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Dear Friends,

**Welcome to our Fall 2025 issue of
the IHM Catholic EdNotes!**

**The following is from the
Website Divine Disclosures:**

Loving Father, as this new school year begins, I come seeking Your peace and confidence. The halls may seem daunting and the challenges unknown, but You remain constant. Fill my heart with Your calming presence, replacing anxiety with assurance. Grant me the confidence to face new classes, new teachers, and new experiences with courage. Help me to remember that You are with me in every classroom and in every situation.

When doubts creep in, remind me that I am Your child, capable through Your strength. May Your peace guard my mind against worry and Your confidence empower me to embrace each opportunity. Let me be a source of calm for others who may be anxious. Guide my steps with the quiet assurance that comes from knowing You walk beside me. In Jesus' name. Amen!

We hope to inspire and assist you with the sacred work of Catholic education through these engaging, informative and interesting features that can support your best practices, Pre-K through Grade 12, whether in a catechetical parish program or a Catholic school setting.

***God bless you for your dedication to
Catholic education!***



Every day in every way, “Back to School” signs and sales seem to appear everywhere.

While we may grumble that the summer is coming to a quick close, the feeling of excitement and newness begins to take over and before we know it, we are looking at enthusiastic faces, beaming eyes and sweet smiles before us! And that is just the faculty and staff greeting each other as the teacher prep days begin! These days are followed with the promising greeting to new students and the hope that the year will be a great one.

It is a good idea to remember, even during these early days, that the year may hold many unexpected challenges and concerns. It may be good to start the year with a plan to keep our spirits enthused and our lives balanced.

While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, psychologists in general suggest that we look to restorative activities to bring ourselves into some balance. So, you may pay greater attention to self-care, which is always a good choice! Or you may want to find your “flow” – that means finding how to invest your time and attention in an engaging and purposeful activity. St. Alphonsus Liguori, the founder of the Redemptorists, who has greatly influenced the spirituality of the IHM Sisters, focused his spirituality on the Incarnation, Jesus becoming one of us! Alphonsus is quoted as saying: “Acquire the habit of speaking to God as if you were alone with Him, familiarly and with confidence and love, as to the dearest and most loving of friends.” Could St. Alphonsus have been on to something? Is it possible that we can discover our “flow” in making time for Jesus, God-with-us, in prayer? Perhaps daring such a personal relationship with God, can provide a social and emotional support to each of us as we navigate the complexities of our world. So, grab your cup of tea and find a comfortable and quiet space! Just maybe your “dearest and most loving of friends”, who is with you always, will help you to discover your “flow” and lead you closer to flourishing!

References Carter, Christine L. 3 Steps to Finding Your Flow. (Posted September 3, 2015)
Grant, Adam. There’s a Name for the Blah You’re Feeling: It’s Called Languishing. New York Times (4-19-21)

Prayer for a New Year of Ministry

"PEACE be with you..." Pope Leo XIV - May 8, 2025

Call to Prayer: This moment of grace is a truly exciting time in the Church during this Jubilee Year of HOPE. We have all experienced the thrill of witnessing our new Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, come out on the balcony to speak his first words: "PEACE be with you." Those words, the same first words that Jesus said to His Apostles on Easter night in the Upper Room, were a blessing and prayer for all of us.

As we begin a new year of ministry, they are also a challenge and a call to us to be PEACEMAKERS ourselves.

In the spirit of Pope Leo, let us ask Mary, our Queen of Peace, to be with us that "peace may flow out of you and me" and into the hearts of all those we will serve in the coming year.

Leader: "Help us, one and all to build bridges..."

All: "Joining together as one people, always at peace." Leo XIV
Glory be to the Father...

Hymn: Peace is flowing like a river...
His healing's flowing...

Antiphon: "May there be above all peace in our hearts; only a peaceful heart can spread peace." Leo XIV

Saint Francis Prayer for Peace

Right Side: Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

Left Side: O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console.
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Reading: The Gospel of John 20: 19 - 21

Pause for Silent Reflection

Response:

(Together) "Let us commit ourselves to bringing His love
everywhere." Leo XIV

Intercessions

Opening Prayer: Pondering the words of Pope Leo XIV, we pray

(Leader) for ourselves and for all those who need our prayers.

The Response is: **LORD, FILL US WITH YOUR PEACE.**

Petitions: *"Help people live a personal relationship with the
Lord, so they may discover the joy of the Gospel."*

Leo XIV

Enkindle in us a passionate love for Jesus and
help us to ignite that love in all whom we will meet,
we pray...

"Let us walk together with joy in our hearts and a song on our lips."

Leo XIV

Encourage us to be a source of peace and support for one another, we pray...

"The Lord sends us into the world to bring His very gift of peace."

Leo XIV

Energize us with joy and zeal in spreading the Gospel, we pray...

"Every community should be a House of Peace."

Leo XIV

Empower all families with love, understanding and peace beyond measure, we pray...

"We want to be a Church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering."

Leo XIV

Embrace all in need of healing with strength and courage, hope and a helping hand, we pray...

"During Mass, I strongly felt the spiritual presence of Pope Francis accompanying us from heaven." Leo XIV

Enable many souls, especially Pope Francis, to
to enjoy the eternal peace of life with God in
heaven, we pray...

Our Father:

Closing Prayer:

PRAYER OF RECOMMITMENT

(Leader)

Loving Prince of Peace,

- Enlarge my heart with Your love and generosity.
- Widen my vision to see the needs of others before my own.
- Open my ears to hear the cry of the poor
- Guide my steps to go out of my way to assist another.
- Fill my soul with Your healing and peace that they may overflow into the minds and hearts of all whom I will serve this year. Amen.

Final Blessing:

"With the power of the Holy Spirit, go forth renewed from this Jubilee. Go and bring the HOPE of the Lord Jesus to everyone." Leo XIV

Leader:

CLASSROOM PRAYER TO BEGIN THE SCHOOL YEAR

Once students have assembled with their teacher/catechist and before class begins, spend a few minutes in prayer to bless your time together this year. Briefly explain the prayer service to them before beginning and then ask each one to think about what they hope to learn this year and what they would like God to help them with (e.g., help me to prepare well for Confirmation, be attentive and respectful during class, find a way to get to Mass every Sunday, be kinder to my little sister, read a chapter of the New Testament every day, etc.)

Ask the students to spend 5 minutes in silence to prepare for prayer and to think about their goal or resolution for this year.

Materials needed: Holy Water
 Card Stock cut to the size of a bookmark for each student
 Religion Textbook for each student
 Copy of Prayer Service for each student

PRAYER TO BEGIN THE SCHOOL YEAR

Teacher/Catechist: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Students: Amen.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher/Catechist: As we begin this new school year, let us take a few minutes to unite ourselves to God and seek His help as we try to know Him better and follow the way He has laid out for us. Let us let the Church and our soon-to-be-canonized saints be our guide.

PETITIONS

Teacher/Catechist: Pope Francis, in proclaiming 2025 a Jubilee Year, asked us to be “Pilgrims of Hope.”
May our actions this year give hope to the people that we encounter each day.
Let us pray to the Lord . . .

Students: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher/Catechist: Each year, the Bishops of the United States set a theme for the year.
This year’s theme, “This is my body given for you,” reminds us that it is Christ’s death and resurrection that is the source of our hope. May we increase our devotion to Jesus each time we receive Him in Holy Communion.
Let us pray to the Lord . . .

Students: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher/Catechist: Carlo Acutis, the Patron of Youth and the Internet, once said, “The Eucharist is the Highway to Heaven.”
May we learn to use wisely the gift of technology as a way to spread goodness and give hope to those who are confused and seeking truth.
Let us pray to the Lord . . .

Students: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher/Catechist: Pier Giorgio Frassati, the Patron of Young Adults and Athletes, took as his motto, “Verso L’Alto” – to the Heights.
May he walk with us this year, urging us to always reach for the heights – to excellence, holiness, and to God.
Let us pray to the Lord . . .

Students: Lord, hear our prayer.

RESOLUTION

Teacher/Catechist: Now, take a moment to write your resolution on your bookmark, to keep in your religion book as a reminder throughout the year to be faithful to your promises.

PRAYER

Teacher/Catechist: Our Bishops have reminded us of the words of St. Peter – “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1Pt. 3:15).
Let us pray:

All: Lord, be present to us and help us to learn as much as we can so that we can witness to our faith in you and be a sign of hope to all we meet this year. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

Teacher/Catechist: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

(Sprinkle students and classroom with Holy Water)

Students: Amen.

“To live without faith, without a patrimony to defend, without a steady struggle for truth, that is not living, but existing.” (Pier Giorgio Frassati)



ORACION EN EL AULA PARA EL COMIENZO DEL AÑO ESCOLAR

Una vez que los alumnos se hayan reunido con su maestro y antes de que comience la clase, dediquen unos minutos a orar para bendecir su tiempo juntos este año. Explícales brevemente la oración antes de comenzar. Entonces, pídeles a cada uno que piense en lo que espera aprender este año y en lo que le gustaría que Dios les ayudara (ej. Ayúdame a prepararme bien para la Confirmación, a estar atento y respetuoso durante la clase, asistir a Misa cada domingo, a ser más amable con mi hermanita, a leer un capítulo del Nuevo Testamento cada día, etc.).

Pidan a los alumnos que pasen 5 minutos en silencio para prepararse para la oración y reflexionar sobre su meta o resolución para este año.

Materiales: Agua bendita
Cartulina, cortada en el tamaño de un marcador, para cada alumno
Libro de religión para cada alumno
Copia de esta oración para cada alumno



ORACION PARA COMENZAR EL AÑO ESCOLAR

Maestro/Catequista: En el nombre del Padre, y del Hijo, y del Espíritu Santo.

Alumnos: Amén.

INTRODUCCION

Maestro/Catequista: Al comenzar este nuevo año escolar, tomemos unos minutos para unirnos a Dios y buscar su ayuda mientras tratamos de conocerlo mejor y seguir el camino que ha trazado para nosotros. Que la Iglesia y nuestros Santos que pronto serán canonizados sean nuestra guía.

PETICIONES

Maestro/Catequista: El Papa Francisco, al proclamar el 2025 como Año Jubilar, nos pidió ser “Peregrinos de la Esperanza.”

Que nuestras acciones este año den esperanza a las personas que encontramos cada día.

Roguemos al Señor.

Alumnos: Te lo pedimos, Señor.

Maestro/Catequista: Cada año, los obispos de los Estados Unidos establecen un tema para el año. El tema de este año, “Esto es mi cuerpo que se entrega por ustedes” (Lc. 22:19), nos recuerda que es la muerte y resurrección de Cristo la que es la fuente de nuestra esperanza.

Que aumentemos nuestra devoción a Jesús cada vez que lo recibimos en la Sagrada Comunión.

Roguemos al Señor.

Alumnos: Te lo pedimos, Señor.

Maestro/Catequista: Carlo Acutis, el Patrón de los Jóvenes y del Internet, dijo una vez, “La Eucaristía es el autopista hacia el cielo.”



Que aprendamos a usar sabiamente el don de la tecnología como una forma de difundir la bondad y dar esperanza a aquellos que están confundidos y buscan la verdad.

Roguemos al Señor.

Alumnos: Te lo pedimos, Señor.

Maestro/Catequista: Pier Giorgio Frassati, el Patrón de Adultos jóvenes y Atletas, tomó como su lema, “Verso L’Alto” – a las Alturas.

Que él camine con nosotros este año, motivándonos a siempre alcanzar las alturas – a la excelencia, la santidad, y a Dios.

Roguemos al Señor.

Alumnos: Te lo pedimos, Señor.



COMPROMISO

Maestro/Catequista: Ahora, tómate un momento para escribir tu resolución en tu marcador. Puede guardarlo en tu libro de religión como un recordatorio durante todo el año de ser fiel a tus promesas.

ORACION

Maestro/Catequista: Nuestros Obispos nos han recordado las palabras de San Pedro – “Estén siempre listos a responder a todo el que les pida razón de su esperanza” (1Pedro 3:15). Oremos.

Alumnos: Señor, acompáñanos y ayúdanos a aprender todo lo que podamos para que podamos ser testigos de nuestra fe en ti y un signo de esperanza para todos los que encontremos este año. Te lo pedimos por Jesucristo, nuestro Señor. Amén.

BENDICION

Maestro/Catequista: Que el Señor nos bendiga, nos guarde de todo mal, y nos lleve a la vida eterna.

(Rocía a los alumnos y el aula con agua bendita)

Alumnos: Amén.

“Vivir sin fe, sin un patrimonio que defender, sin una lucha constante por la verdad, eso no es vivir, sino existir.” (Pier Giorgio Frassati)





Dear Friends,

A computer can be a wonderful device. And it can be the source of angst and frustration, especially for beginners! Learning what all the keys are and their function is not always an easy task. But the best part of a computer is its ability to make me look good! Mistakes, misspelled or incorrect words, lost documents, uneven margins, etc. can be corrected at the touch of a key (if you know which one to use!!) Then there is the "refresh" button. I'm not really sure what it does, but I like the name of it! It gives me the sense that I can do something **new**.

Well, here we are at the start of a new school year. September is the month where things begin to change in order to start another cycle of dying and rising. It is interesting that, before the leaves die, they give forth a masterpiece of breathtaking color. It's the time of year when we get a sense that we are starting all over and doing something **new**. God is giving us a fresh start.

There is a story in the Acts of the Apostles about Aeneas' healing by Peter through the power of Christ's spirit. Aeneas had been crippled for a long time. Two lines in the story especially struck me. "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. **Get up and make your bed.**"

The command to "get up and make your bed" is very significant. The bed is no longer something that holds this man back. He has risen from it. Making his bed symbolizes a **new** life, the first act of a **new** day, a new beginning. Aeneas has left an old way of living and embarks on a **new** one. It's a lot like the month of September, the New Year's Day of the school calendar!

We are on the cusp of a new school year. With the falling leaves of Autumn, we are being called to start anew, to "make our beds" and get moving. We can't allow our need to "**control**" overwhelm us. Perhaps we've been comfortable with the lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer and don't want to let go. We can't afford to "**backspace**" when something new awaits us.

Jesus calls us every day to get up and make our beds, to start a new day, to “**refresh**” our lives. Make the bed into something **new** rather than the same old place.

May the act of making your bed each morning remind you that God is calling you to **new** things this day and allow God to walk with you.

God calls: Mary, Joe, Alice, Vince, Carol, Marie . . . “Get up and make your bed!”

Messages from Pope Francis

Based on
"Hope- Pope Francis, the Autobiography"

Part 1/3: Promote Christian Character



Pope Francis was born to Italian immigrant parents in a humble neighborhood barrio of Buenos Aires. He became the eldest of five children. As with all of us, the character of Jorge Bergoglio was formed within his family, in his neighborhood and schooling experiences, and by folks with whom he chose to form friendships. He was not always "Pope" material! He made his share of mistakes, but he learned from them. His world view was shaped by art, music, literature, and politics-in-action. Like Jesus, Jorge "grew in wisdom, age, and grace before God and humankind" (Luke 2: 52). Life taught Jorge that there was something to learn from everyone and everything – even if it is what not to be or what not to do!

In his autobiography, *Hope*, Pope Francis shared seven life experiences that are relevant to tutoring the hearts of school-aged children. They are the focus of a three-part newsletter: (1) Promote Christian Character, (2) Grow from Mistakes, and (3) Manage Emotional Stress.

What is character? *Character* is the distinguishing feature of personality and behavior that persists, regardless of outside pressure or personal temptation. Dr. Thomas Lickona remarked that character requires a person to know the good, desire the good, and do the good on a consistent basis. In other words, character is shaped over time – by choice – and as a life-pattern.

Christian character involves freely choosing to know, love, and serve God. A person of Christian character intentionally tries to live the example and teaching of Jesus that is presented in the Scriptures. The Ten Commandments, the Law of Love, the Beatitudes, the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, and the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching are guideposts on the journey. Each of these warrants an individual newsletter! **The foci of this newsletter, however, are three Christian Character lessons from the life of Pope Francis.**

Lesson #1: Create Harmony

"Thank you is a phrase that is fundamental to life, starting with family life. Together with please and sorry. It is a key that opens the way to a well-lived life, to a life of peace." (HOPE, p. 48)

- "Great hearts are grateful hearts."
- Gratitude is a natural antidote for pessimism.
- Gratitude is like glue in a relationship. Bonds of friendship and respect form when "please" and "thank you" become like salt and pepper in our relationships.
- Apologizing for hurts – whether real or imagined – is balm for broken hearts. Accepting responsibility for a hiccup in a relationship is a way of showing respect for the injured person.

Lesson #2: Avoid Gossip

- Gossip means to tell a person's business to people who have no need or right to know it.
- Gossip can never be corrected and healed because you have no idea how far your rumor spread.
- If a person gossips to you about someone, probably that person will gossip about you also. Consequently, you can no longer trust that person.
- Without trust, healthy relationships are impossible.
- "Say the good things that people need to hear (Ephesians 4:29) or keep silent.
- Gossip "anesthetizes the heart." It makes the heart hard and numb.
- In the poem "Our Own," Margaret Sangster wrote: "Hearts have been broken by harsh words spoken that sorrow can never set right."
- Bishop Fulton Sheen taught: "It is easier to create faith than to restore it."

"... since I was a child, I have always tried to avoid those who gossip, those who speak ill of others: I have always regarded this as a grave sickness that anesthetizes the heart. In the words of the Book of Sirach: "Many have fallen by the edge of the sword, but not as many as by the tongue" (Sirach 28:18), because gossip, mud-slinging, is by no means an innocent vice: it is instead a plague that carries discord and suffering." (HOPE, p. 139).

Lesson #3: Be Generous and Self-Reflective

During Freshman Year of Boarding School: I remember an episode relating to that year at the school at Ramos Mejia that might seem small, though for me it was not at all. One day I gave my bicycle to a classmate, who had an accident and damaged it. I told him he would have to get it repaired, and he did. His mother had to pay. Causing her no doubt to make sacrifices, since they certainly weren't wealthy. Well, this guilt remained with me for years. For many years I felt I had been unfair, that I had been ungenerous, and this feeling stayed with me for a long while." (HOPE, p. 97).

- In time, Jorge regretted his decision since the student's family was poor and Jorge could get along without the bike. He felt that he had been unfair and ungenerous. (He was growing in self-reflection.)
- Like Jorge, we might have second-thoughts about negative choices that we have made. We, too, might regret past decisions. Let the discomfort that you feel in your soul (guilt) tutor your heart to become better. For instance, in future interactions become more generous or more kind, more forgiving, more helpful, more self-sacrificing, etc.
- Let mistakes, and even sin, become a steppingstone instead of a stumbling block.
- Adopt the motto: "Good, better, best! I will never rest. Until my good is better and my better is my best."

Mensajes del Papa Francisco

Basado en
"Esperanza - Papa Francisco, la Autobiografía"

Parte 1/3: Promover el Carácter Cristiano



El Papa Francisco nació de padres inmigrantes italianos en un barrio humilde de Buenos Aires. Jorge era el mayor de cinco hijos. Al igual que todos nosotros, el carácter de Jorge Bergoglio se formó dentro de su familia, en su vecindario y en sus experiencias educativas, y por las personas con las que eligió formar amistades. ¡Él no siempre tuvo las cualidades de "Papa"! Cometió su parte de errores, pero aprendió de ellos. Su visión del mundo fue moldeada por el arte, la música, la literatura y la política en acción. Al igual que Jesús, Jorge "creció en sabiduría, edad y gracia ante Dios y la humanidad" (Lucas 2: 52). La vida le enseñó a Jorge que había algo que aprender de cada persona y de cada cosa, ¡incluso si es lo que no hay que ser o lo que no hay que hacer!

En su autobiografía, "Esperanza", el Papa Francisco compartió siete experiencias de vida que son relevantes para educar los corazones de los niños en edad escolar. Son el enfoque de un boletín informativo de tres partes: (1) Promover el Carácter Cristiano, (2) Crecer a partir de Errores y (3) Manejar el Estrés Emocional.

¿Qué es el carácter? **El carácter** es la característica distintiva de la personalidad y el comportamiento que persiste, independientemente de la presión externa o la tentación personal. El Dr. Thomas Lickona comentó que el carácter requiere que una persona conozca lo bueno, desee lo bueno y haga lo bueno de manera constante. En otras palabras, el carácter se forma con el tiempo, por elección, y como un patrón de vida.

El carácter cristiano implica elegir libremente conocer, amar y servir a Dios. Una persona de carácter cristiano intenta vivir intencionalmente el ejemplo y la enseñanza de Jesús tal como se presenta en las Escrituras. Los Diez Mandamientos, la Ley del Amor, las Bienaventuranzas, las Obras de Misericordia Espirituales y Corporales, y los Principios de la Doctrina Social Católica son hitos en el camino. ¡Cada uno de estos merece un boletín individual! Sin embargo, los focos de este boletín son tres lecciones de la vida del Papa Francisco.

Lección #1: Crear Armonía

"Gracias" es una frase que es fundamental para la vida, comenzando con la vida familiar. Junto con "por favor" y "lo siento". Es una llave que abre el camino a una vida bien vivida, a una vida de paz" (p. 48)

• "Los grandes corazones son corazones agradecidos."

• La gratitud es un antídoto natural para el pesimismo.

• La gratitud es como un pegamento en una relación. Se forman lazos de amistad y respeto cuando "por favor" y "gracias" se convierten en sal y pimienta en nuestras relaciones.

* Pedirse perdón por los daños - ya sean reales o imaginarios - es un bálsamo para corazones rotos. Aceptar la responsabilidad por un tropiezo en una relación es una forma de mostrar respeto por la persona herida.

Lección #2: Evitar el Chisme

- El chisme significa contar los asuntos de una persona a personas que no tienen necesidad o derecho a saberlo.
- El chisme nunca puede sanar porque no tienes idea de cuán lejos se propagó tu rumor.
- Si una persona chismea sobre otra contigo, probablemente esa persona chismeará sobre ti con otra.
- En consecuencia, ya no puedes confiar en esa persona. Sin confianza, las relaciones saludables son imposibles.
- “Di las cosas buenas que la gente necesita escuchar (Efesios 4:29) o guarda silencio.
- Como dijo el Papa Francisco, el chisme “anestesia el corazón”. Endurece y hace insensible; bloquea la construcción de relaciones; trae tristeza y sufrimiento innecesario.”
- Los corazones han sido rotos por palabras duras que la tristeza nunca podrá corregir.”

“... desde que era niño, siempre he tratado de evitar a aquellos que chismorrear, a aquellos que hablan mal de los demás: siempre he considerado esto como una grave enfermedad que anestesia el corazón. En las palabras del Libro de Sirácida: “Muchos han caído por el filo de la espada, pero no tantos como por la lengua” (Sirácida 28:18), porque el chisme, la difamación, no es de ninguna manera un vicio inocente: es, en cambio, una plaga que lleva a la discordia y al sufrimiento” (p. 139).

Lección #3: Sé Generoso y Auto-reflexivo

“Durante el primer año en el internado: “Recuerdo un episodio relacionado con ese año en la escuela en Ramos Mejía que puede parecer pequeño, aunque para mí no lo fue en absoluto. Un día le di mi bicicleta a un compañero de clase, quien tuvo un accidente y la dañó. Le dije que tendría que repararla, y así lo hizo. Su madre tuvo que pagar. Sin duda, esto le causó sacrificios, ya que ciertamente no eran ricos. Bueno, esta culpa permaneció conmigo durante años. Durante muchos años sentí que había sido injusto, que había sido poco generoso, y este sentimiento se mantuvo conmigo durante mucho tiempo” (p. 97).

- Aunque el daño a la bicicleta fue accidental y no intencional, Jorge Bergoglio tenía derecho a esperar que su compañero de clase la reparara. Eso puede haber sido "correcto" pero para la conciencia en desarrollo de Jorge, no fue una decisión "justa" ya que la familia del estudiante era pobre y Jorge podía arreglárselas sin la bicicleta. Debido a que era auto-reflexivo (a la edad de 13 años), más tarde se sintió culpable. Sintió que había sido injusto y poco generoso.
- Como Jorge, podríamos tener dudas sobre las decisiones negativas que hemos tomado. También podríamos arrepentirnos de decisiones pasadas. Pero aprendamos una lección del Papa Francisco. Que la culpa nos lleve a ser más generosos en el futuro - o más amables, perdonadores, serviciales, autosacrificados, etc.
- Deja que la incomodidad que sientes en tu alma (culpa) eduque tu corazón. Que los errores, e incluso el pecado, se conviertan en un peldaño en lugar de un obstáculo.
- Adopta el lema: “¡Bueno, mejor, lo mejor! Nunca descansaré. Hasta que mi bueno sea mejor y mi mejor sea mi lo mejor.”

THIS JUBILEE IS FOR YOU!

A Reflection on our Jubilee Pilgrimage to Rome and what it taught me about the pilgrimage of life

Sister Christina Marie Roberts, IHM



THE JUBILEE YEAR

“You shall treat this fiftieth year as sacred. You shall proclaim liberty in the land for all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to your own property, each of you to your own family.” (Leviticus 25:10)

The Jubilee Year of 2025 is a gift offered to each and every one of us. Originally described in the Old Testament in the Book of Leviticus, the Year of Jubilee is a time of liberation and restoration, which focuses on forgiving debts, freeing those in bondage, and returning land to its original owners, a time to re-establish right-relationship with God, one another, and all of creation. The Jubilee Year is also known as the Holy Year, a time in which God’s holiness transforms us. Ordinarily, the Jubilee Year is celebrated every 25 years in the Catholic Church, and this **Jubilee of 2025** calls us to be “**Pilgrims of Hope.**”



MAKING A PILGRIMAGE: LEARNING TO EXPAND OUR HEARTS



This summer, I had the wonderful opportunity to make a pilgrimage to Rome for the Jubilee of Youth with 36 young adults from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, led by Archbishop Perez, Bishop John McIntyre, and Father Stephen DeLacy, Father Timothy Tarnacki, and Andrea Mueller of the Office for Ministry with Young Adults. This was my first pilgrimage experience and certainly one that I will never forget! From the beginning, we were constantly reminded that **the purpose of a pilgrimage is to expand our hearts.** The Jubilee Year calls us to set out on a journey or pilgrimage that opens our hearts, helps us to change by growing closer to God and to each other, to gain new perspectives, and to be in solidarity with and grow in understanding of those who are forced to leave their homes for a variety of reasons and set out on a journey, seeking a new way of life.

THIS JUBILEE IS FOR YOU!

On the morning of Saturday, August 2, as we prepared to make our pilgrimage to Tor Vergata where we would have an evening vigil under the stars with Pope Leo, we gathered for Mass during which we heard the description of a jubilee year from Leviticus 25. God's timing could not have been more perfect! In his homily, Archbishop Perez reminded us continually "This Jubilee is for you," that God has a plan for each and every one of us, and the jubilee is a gift from God for each of us. Our time in Rome was truly a gift, and most of all, our pilgrimage taught me so much about the pilgrimage of life! I would like to share a few important points from these days with you:

Abandon your expectations and allow God to work, to help you to see His goodness!

"The fullness of our existence does not depend on what we store up or, as we heard in the Gospel, on what we possess. Rather, fullness has to do with what we joyfully welcome and share." (Pope Leo XIV - Sunday Mass at Tor Vergata on 8/3/25)

Going on a pilgrimage was a completely new experience for me! I truly believed that if something was on our itinerary, we would do it, and do it right on time! It did not take me long to realize that especially because of the incredible crowds, our schedule would change constantly! For example, when we were in Assisi, we were unable to see Bl. Carlo Acutis' body simply because the line was too long. I was so disappointed! We would have to choose what we could do with our time. I chose to see Ss. Francis and Clare, not realizing that I would have a powerful experience of the peace of God while praying at the tomb of St. Francis, a total gift that I certainly did not expect!

It took me a few days, but I eventually realized that I had to let go of my expectations and allow God to work, and to joyfully welcome whatever He had in store for us these days.

Father DeLacy often reminded us that **"God does not give us the pilgrimage we want, but rather the pilgrimage that we need."** This was certainly a life lesson, as we are constantly being surprised by our God who knows exactly what we need!



Difficult moments help us to grow closer to God and each other!

"To truly know Jesus, one must complete a journey; one must remain with Him and also pass through His Passion. When we have seen Him humiliated and suffering, when we have experienced the saving power of His Cross, then we can say that we have truly come to know Him. There are no shortcuts to becoming disciples of Jesus." (Pope Leo XIV - General Audience on 7/30/25)

Going into this pilgrimage, if you had asked me what the highlight of the week was, I probably would have said the incredible seats we had for the General Audience! We were so close to Pope Leo that when he went by on the Popemobile, he actually turned his head and looked toward us when I yelled, "Papa!" A moment I will never forget!



As incredible as that was, honestly, the most unforgettable moment for me happened while we waited in an enormous crowd like nothing I had ever experienced before, spending about three and a half hours packed like sardines to get into St. Peter's Square for the Opening Mass! As we shuffled forward a few steps every ten minutes or so, it became very challenging to stay together and to avoid being knocked over by the crowd! Yet I was amazed, as I looked around, I saw so many of our group members looking out for each other, supporting each other, and literally holding each other up at times! Our group really bonded during those moments of struggle, drawing us closer to God and each other, showing us how the most difficult times in our lives can also become moments of growth and encounter!

God is in the waiting - A sign that good things are coming!

"Find the courage to make difficult choices and say to Jesus: "You are my life, Lord."....Fear then gives way to hope, because we are certain that God brings to completion what he begins." (Pope Leo XIV, Evening Vigil at Tor Vergata, 8/2)

With a million people in Rome during the Jubilee of Youth, waiting became a constant theme - for the metro, a basilica, or even our next meal! Waiting in a large crowd that bursted at the seams as the Roman sun blazed was never fun and even became some of the most mentally and physically challenging moments I experienced! But just as the disciples learned on the road to Emmaus, God was with us in the waiting and uncertainty. If only we trusted and hoped in Him, He would reveal Himself with in ways we did not expect! And so it goes in times of waiting in our own lives...

"My dear friends, united to Jesus, like branches to the vine, you will bear much fruit. You will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. You will be seeds of hope where you live, in your families, among your friends, at school, at work, and in sports. You will be seeds of hope with Christ, our hope." (Pope Leo XIV - Angelus Message at Tor Vergata on 8/3/25)

Yes, this jubilee was certainly a gift for each of us! The pilgrimage experience definitely helped each of our hearts to expand as we grew in trust and in hope that God would provide for us and constantly surprise us with exactly what we needed! While this gift we received was meant for each of us, we must share this gift with each other!

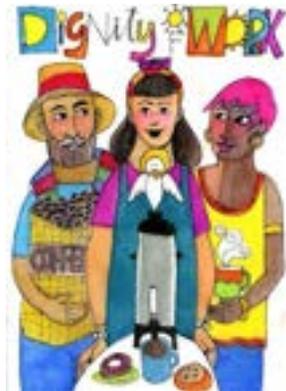
May the gifts and graces we receive this Jubilee Year become gifts for others, bringing the Hope of Christ to all those whom we encounter on the pilgrimage of life!

Social Justice

5th Theme of Catholic Social Teaching: The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers by Sister Joyce C. Bell IHM, Coordinator of Social Justice

Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of our ongoing participation in God's creation. We were placed in creation to care for it, to be nourished by it and to sustain it. Work is one way we express the inherent dignity God has placed within us. "Labor makes possible the development of society and provides for the sustenance, stability and fruitfulness of one's family" (Pope Francis, *The Joy of Love*, n. 23-24). Through work we provide for our own needs and the needs of our family. If the dignity of work is to be protected, the basic rights of workers must be respected: the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property and to the economic initiative. The economy must serve people, not the other way around.

Learn more about this theme of Catholic Social Teaching by viewing this video:
CST 101: The Dignity of Work <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txH7G1RkD8I>



Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

1. Life and dignity of the human person
2. Call to family, community and participation
3. Rights and responsibilities
4. Option for the poor and vulnerable
5. The dignity of work and the rights of workers
6. Solidarity
7. Care for Gods' creation

CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Instruct the wise and they become wiser still. Proverbs 9: 9

Catholic Podcasts

The Catholic School Leaders Podcast

Leadership in a Catholic school can be a challenging vocation. Whether you are in a current leadership role or are aspiring to be a future Catholic school leader, join host John Mihalyo and other exceptional leaders from all over the country to help you grow in leadership. Listen on your favorite podcast app.

Catholic Daily Reflections

Host, Dr. Tim Gray, president of the Augustine Institute, comments on the daily Catholic Mass Readings, explains the Scriptures, and provides concrete ideas on how to apply them to daily life. These Catholic reflections focus on living the Catholic faith and learning to know and love the Lord through our daily endeavors and participation in liturgical worship. Listen on your favorite podcast app.

Apps for Ipad, Iphone

Catholic Holy Bible with Audio

With this app you can carry your Bible in your pocket! The Catholic Holy Bible app works both on and offline, so no worries if WiFi is unavailable. Sharpen your biblical knowledge with quizzes, customize your own reading plan, highlight and bookmark favorite passages, are just a few of the features. Perfect for use in the classroom or for your personal use. Download for free from Apple.



The God Minute

The God Minute is an app created by a small group of priests, religious sisters and lay people who start their day in prayer. Sponsored by the Vincentian community, their simple mission is to inspire and empower people of faith into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Soft music, sacred scripture and a thoughtful reflection are weaved into a 10 minute guided reflection. Great way to start your day! Download for free on Apple.



Shared Wisdom

Two heads are better than one. Please submit your favorite technology resources for Catholic religious education at krantzihm@yahoo.com. Submissions will be included in upcoming issues. Many thanks to those who shared tools for this issue.



IHM Vocations



SCHOOL & PARISH VOCATION PROGRAMS

- K-12 School Vocation Day
- Visit to Villa Maria House of Studies
- Vocation talk for:
 - K-12
 - PREP Students
 - Youth & Young Adult Ministries
 - Parent Groups

Contact:

Vocation Director

Sister Laura Downing, IHM
ihmvoc@gmail.com



 @ihmvocations
ihmvocations.org



GPS for Success



**Recalculating Positive Social and Emotional Strategies
which create healthy climate and learning in the classroom.**

**Recalculating Positive Social and Emotional Strategies
which create a healthy climate and learning in the classroom**

Why Social and Emotional Health Matters

Children's social and emotional health affects their overall development and learning. Research indicates that children who are mentally healthy tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than less mentally healthy peers. Children who exhibit social and emotional difficulties tend to have trouble following directions and participating in learning activities. Compared with healthier peers, they may be more likely to suffer rejection by classmates, have low self-esteem, do poorly in school, and be suspended. Thus, children's social and emotional health is just as important as their physical health and affects their capacity to develop the potential to lead a fulfilling life.

Teachers can promote children's social and emotional health in many ways, for example, by organizing a material-rich environment to stimulate social interactions among children. This article focuses on one of the most important practices: building trusting relationships.



**The most valuable resource that all teachers have is each other.
Without collaboration our growth is limited to our own perspectives.**

Robert John Meehan

Establishing Trusting Relationships

Young children develop and learn in the context of relationships. A trusting and caring teacher-child relationship is essential for children's optimum development. Children who have trusting relationships with their teachers are, on average, more willing to ask questions, solve problems, try new tasks, and express their thinking than their peers without such relationships. It has been observed that children develop positive social and emotional health as a result of close relationships with their teachers. For example, children learn to use words to express their feelings – such as a child saying to another “I am sad when you use hurting words!” – and to show empathy – as when a child will pat a friend's head and say, “Are you okay? Do you want to hold my teddy bear?”

Children benefit socially, emotionally, and academically when teachers intentionally create close, trusting relationships. But gaining the trust of every child is not as simple as being nice and engaging. How can teachers create trusting relationships with all children? Consistently offering warmth, affection, respect, and caring is essential.

Showing Warmth and Affection Consistently

Warmth and affection, even on bad days and when children are misbehaving, are critical to children's well-being in early education settings. They contribute to developing secure relationships between children and adults, provide models of gentle behavior, and are linked with children's ability to interact positively with peers. Preschoolers have been observed using gentle hands and kind words and positively interacted with peers most of the time. Their social and emotional well-being was nourished by their teacher's warmth and affection.



Social Skills Kids Need

www.thepathway2success.com



Compromising



Expressing Feelings



Thinking Before Speaking or Acting



Using Flexible Thinking



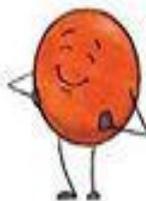
Following Directions



Using Self-Control



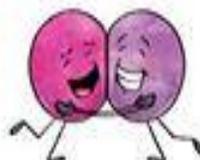
Showing Empathy



Having a Positive Attitude



Disagreeing Respectfully



Getting Along with Others



Self-Advocating



Using Coping Strategies



Dealing with Anger & Frustration



Seeing Someone Else's Perspective



Expressing Ideas, Feelings & Thoughts



Taking Responsibility



Using Positive Self-Talk



Understanding Choices



Understanding Personal Space



Taking Turns



Being a Good Sport



Appreciating Differences



Staying Calm in Times of Stress



Being Reflective



Brainstorming Solutions



Self-Regulating Emotions



Dealing with Worries



Reading Social Cues



Sharing



Dealing with Problems & Conflicts



Apologizing



Accepting Consequences

Kindergarten Social & Emotional Learning Worksheet

Call to Action

(Talk about each emotion and what would cause someone to feel that way.)

- "If you see someone with a sad face, what do you think you could do?"
- "If you see someone with an angry face, what do you think you could do?"
- When children come in from recess, you might ask, "Is there anything we need or you would want to talk about before we leave today?"



This face is **ANGRY**.
Color it **RED**.



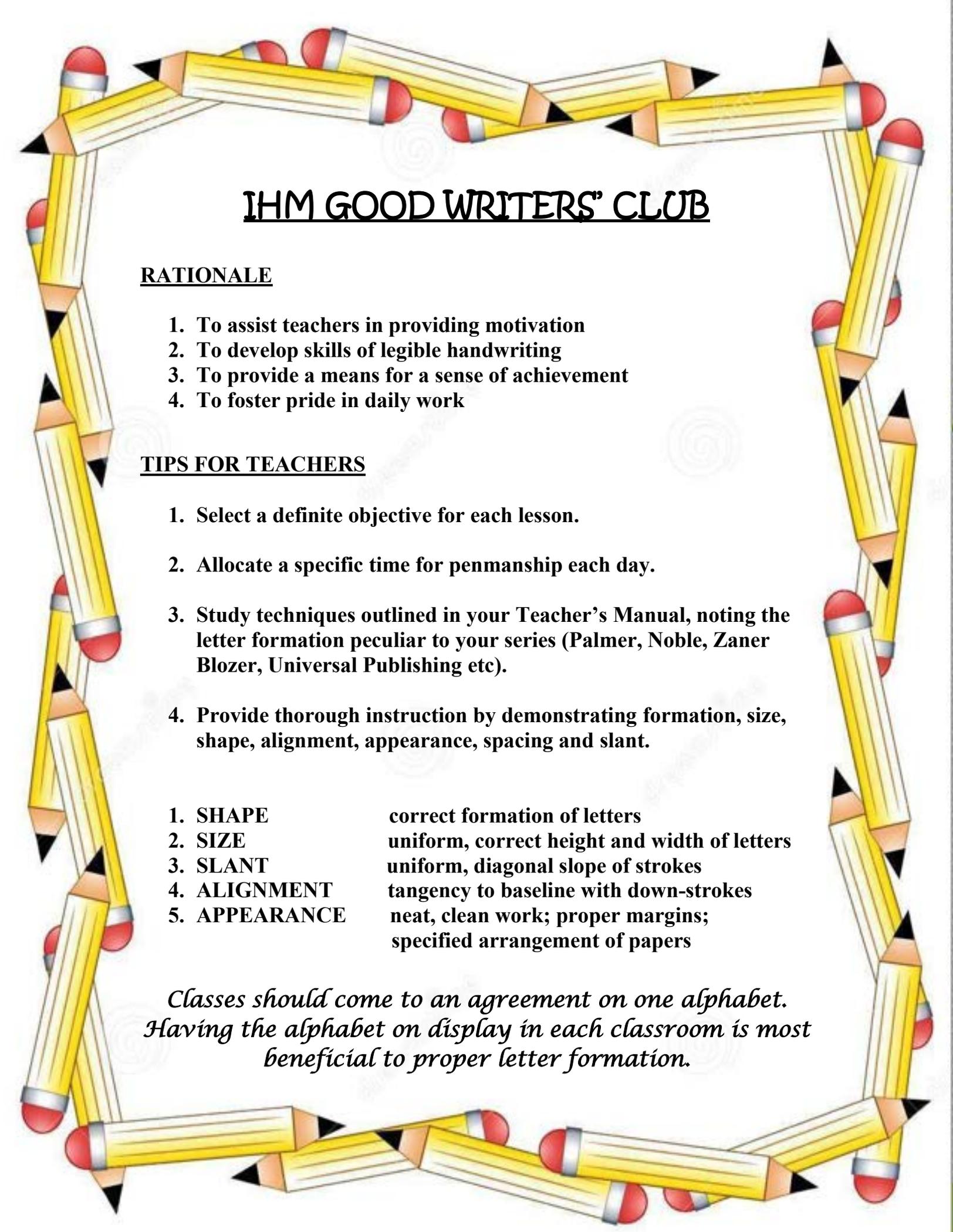
This face is **EXCITED**.
Color it **ORANGE**.



This face is **HAPPY**.
Color it **YELLOW**



This face is **SAD**.
Color it **BLUE**.



IHM GOOD WRITERS' CLUB

RATIONALE

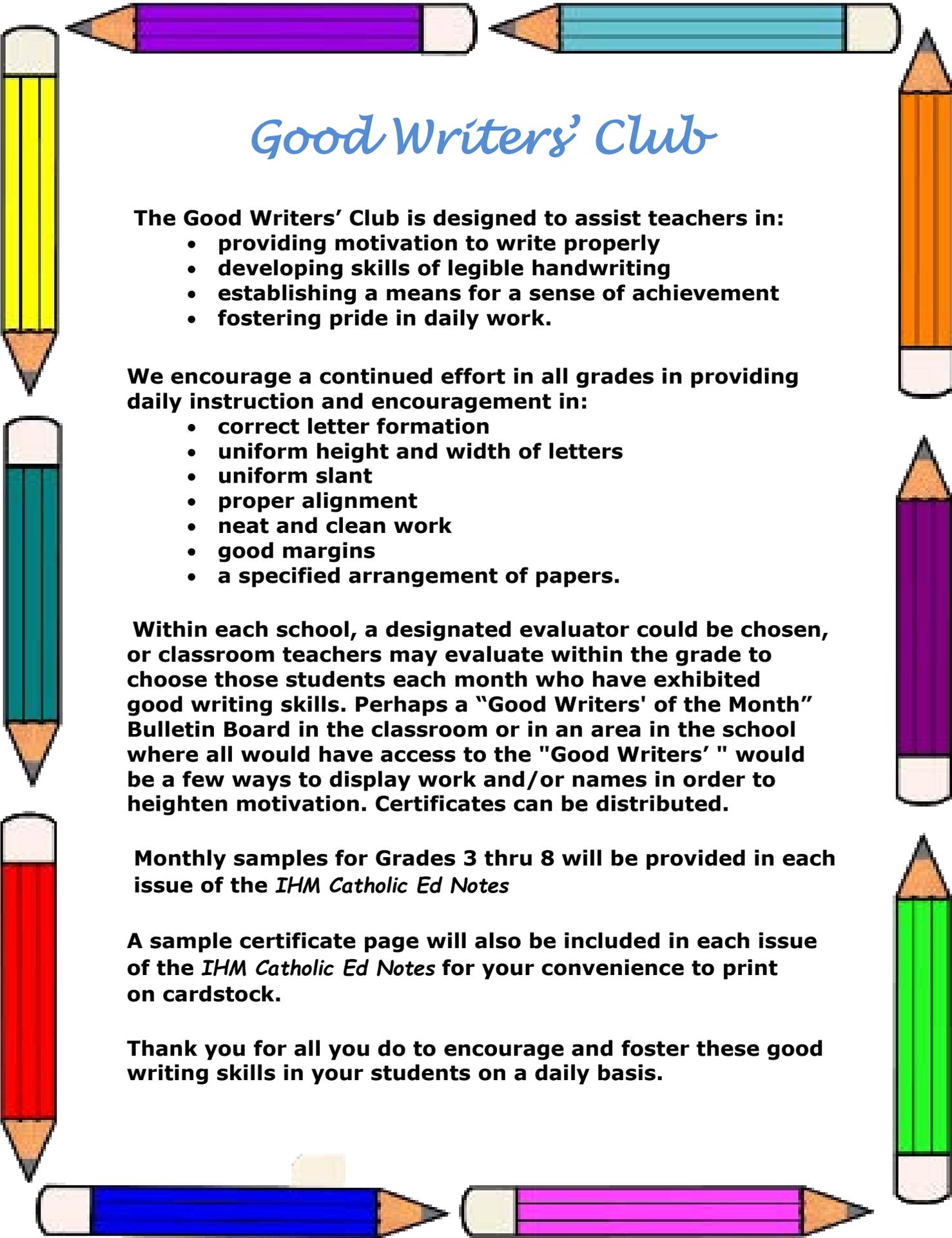
1. To assist teachers in providing motivation
2. To develop skills of legible handwriting
3. To provide a means for a sense of achievement
4. To foster pride in daily work

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

1. Select a definite objective for each lesson.
2. Allocate a specific time for penmanship each day.
3. Study techniques outlined in your Teacher's Manual, noting the letter formation peculiar to your series (Palmer, Noble, Zaner Blozer, Universal Publishing etc).
4. Provide thorough instruction by demonstrating formation, size, shape, alignment, appearance, spacing and slant.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. SHAPE | correct formation of letters |
| 2. SIZE | uniform, correct height and width of letters |
| 3. SLANT | uniform, diagonal slope of strokes |
| 4. ALIGNMENT | tangency to baseline with down-strokes |
| 5. APPEARANCE | neat, clean work; proper margins;
specified arrangement of papers |

*Classes should come to an agreement on one alphabet.
Having the alphabet on display in each classroom is most
beneficial to proper letter formation.*



Good Writers' Club

The Good Writers' Club is designed to assist teachers in:

- providing motivation to write properly
- developing skills of legible handwriting
- establishing a means for a sense of achievement
- fostering pride in daily work.

We encourage a continued effort in all grades in providing daily instruction and encouragement in:

- correct letter formation
- uniform height and width of letters
- uniform slant
- proper alignment
- neat and clean work
- good margins
- a specified arrangement of papers.

Within each school, a designated evaluator could be chosen, or classroom teachers may evaluate within the grade to choose those students each month who have exhibited good writing skills. Perhaps a "Good Writers' of the Month" Bulletin Board in the classroom or in an area in the school where all would have access to the "Good Writers' " would be a few ways to display work and/or names in order to heighten motivation. Certificates can be distributed.

Monthly samples for Grades 3 thru 8 will be provided in each issue of the *IHM Catholic Ed Notes*

A sample certificate page will also be included in each issue of the *IHM Catholic Ed Notes* for your convenience to print on cardstock.

Thank you for all you do to encourage and foster these good writing skills in your students on a daily basis.

IHM Good Writers' Club



Grades 3 & 4

OCTOBER

Red are the apples
Plenty for all
This is the harvest,
This is fall.

NOVEMBER

Letter shapes are important,
Make them round and neat,
So everyone will see,
Your writing can't be beat.

Grades 5 & 6

OCTOBER

Help me, Mary, everyday
To be like you in my own way,
In all my work, in all my play,
In what I do and what I say.

NOVEMBER

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it
Is like wrapping a present
And not giving it.
(William Arthur Ward)

Grades 7 & 8

OCTOBER

Your actions communicate your values.
Be conscious of what you do.
Say what you mean and live it.
(Pope Francis)

NOVEMBER

If you want to be trusted
You must be trustworthy
Intelligence plus character
Is the goal of true education.

DECEMBER

Grades 3 & 4

Christmas is a time
To open our hearts
To God and His gifts
Just like the rest of the year.

Grades 5 & 6

Advent is a time to wait,
Not quite time to celebrate
We light the candles one by one
'Till the Advent time is done.

Grades 7 & 8

Life is a constant Advent season:
we are continually waiting -
to become, to discover, to complete, to fulfill.



Fall, 2025

PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship
required by the IHM GOOD WRITERS CLUB

for Grade _____

and thereby is entitled to this

Certificate of Merit

awarded by the IHM Good Writers Club

Date

Member of the official Board of Evaluators

PROFICIENCY IN PENMANSHIP



This certifies that

has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship
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Religion Bulletin Boards

2025 – 2026

Moving Forward in Faith

We are at the beginning of a new school year. At the same time, we are experiencing some other new beginnings--in the Church, in our faith and with our friends. As we begin preparing our classroom environment, it is a suitable time to review a few principles for making our classrooms reflective of what they should be in a Catholic school:

- **There should be a Religion bulletin board in every classroom.**
- **Bulletin boards should be purposeful and part of a learning experience.**
- **Chalkboards and whiteboards should not be re-purposed as bulletin boards but reserved for teacher demonstrations and student practice. If more space is needed, make use of closet doors or windows to display valuable information.**



In addition to the newness associated with the beginning of a school year, we also have the opportunity to help our students learn more about our new Pope, and new saints who set the example of holiness at a youthful age. In October, we focus on Mary--her approved apparitions in the United States and prayers to Mary that the students should commit to memory. During November we continue to focus on Prayers to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.



August / September



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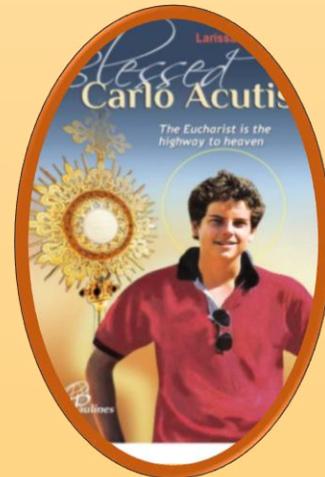
- Grew up in Chicago.
- First American citizen to be elected Pope, Pope Leo is also a citizen of Peru and Italy.
- Pope Leo studied at Villanova University,
- Is a member of the Augustinian community.
- Spent many years doing missionary work in Peru.

The beginning of the school year provides an opportunity to introduce the students to our new Holy Father, Pope Leo the 14th. Prepare a bulletin board with a picture of our Holy Father and share with the students some key points of his background. For younger students, explain what a pope is and what a significant role it is for the Church. For older students who study the history of the Church, have them do a little research on other popes named Leo and their contributions to the Church. Have them complete the form attached and share their findings with the class. Display forms in hall outside classroom for others to read. Give all students a copy of the prayers for the pope and include the prayer in the class prayers.



The canonization of Carlo Acutis (3 May 1991 – 12 October 2006) on September 7 provides an opportunity to focus on youth who have become canonized saints. There are many young saints who can serve as roll models for the youth of today. Carlo is especially significant because students can relate to his use of technology to share his love of God with others. Known as the patron Saint of the internet, Carlo was also known for his devotion to the Eucharist.

Of interest to younger students might be Antonietta Meo who died at age 6 in 1937, she is recognized for her deep faith despite suffering from cancer, Antonietta wrote over **100 heartfelt letters** to Jesus and the Virgin Mary, expressing her love, offering her suffering for sinners, and asking for grace. These letters were filled with profound theological insight, especially for someone so young. She would leave them at the foot of a crucifix or a statue of Baby Jesus in her room; she would become the **youngest non-martyred saint** in Church history. *Place a box/basket in front of the bulletin board for students to place their own heartfelt letters*



St, Carlo. Pray for us,

October

To Jesus Through Mary

October 9th marks the Feast of Our Lady of Champion, the title given to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the national shrine in Champion, Wisconsin after her miraculous protection of that land during great fires surrounding the area in the 19th century. It is the only Marian Apparition in the United States officially recognized by the church. There are many feasts of Our Lady celebrated during October. In fact, there are some calendars that show a Feast of Mary being celebrated somewhere in the world for every day of October.

<http://www.ourladyrosarymakers.com/Marysfeastsoct.html>

In the message she gave at Champion, Our Lady said, *“gather the children of this wild country (a good description of the United States to the present) and teach them what they should know for salvation. Teach them their catechism, how to sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross, and how to properly approach the Sacraments, that is what I wish you to do. Go and fear nothing, I will help you.”*

October's Bulletin boards can help us fulfill Mary's request. Familiarize the students with the story of Our Lady--also known as Our Lady of Good Help. Place a picture of Our Lady of Champion on the bulletin board along with her title. Underneath the picture, place a copy of one of the prayers to Our Lady. That the students should commit to memory. At their level. Include that prayer in the students' daily prayer. Change the prayer every week or every two weeks.

Inspired by the words of Venerable Fulton J. Sheen, this display invites reflection on how we treat the Mother of God. Bishop Sheen often asked: "What would you think of me if I entered your home and refused to speak of your mother?" This poem written by Mary Dixon Thayer became a part of his daily prayer.

On the bulletin board, place a picture of Mary as well as a copy of the poem, *Lovely Lady*. Have children practice the poem from time to time. On the empty space on the bulletin board have the children submit pictures or draw pictures of themselves with their own mother/important person. Encourage them to speak as they would. With their own mother in prayer to Mary.

Our Lady of Champion



**My Queen!
My Mother!
Remember you are
mine.
Keep me and guard
me as your property
and possession.
Amen**



Ask Your Mother



Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue

Lovely Lady dressed in blue —
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little boy,
Tell me what to say!

Did you lift Him up, sometimes,
Gently on your knee?
Did you sing to Him the way
Mother does to me?

Did you hold His hand at night?
Did you ever try
Telling stories of the world?
“Oh And did He cry?”

Do you really think He cares
If I tell Him things—
Little things that happen?
And Do the Angels’ wings

Make a noise? And can He hear
Me if I speak low?
Does He understand me now?
Tell me — for you know!

Lovely Lady dressed in blue —
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little boy,
And you know the way.



November

Eucharist means Thanksgiving.



*Jesus is my
Friend, and the
Eucharist is my
highway to
heaven.*

*O Sacrament most holy
O Sacrament divine
All praise and all
thanksgiving.
Be every moment Thine!*



*Thank You,
God*



Design a bulletin board which reflects the concepts presented in the past two months --St. Carlo Acutis and traditional prayers the student should commit to memory. Carlos' devotion to the Eucharist fits well into the month celebrating Thanksgiving since Eucharist means Thanksgiving.

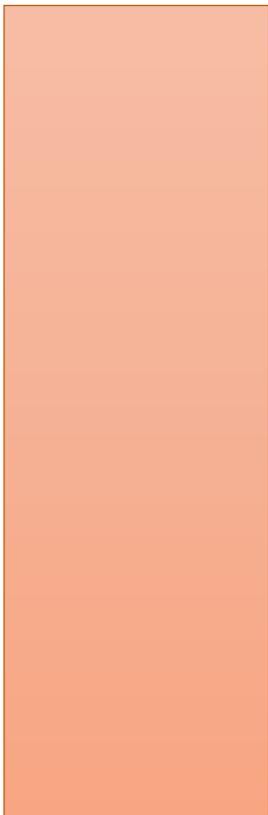
For younger students, a bulletin board reflecting gratitude for God's gifts is appropriate. Place an empty cornucopia on the bulletin board. Give each student a piece of fruit from the pages below. Have them complete the statement on the fruit and color the piece of fruit in. Fill the cornucopia with the fruit. Include the students' expressions of gratitude in the daily prayers of the class.

Pope Leo _____

Born _____ **Died** _____



About





Thank
you, God,
for



Thank
you, God,
for



Thank you, God, for



Thank you, God,
for



Thank you,
God, for



Thank you, God,
for



Thank
you, God,
for



Thank you, God, for



Thank
you, God,
for