlesschool.org) and she will get in contact with you.

We are continuing to be available to your families; however, the teachers also need a work/life balance. They will generally be available during the time they would have been in school with your children

(8am-3:15pm). When they are not going to be able to answer emails, most are going to put an away message as an auto-reply so that you know they are not ignoring you, but rather taking care of their own families - whether that be their own children that they are "homeschooling" (and by the way, kids of teachers do not listen better than other kids when mom is trying to teach!) or taking care of their spouses or their elderly parents or in-laws.

One of our own Saint Charles parents writes a blog called Oh Bless Your Heart. I know the PTU posted it on Facebook recently, but in case you missed it and want to read some very relatable and humorous stories of a fellow parent along with some inspirational insights, check out this link: <https://ohblessyourheart.wordpress.com/author/ohblessyourheart/>

A few parents have asked me if I know anything about when school will return to normal or if I have any information that you do not have. The simple answer is no. I watch the Governor's press conference every day. I watch the news. I read directives from the diocese. I do not know more than you do about the "end" of this Coronavirus pandemic. I certainly wish I did.

While I am looking for some direction from the Diocese regarding best practice in grading at this time, please continue to have students complete assignments as well as they can and in a timely manner (without causing undue stress on your family). Remember - breathe, enjoy time with your family, spend extra time in prayer together. Try to see this time as a blessing - you have a house to be "stuck" in and you have each other.

Speaking of prayer, Mr. Brian Pelcin, our pastoral minister at Saint Charles, sent me this link about two opportunities to pray with the whole world and Pope Francis. Please take a few minutes to read this and mark the date and time on your calendars so that you and your family can join these prayers: <https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/03/22/pope-francis-calls-christians-worldwide-combat-coronavirus-pandemic-midday-prayer>

Thank you for your patience and kindness as we together navigate these uncharted waters.

Eileen M. Updegrove