



PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON – CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

OCTOBER 18, 2019

Pause and Ponder

October – Jesus Heals an Official's Son at Capernaum in Galilee (John 4:46-54)

Virtuous Action – Asking for Assistance

The official who approached Jesus requesting his son to be healed possessed what one might call a “miracle readiness.” He was prepared for a healing for his son that no physician could provide. He believed, maybe somewhat uncertainly, that Jesus was his last hope, but his heart and soul were fertile ground for a miracle to occur.

If we wish to witness miracles, we, too, must have the “readiness” of the official. We may not always be certain of what will follow, but our trust in the Lord allows us to be prepared in our hearts and souls for the miracles that come our way.

This week let us nurture the fertile ground of our spiritual lives by praying for this “readiness” so critical to experiencing miracles in our lives.

Let Us Pray

- + for **physicians, nurses, and healthcare workers** who demonstrate respect for the dignity of life by their service
- + for **Good Shepherd Catholic School** welcoming a visiting team this week for re-accreditation from the Middle States Association

Catholic Identity

Respecting Human Life – The Fifth Commandment calls us to foster the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social well-being of self and others. It calls us to create a culture of life and work against the culture of death. This presents us with three challenges:

1. We need to counter the relativism that imperils human life.
2. We must witness God's providential presence to each human being.
3. We need to confront the weakening of conscience in society.

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults

Life issues that confront us and demand a Catholic response include murder, abortion, stem-cell research and cloning, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, the death penalty, war, and terrorism. These topics call us to

speak with a voice that is informed, articulate, and Catholic not only in our classrooms, but also in our conversations outside our classrooms. While such conversations may be difficult to entertain, they are the places where faith meets life.

Weekly Calendar

<i>Sunday, October 20</i>	<i>Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>		
	Open House @ St. Elizabeth High School	11:30 am	
	Open House @ Padua Academy	1:00 pm	
Monday, October 21	CSO Staff Meeting	9:30 am	
Tuesday, October 22	<i>St. John Paul II</i>		
	CSO School Visit	8:30 am	Immaculate Conception
	Initial Faith Formation (Southern Cohort)	4:30 pm	St. Francis de Sales
Thursday, October 24	Early Childhood Level Meeting	1:00 pm	1626
	Initial Faith Formation (Northern Cohort)	4:00 pm	Christ the Teacher
<i>Sunday, October 27</i>	<i>Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i>		
	Open House @ Saint Mark's High School	12:00 noon	
	Open House @ Archmere Academy	1:00 pm	

Action Required

Administrators' Meeting – In preparation for the Administrators' meeting for ***Tuesday, October 29***, administrators are asked to read the Introduction and Chapters 1-2 in *Fresh Eyes on Jesus' Miracles*. Discussion of the readings will occur at the meeting.

Attention Needed

Vocations Day 2019 – Information was sent to elementary school administrators (and through the school administrator to the sixth grade teachers) in preparation for Vocations Day on ***Wednesday, November 6***, at Holy Cross School. Please emphasize with sixth grade teachers the need for their attention and preparation for this annual vocations event so that they and their students feel both comfortable and connected with the day's activities. Additional information will follow before the event.

Renaissance – Renaissance Champions will meet for professional development on ***Wednesday, November 13***, as noted on the annual calendar. Details about the inservice will be forwarded in early November. All Champions and school administrators are expected to be present for this professional development opportunity. This professional development program was included in the Renaissance Flow 360 fees paid by each school last school year.

Freckles Math is now available to all Renaissance schools. Inservice about Freckles will be provided at the professional development in November. Some schools have already begun to use Freckles and the feedback has been positive.

Literature Mapping Contest (DE schools) – Students in Grades K-12 are encouraged to participate in the Literature Mapping Contest sponsored by the Delaware Center for Geographic Education. See the information provided. Here is an opportunity to have your school recognized throughout Delaware!

Newsworthy Information

Classroom Observations – Now six weeks into the school year, administrators and teachers are engaged in the classroom observation process. Whether through classroom walk-throughs or full-class observations, Peter DeWitt identifies practices of which administrators and teachers should be aware in his article, “The Myth of Walkthroughs: 8 Unobserved Practices in Classrooms” (*Education Week*, April 2016). Four of the practices from the article are briefly explained below.

- Cooperative learning vs. Cooperative seating – Leaders and teachers talk about it. We know it's important for students to work cooperatively. However, professor and researcher Rob Coe found that we put students in cooperative groups over 70% of the time they are in our classrooms, but they are spending 80% of that time working on individual activities. We have to be careful that when we provide the myth that students are engaging in cooperative learning, doesn't actually mean they are just participating in cooperative seating.
- Authentic engagement vs. Compliant engagement – Just because students are following the speaker or answering a question, doesn't mean they are actively and authentically engaged.
- Surface level vs. Deep level questioning – Do we scaffold our questions, or do we spend most of our time asking questions most of the students already know the answers to?
- Teacher talk vs. Student talk – University of Melbourne researcher Janet Clinton found that on average, teachers asked about 200 questions per day and students asked 2 questions per student per week.

Reasons to Celebrate

Mentoring Program 2019-2020 – Congratulations to the more than 100 teachers involved in the diocesan Mentoring Program and to their mentors! Through the mentoring program, teachers and counselors are integrated into their new roles in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wilmington and most are on the road to Delaware licensing and certification. The commitment to professional growth of these teachers and counselors is to be applauded, the guidance and time offered by their mentors commended, and the organization and work coordinating the program by Carol Ripken, Associate Superintendent, gratefully acknowledged.

***A person's rightful due is to be treated as an object of love,
not as an object for use.***

Saint John Paul II