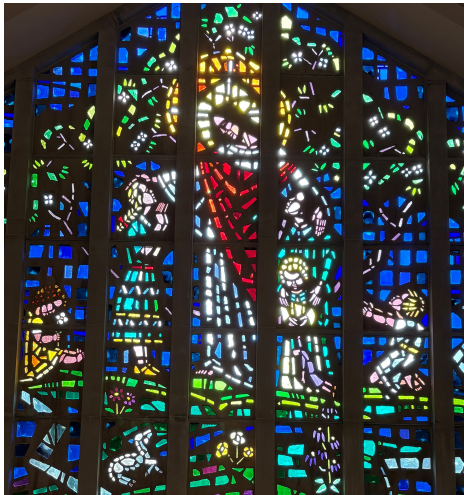




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Dear Friends,

Welcome to our Fall 2026 issue of the IHM Catholic EdNotes! Let us pray for one another.

Heavenly Father,

As we begin this new school year, we step forward with hope, excitement, and trust in Your plan.

Thank You for the gift of learning, the blessing of friendship, and the guidance of our teachers.

Fill our hearts with courage to face challenges, wisdom to make good choices, and compassion to lift others up.

Help us to see every lesson as a step toward the future You have prepared for each of us.

May our classrooms be places of respect, joy, and discovery.

May we shine Your light in our words and actions, and inspire one another to grow in faith and love.

Through the intercession of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, we dedicate this year to You—ready to learn, ready to serve, and ready to make a difference.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us:
ihmcatholicednotes@gmail.com



God bless you for your dedication to Catholic education!



Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Understanding the IHM Charism

LOVE, CREATIVE HOPE & FIDELITY

Excerpts on the IHM Charism by Sister Patricia Dailey IHM

A Congregation's Charism may often be experienced as a compelling, contagious, identifiable spirit, perhaps better caught than taught, better described than defined; something felt, something sensed, something that radiates!

We express the IHM Charism in these powerful words: Love, Creative Hope & Fidelity! Of course, these are virtues that are generally well known, and certainly practiced by many good people. So, how is it that the IHM Sisters claim them as uniquely theirs? The answer lies in the specific identifiable ways that the IHM Sisters attempt to live and share these virtues from their beginning days in 1845 until now.

We say that our Charism grace of **LOVE** manifests itself in joy, respect and reverence; that it becomes real in kindness and compassion; availability, approachability and accessibility; that it exercises justice with mercy; that it responds with acute sensitivity and large-heartedness to human need. This is not necessarily dramatic but an everyday ordinary response to a need. In a special way, our Charism directs our love and concern to God's people, especially those most abandoned or neglected - the poor among us, to those who could fall between the cracks, get left on the margins or become almost invisible.

We say that our Charism grace of **CREATIVE HOPE** places all its confidence in God's loving Providence; that it seeks to make a way where there seems to be no way; that it finds in the present a hint of something more, looking beyond what appears to be to what really is; that it believes that we can make a difference, especially when efforts seem futile; that it chooses an alternative way of living, different from the dominant culture that would have us settle for less; that it engenders hope in the young and the most vulnerable and seeks to find alternatives to negativity and despair, looking to the future with fresh eyes and renewed vigor. It never gives up on anyone!

In a culture that places little value on faithfulness, we say that our Charism of **FIDELITY** calls for perseverance, for staying power, for courage, for faithful commitment over the long haul. We say Fidelity fosters integrity in words and actions and it challenges us to remain steadfast in the mission entrusted to us. It calls forth an enduring love.

It is our ongoing challenge and responsibility to claim this God-given gift of the IHM Charism, and to be sure that it finds a home in our hearts; that it becomes the reality of how we choose to live life and live it abundantly!



Prayer for the Beginning of a New Year of Ministry

Call to Prayer: On June 11, as a special part of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Bishops of the United States consecrated our own nation to the incredible love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Prayers to the Sacred Heart have continually developed over many years following the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary in the 17th century. Many Popes have praised this beautiful devotion and have also encouraged the practice of the consecration of self and home and entire countries to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As we begin a new year of ministry, let us consecrate ourselves and all whom we will serve to the compassionate and merciful Sacred Heart of Jesus. May our hearts mirror the loving Heart of Jesus in all we say and do this year.

Leader: May the Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us...

All: Inflame our hearts with love for Him.

Hymn: Open My Eyes - Verses 1, 2, 3

Antiphon: "The Heart of Jesus beats for every person; make yours beat with His." Saint Carlo Acutis

Sacred Heart Psalm (Please pray antiphonally)

*O Divine Beloved, come and set my heart ablaze
with the fire of your love.

*Inflame my heart and prayers as you did for your
chosen son, Jesus. His holy heart was constantly on
fire with a consuming love for you, His God.

*Envelop me in your flaming Spirit that my lukewarm
prayers and acts may spring alive with the
fire of faith.

*Make my heart, like the heart of Christ, burn with
compassion for the outcast, with comfort for the
lonely and all who are in need.

*May my heart thus formed in the pattern of
His Sacred Heart become a fiery furnace where
the Kingdom will be forged, the age of peace and
justice.

*Grant this prayer in the name of your Son,
who dwells with you and the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.

(Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim by Edward Hayes)

Reading: First Letter of John 4: 7 - 11

Silent Reflection

Intercessions

Leader: Today, we consecrate ourselves and our ministry to
the Sacred Heart of Jesus. With the words of the
Litany of the Sacred Heart, we ask for blessings
on all whom we will serve and all who are in need of
our prayers today.

Our Response will be: **HEART OF JESUS, HEAR US.**

Reader: That the *Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for us*, will embrace Pope Leo XIV, all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons and continue to mold them into loving and compassionate shepherds, we pray ...

That the *Heart of Jesus, source of justice*, will embolden all the leaders of the world to work for justice and peace, we pray...

That the *Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy*, will strengthen and heal all who are suffering in any way, we pray...

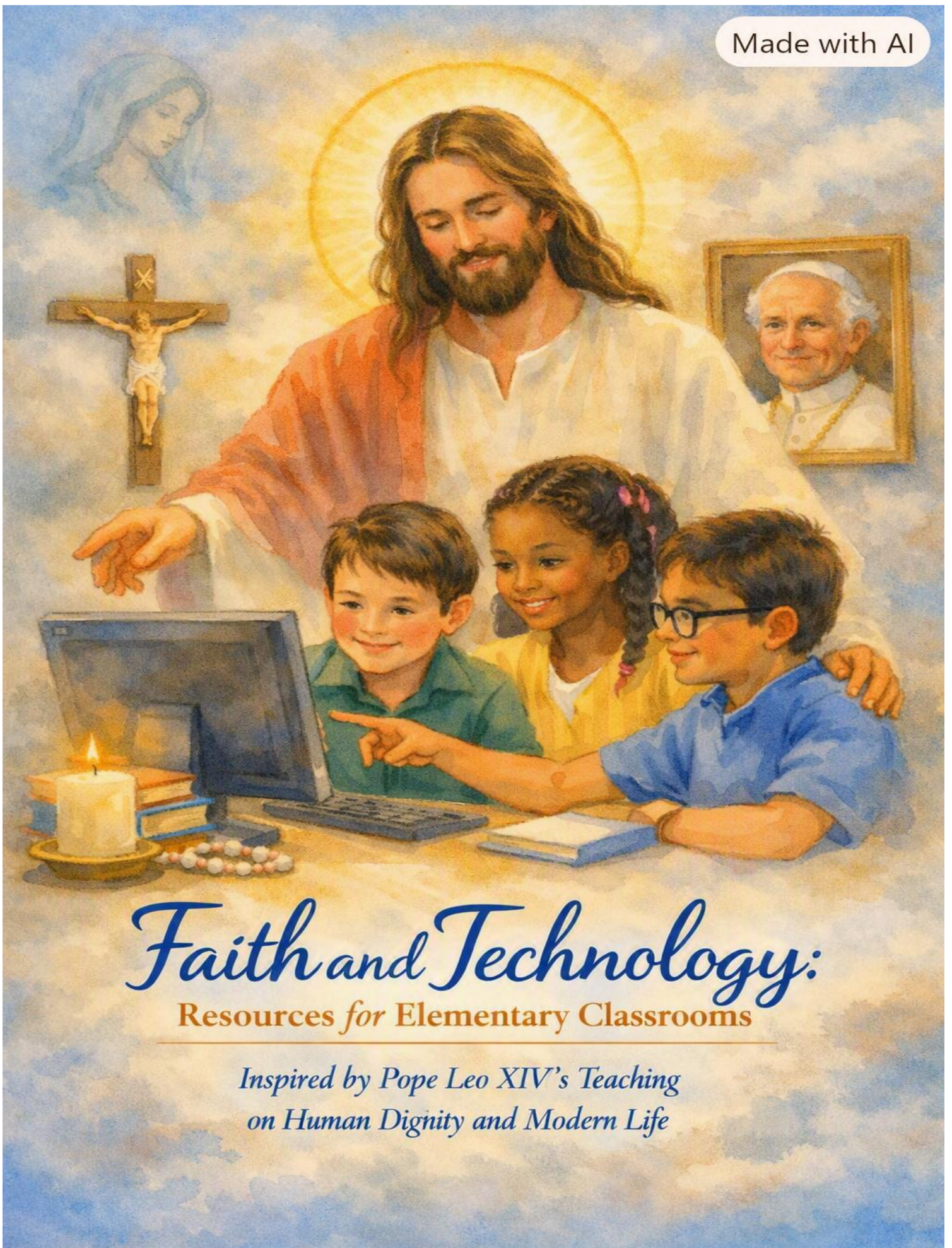
That the *Heart of Jesus, King and Center of our hearts*, will enkindle within each of our hearts the desire to always keep "Jesus as the Center and Mary as the Model" of our lives, we pray...

Closing Prayer: Pope Leo XIV's Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

(Together) Lord, I come to your tender heart today,
to you who have the words that set my heart ablaze,
to you who pour out compassion on the little ones and the poor,
on those who suffer, and on all human miseries.
I desire to know you more, to contemplate you in the Gospel,
to be with you and learn from you
and from the charity with which you allowed yourself
to be touched by all forms of poverty.
You showed us the Father's love by loving us without measure
with your divine and human heart.
Grant all your children the grace of encountering you.
Change, shape, and transform our plans,
so that we seek only you in every circumstance:
in prayer, in work, in encounters, and in our daily routine.
From this encounter, send us out on mission,
a mission of compassion for the world
in which you are the source from which all consolation flows.

Blessing: (Together) Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts
like unto Thine. Amen.

Made with AI



Faith and Technology:

Resources for Elementary Classrooms

*Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's Teaching
on Human Dignity and Modern Life*

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Introduction

This teaching packet helps students understand one of the most important ways the Pope teaches the Church: **encyclicals**. Children often hear about the Pope, but they may not know how he shares his wisdom with Catholics all around the world. This packet introduces encyclicals in a simple, friendly way and helps students connect the Pope's teachings to their everyday lives — at home, at school, and online.

Through clear explanations, activities, and faith-centered reflections, students will learn that the Pope's words are meant to guide us toward kindness, wisdom, and love. This packet also supports Catholic school mission and values by helping children see how faith shapes the choices they make each day.

What Is an Encyclical?

A Understandable Explanation for Elementary Students

1. **An encyclical is a very special kind of letter written by the Pope.** It's not just any letter — it's a message for **the whole Church** all around the world.

You can tell students:

“When the Pope writes an encyclical, he is sending a message to every Catholic — teachers, parents, children, priests, Sisters — everyone.”

2. **The Pope writes encyclicals to teach us important things**

The Pope uses encyclicals to teach us about:

- our **faith**,
- how to **follow Jesus**,
- how to **love others**,
- and how to make **good choices** in everyday life.

You can say:

“An encyclical is like a big lesson from the Pope. He helps us understand what is good, true, and loving.”

3. Encyclicals help us live our faith every day

The Pope often writes about things happening in the world — like caring for creation, helping the poor, or using technology wisely.

For children:

“The Pope teaches us how to use God’s gifts in the right way — even things like computers, tablets, and phones.”

Why Pope Leo’s Encyclical Matters for Us

Pope Leo’s recent encyclical teaches us:

- Technology is a **gift from God**
- We must use it with **kindness**
- We must use it with **wisdom**
- We must use it to **help others**
- We must remember that **people matter more than screens**

This packet helps students understand and practice those lessons throughout the school year.

Overview of This Teaching Packet

This packet includes:

- A clear introduction to encyclicals and background information for teachers on ***Magnifica Huumanitas***
 - Student-friendly explanations of Pope Leo’s message
 - Monthly themes connecting faith to real life
 - Activities that help children practice kindness online and in person
 - Reflection pages, prayer prompts, and classroom discussion starters
 - Visuals and graphics designed for Catholic schools
 - Marian-themed elements that support your classroom’s faith identity. Each section is designed to be simple, gentle, and mission-centered — perfect for elementary students and fully aligned with Catholic school values.
-

Teacher Overview: *Magnifica Humanitas*

Understanding Pope Leo XIV's Vision for Faith, Dignity, and Modern Learning

Purpose of the Encyclical

Magnifica Humanitas is Pope Leo XIV's reflection on the dignity of the human person in an age shaped by rapid technological change. He calls educators, families, and communities to help children grow in wisdom, virtue, and moral clarity while engaging the modern world with confidence and hope. The encyclical emphasizes that technology must always serve the human person — never replace, diminish, or distract from the sacredness of human life.

Key Themes for Educators

1. Human Dignity at the Center

Pope Leo XIV teaches that every child is created in the image of God and deserves formation that honors their inherent worth. Technology should support learning, not overshadow the human relationships that shape the heart.

2. Technology as a Tool for Good

The encyclical encourages schools to use technology wisely:

- to expand access to knowledge,
- to foster creativity,
- to strengthen communication,
- and to support the mission of Catholic education. **But it must always be guided by virtue, prudence, and the Gospel.**

3. Formation of Virtue

Children must learn not only *how* to use technology, but *why* and *when*. Pope Leo XIV highlights virtues such as:

- **prudence** in decision-making,
- **temperance** in screen use,
- **justice** in digital interactions,
- **charity** in communication. These virtues help students become responsible digital citizens rooted in Christ.

4. The Role of the Teacher

Teachers are called to be witnesses of faith who model thoughtful, ethical engagement with technology. Pope Leo XIV reminds educators that their presence, encouragement, and example are irreplaceable — no device can substitute for the human heart of the classroom.

5. Integrating Faith and Modern Life

The encyclical invites Catholic schools to show students that faith is not separate from modern life. Instead, Christ walks with them in every moment — including their digital world. Technology becomes a place where students can practice virtue, seek truth, and shine His light.

How These Resources Reflect *Magnifica Humanitas*

This resource supports teachers in:

- forming students in virtue,
- guiding responsible technology use,
- integrating faith into digital learning,
- and building classrooms where Christ is at the center.

Every worksheet, reflection, and activity is designed to help children understand that they are beloved by God and called to use their gifts — including technological ones — for good

+ September +

Technology Is a Gift From God



*"Every good gift, every perfect gift is from above.
reflect the love of Christ."¹⁷*





Technology Is a Gift From God

Dear Parents and Families.

This month, our students are learning that **technology is a gift from God**—a tool meant to help us learn, create, and connect with others. In class, we are exploring how gratitude and responsibility guide the way we use digital tools.

Students will:

- Reflect on how technology helps them grow
- Practice responsible digital choices
- Connect Scripture to online behavior
- Learn how to use technology for good

Family Connection:

- Talking about how technology helps your family
- Encouraging thoughtful posting and messaging
- Setting gentle routines for screen time
- Praying together for wisdom in digital choices

Scripture of the Month:

"Every good gift... is from above." —James 1:17

Thank you for partnering with us as we help students see technology as a blessing to be used with gratitude and care.



Name: _____ Date: _____

My Hands Can Help

Pope Leo's Teaching

Pope Leo reminds us that technology should help us tell the truth, be kind, and stay close to God.

Think about how your hands — and your choices — can bring kindness to others.

1. Write one way your hands can help someone at school:

2. Write one way your hands can help someone online:

3. Circle the choices that show kindness when using technology:

- Sending a kind message
- Ignoring someone on purpose
- Sharing a prayer
- Teasing someone online
- Encouraging a friend
- Posting something mean

Draw It!

Draw a picture of your hands doing something kind — online or in person.



Scripture Activity

“Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.” — 1 Corinthians 10:31

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. Read the Scripture Verse

“Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”

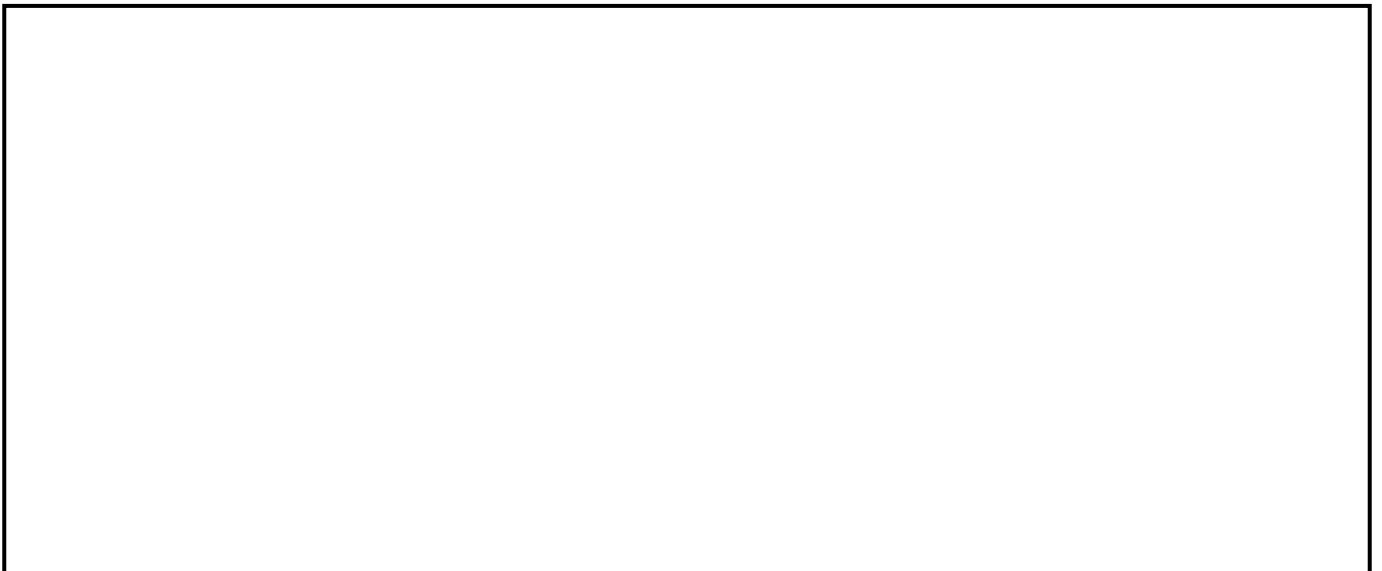
2. Circle the actions that give glory to God:

- Helping a friend
- Sharing something unkind
- Saying a prayer before using technology
- Teasing someone online
- Encouraging someone who feels left out
- Posting something mean
- Using kind words

3. Write one way YOU can give glory to God this week:

4. Draw It!

Draw a picture of someone using technology in a way that gives glory to God.



“My Choices Matter”

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Look at each action. Decide if it is Helpful or Hurtful, then write what you could do instead.

My Action	Helpful or Hurtful?	What Could I Do Instead?
Sending a kind message		
Ignoring someone’s text		
Sharing a prayer online		
Posting something mean		
Encouraging a friend		
Teasing someone online		

Reflection Question: _

Why is it important to make good choices when using technology?

“Lord, Help My Hands Bring Peace”

Name: _____ Date: _____



1. Color and label the Five-Finger Prayer Hand

2. Write a prayer asking God to help you use your hands and technology kindly:

“Dear Jesus, _____

Amen.”

3. Draw a small picture of something kind you can do with your hands:

 SEPTEMBER WORKSHEET 5 — Family Connection Page

“Faith at Home: Using Technology with Kindness”

Name: _____

Dear Families,

This month, students are learning how prayer and technology can work together. Pope Leo teaches that tools like computers and tablets are good when they help us love God and our neighbor.

Family Activity:

Talk together about how your family uses technology.

Write one way your family can show kindness online or in person.

Our Family Promise:

“We will use technology in a way that shows kindness and honors God.”

Signature: _____

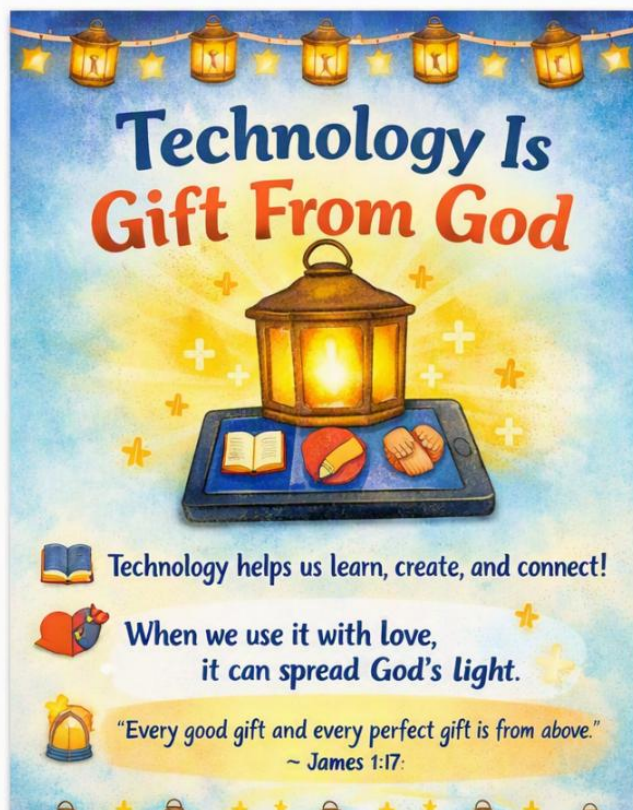


🍎 SEPTEMBER Bulletin Board Idea—

Created for Connection

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Created for Connection</i>
Central Visual	Large watercolor heart with children holding hands
Key Message	"People matter more than screens."
Student Interaction Area	"I connected with someone today by..." cards
Border/Accents	Watercolor dots, handprints, soft red + gold palette

Poster and Prayer Card images



October

Gentle Replies



*Lord, help me speak
with gentleness and mercy.*

*Let my words bring peace
to those around me.*

— Psalm 107 1

OCTOBER

“Wisdom in a Digital World”

Monthly Theme--*Helping Students Make Good Choices Online and Offline*

October focuses on **wisdom** — helping students understand that every click, message, and post should reflect their faith.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Wisdom means stopping to think before acting.

We teach students:

“A wise person asks: ‘Is this kind, true, and helpful?’ before they post or share.”

Classroom Applications

- Teach “Pause, Pray, Proceed”
- Discuss real-life examples of digital choices
- Practice identifying trustworthy information
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to everyday school life
- Reinforce that wisdom is a gift from the Holy Spirit

Reflection Prompts

- “What helps me make wise choices online?”
- “How can I show wisdom when I’m frustrated?”
- “What does the Holy Spirit help me notice?”

Short Prayer

Holy Spirit, give us wisdom in all our choices — online, at home, and at school. Guide our hearts toward truth. Amen.



Kind Words

Online and In Person

Dear Parents and Families,

This month, our students are focusing on the power of **kind words**—both online and in person. We are teaching them how Christian virtue guides the way we **speak**, write, and respond to others.

Students will:

- Practice gentle replies
- Learn how words affect others
- Apply kindness to digital communication
- Connect Scripture to their speech

Family Connection:

- Modeling gentle, patient communication
- Encouraging kindness in texts, chats, and posts
- Talking about how words can lift others up
- Praying together for a gentle heart

Scripture of the Month: _____

"Kind words are like honey." — Proverbs 16:24

Thank you for helping us build a community where every child learns to speak with kindness and love.



“Gentle Replies”

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

My Words Matter

Think about how your words — spoken or typed — can bring peace and kindness to others.

1. Write one gentle reply you could give a friend who is upset:

2. Write one gentle reply you can use online.

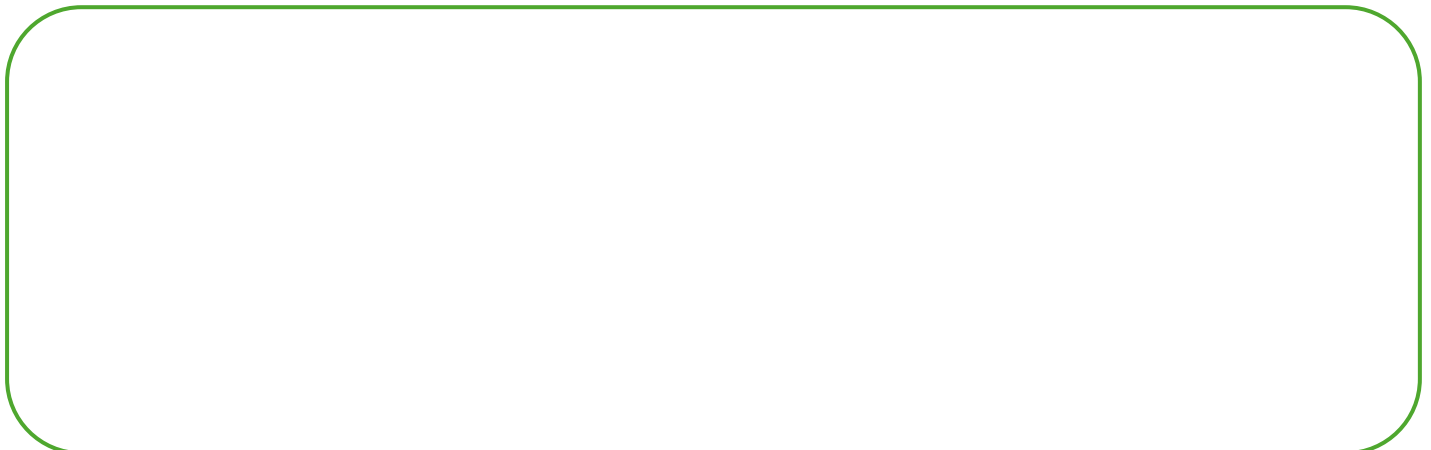
Circle the Gentle Choices

Circle the replies that show gentleness:

- “I’m here for you.”
- “You’re so annoying.”
- “Let’s try again together.”
- “Stop talking to me.”
- “I understand.”
- “That was dumb.”

Draw It!

Draw a picture of someone giving a gentle reply.



Scripture Activity

“Let your gentleness be known to everyone.” — Philippians 4:5

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scripture Reflection

Read the verse below:

“Let your gentleness be known to everyone.”

1. Circle the actions that show gentleness:

- Helping someone who dropped their books
- Rolling your eyes
- Saying “thank you”
- Yelling at someone
- Listening carefully
- Interrupting someone

2. Write one way YOU can show gentleness this week:

3. Draw It!

Draw a picture of someone showing gentleness at school or online.



***“My Words Can Build Peace”***

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions:

Look at each reply. Decide if it is Kind or Unkind, then write what you could say instead.

Reply	Kind or Unkind?	A Better Reply
“I can help you.”	_____	_____
“Why are you so slow?”	_____	_____
“Let’s try again.”	_____	_____
“That’s a terrible idea.”	_____	_____
“You did great!”	_____	_____
“No one cares.”	_____	_____

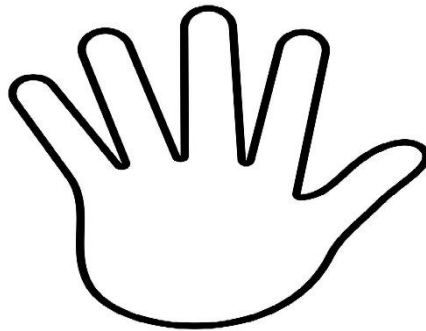
Reflection Question:

Why do gentle replies make a difference?

“Lord, Make My Words Gentle”

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Color and label the Five-Finger Prayer Hand

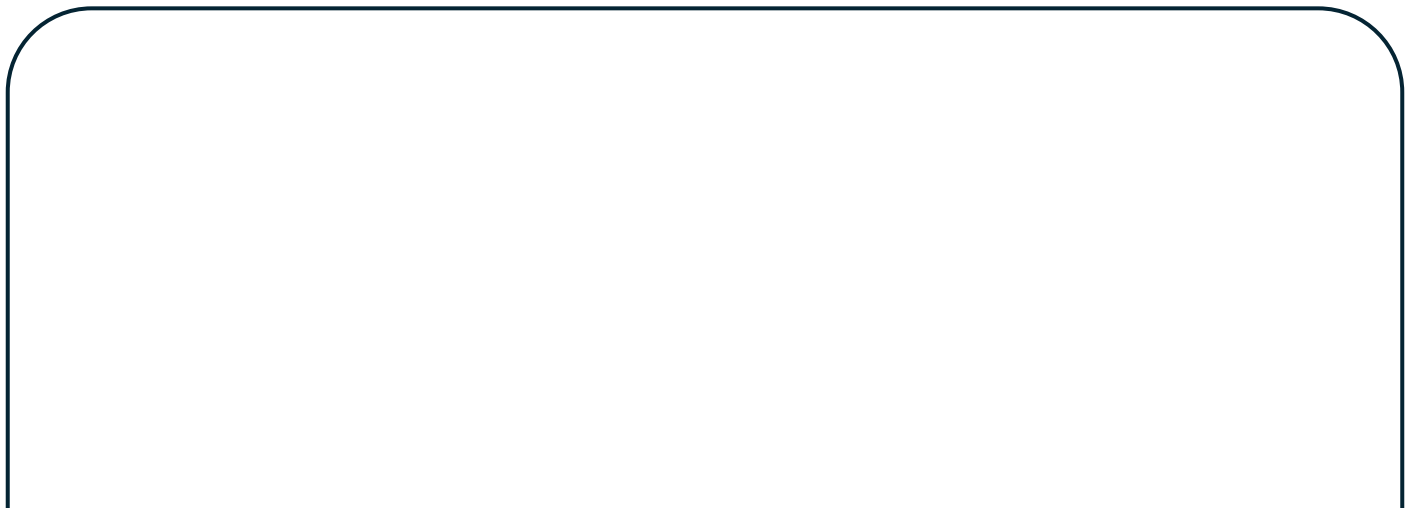


2. Write a prayer asking God to help you speak gently:

“Dear Jesus,

Amen.”

3. Draw a small picture of someone using gentle words:



“Faith at Home: Gentle Words”

Name: _____

Dear Families,

This month, students are learning how gentle words can bring peace to others. Pope Leo teaches that our choices — including our words — should help us live truthfully and lovingly.

Family Activity

Talk together about how your family uses words at home and online.

Write one gentle phrase your family wants to use more often.

🍎 OCTOBER Bulletin Board Idea—

Wisdom in a Digital World

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Wisdom in a Digital World</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor lantern glowing with warm light
Key Message	“Pause, Pray, Proceed.”
Student Interaction Area	“A wise choice I made was...” slips
Border/Accents	Lantern icons, gold stars, deep orange palette

Poster/ Bookmark image



November

Look Up, Love More



“Let all that you do be done in love.”

— 1 Corinthians 16:14 —





NOVEMBER

“Gratitude for God’s Gifts”

Monthly Theme--*Helping Students See Technology as a Gift to Be Used With Care*

November teaches students to see technology as a **gift**, not a right — something to be used with gratitude and responsibility.

Student-Friendly Explanation

We remind students:

“Technology is a gift from God. We show gratitude by using it respectfully and responsibly.”

Classroom Applications

- Practice “Thankful Technology Habits”
- Teach digital responsibility through simple routines
- Connect gratitude to Catholic social teaching
- Encourage students to thank classmates, teachers, and family
- Reflect on Pope Leo’s message about using God’s gifts well

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I show gratitude when I use technology?”
- “What digital habits help me stay responsible?”
- “Who am I thankful for today?”

Short Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gifts You give us — especially the people in our lives. Help us use technology with gratitude and care. Amen.

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” — Psalm 107:1

“Thankful Hands”

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

My Hands Can Show Gratitude

Think about how your hands — and your choices — can show thankfulness to God and others.

1. Write one thing you are thankful for at school:

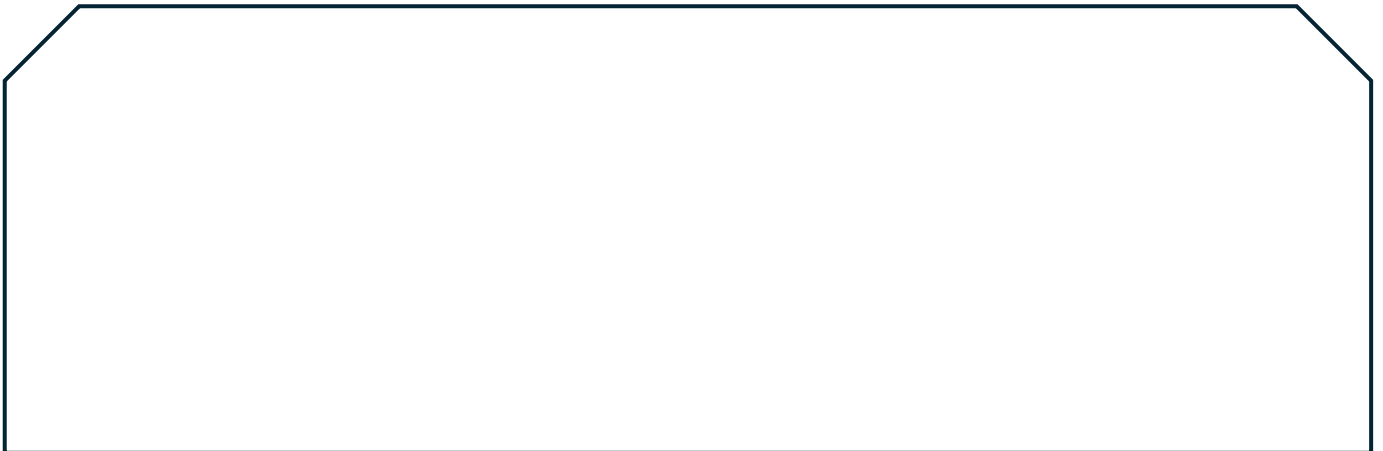
2. Write one thing you are thankful for at home:

Circle the Thankful Choices

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Saying “thank you” | • Ignoring kindness |
| • Complaining about everything | • Sharing something |
| • Helping someone | • Rolling your eyes |

Draw It!

Draw a picture of your hands doing something thankful.



“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” — Psalm 107:1

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scripture Reflection

Read the verse below:

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”

1. Circle the actions that show thankfulness:

- Praying before meals
- Complaining loudly
- Helping a classmate
- Saying “thank you”
- Slamming a door
- Sharing with others

2. Write one way YOU can give thanks to God this week:

3. Draw It!

Draw a picture of someone giving thanks to God.



“My Choices Show Thanks”

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions:

Look at each action. Decide if it shows Gratitude or Ungratefulness, then write what you could do instead.

Action	Grateful or Ungrateful?	A Better Choice
Saying “thank you”	_____	_____
Complaining about chores	_____	_____
Helping someone carry books	_____	_____
Ignoring kindness	_____	_____
Sharing supplies	_____	_____
Rolling your eyes	_____	_____

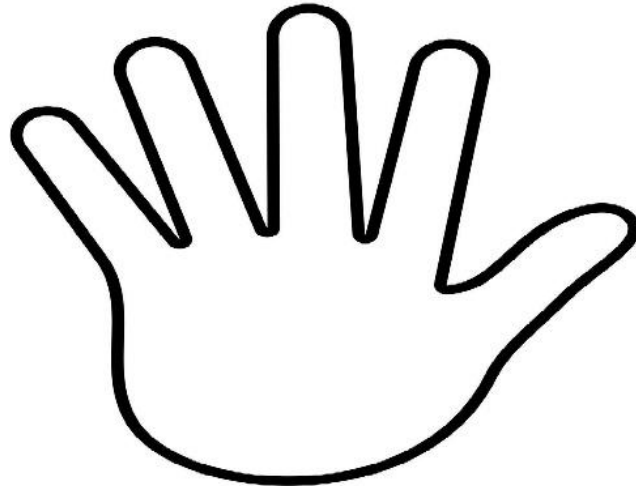
Reflection Question:

Why is gratitude important?

“Lord, Help Me Be Thankful”

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Color the Five-Finger Prayer Hand. Write on each of the fingers something you are grateful for



2. Write a prayer asking God to help you be thankful:

“Dear Jesus,

Amen.”

3. Draw a small picture of a person you are thankful for and tell why you are grateful





“Faith at Home: Gratitude”

Dear Families,

This month, students are learning how gratitude helps us see God’s goodness. Pope Leo teaches that our choices — including how we respond to blessings — should reflect truth, kindness, and thankfulness

Family Activity

Talk together about what your family is thankful for. Write one blessing your family wants to remember this week. Post it in a prominent place as a reminder (e.g. refrigerator)

Our Family Promise

“We will show gratitude to God and to one another.” We will

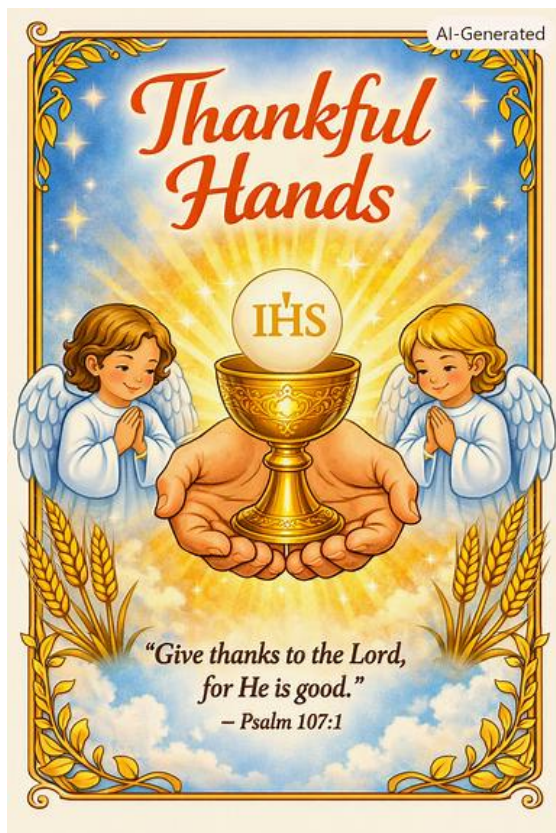
Signature: _____



🍁 NOVEMBER BULLETIN BOARD IDEA— Gratitude for God’s Gifts

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Gratitude for God’s Gifts</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor autumn wreath with simple Marian blue ribbon
Key Message	“Technology is a gift — use it with gratitude.”
Student Interaction Area	“I am thankful for...” leaves
Border/Accents	Leaves, soft browns + blues, gratitude phrases

Images for Posters/Prayer cards



December

Shine His Light Online



*“The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.”*

— John 1:5 —





DECEMBER

“Light in the Darkness”

Monthly Theme-- *Helping Students See Christ’s Light in a Digital World*

teaches students that Jesus is the **Light of the World**, and we are called to bring His light into every space — including the digital world.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Screens shine, but they don’t give real light. Real light comes from Jesus.

We teach students:

“When we choose kindness, honesty, and love — we shine with Jesus’ light.”

Classroom Applications

- Advent kindness challenges
- “Shine His Light” digital behavior goals
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to Advent waiting
- Practice encouraging classmates online and in person
- Create a class nativity reflection on digital kindness

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I shine Jesus’ light today?”
- “What choices help me bring light instead of darkness?”
- “Where do I see God’s light in my life?”

Short Prayer

Jesus, Light of the World, help us shine with Your love in everything we do — at home, at school, and online. Amen.

DECEMBER WORKSHEET 1 — LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Advent Reflection Page - Shine His Light

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” — John 1:5

Name: _____ Date: _____

Reflection Prompts

1. How can I shine Jesus' light this week?

2. Where do I see His light in my life?

My Advent Prayer

Write a short prayer asking Jesus to help you shine His light.

Draw a Picture

Draw yourself shining Jesus' light — helping, praying, sharing, or being kind.



DECEMBER WORKSHEET 2 — ADVENT CANDLES OF HOPE

Living the Virtues of Advent--The Four Advent Candles

Hope • Peace • Joy • Love

Name: _____ Date: _____

Each week of Advent has a special meaning. Write one sentence for each candle showing how you can live that virtue.



Hope (First Week of Advent)

How can I bring hope to others?



Peace (Second Week of Advent)

How can I help create peace in my classroom or home?



Joy (Third Week of Advent — Gaudete Sunday)

What brings me joy, and how can I share it?



Love (Fourth Week of Advent)

How can I show God's love to someone this week?

My Advent Promise

Write one promise you will keep during Advent.

DECEMBER WORKSHEET 3 — JOHN 1:5 SCRIPTURE PAGE

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” — John 1:5

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Copywork Practice

Write the Scripture verse carefully on the lines below.

What Does This Verse Mean?

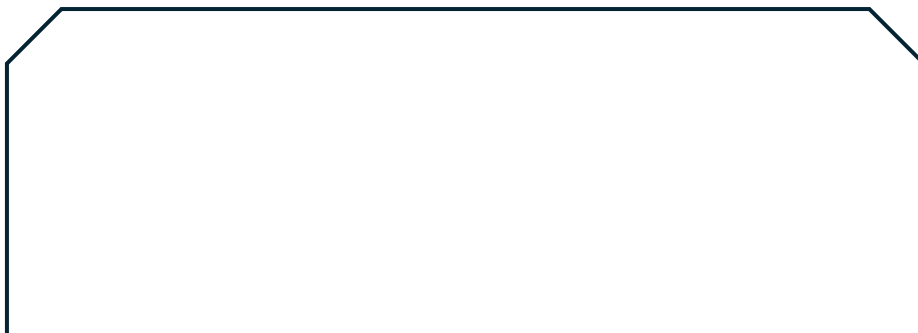
Write one or two sentences explaining what *“light in the darkness”* means to you.

My Advent Prayer

Write a short prayer asking Jesus to help you shine His light.

Draw a Symbol of Light

Draw a candle, star, or something that reminds you of Jesus’ light.



DECEMBER WORKSHEET 4 — SYMBOLS OF LIGHT

Matching Activity • Advent Symbols

Name: _____ Date: _____

Symbols That Help Us Remember Jesus' Light

Draw a line to match each symbol with its meaning.

Symbols

1. Candle
 2. Star
 3. Angel
 4. Manger
-

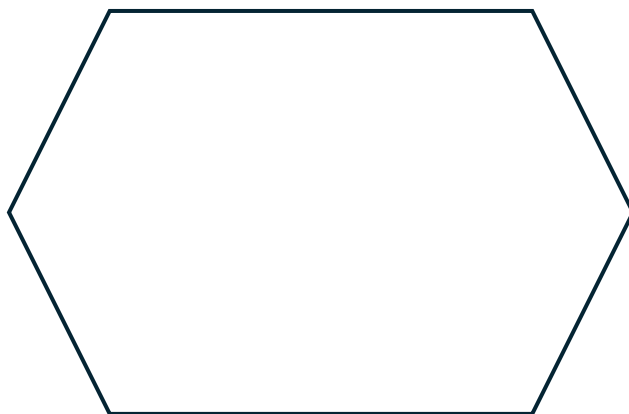
Meanings

- A. Jesus is born in humility
 - B. God's guidance and direction
 - C. Jesus is the Light of the World
 - D. God's messenger bringing good news
-

Reflection Question

Which symbol reminds you most of Jesus' light? Why?

Draw One Symbol Below



DECEMBER WORKSHEET 5 — ACTS OF KINDNESS TRACKER

Advent Daily Kindness Practice

Shine His Light Through Kindness

Name: _____ Date: _____

During Advent, we prepare our hearts for Jesus by sharing His light with others. Each day this week, write one act of kindness you did — big or small.

My Advent Kindness Week

Day	My Act of Kindness
Monday	_____
Tuesday	_____
Wednesday	_____
Thursday	_____
Friday	_____
Saturday	_____
Sunday	_____

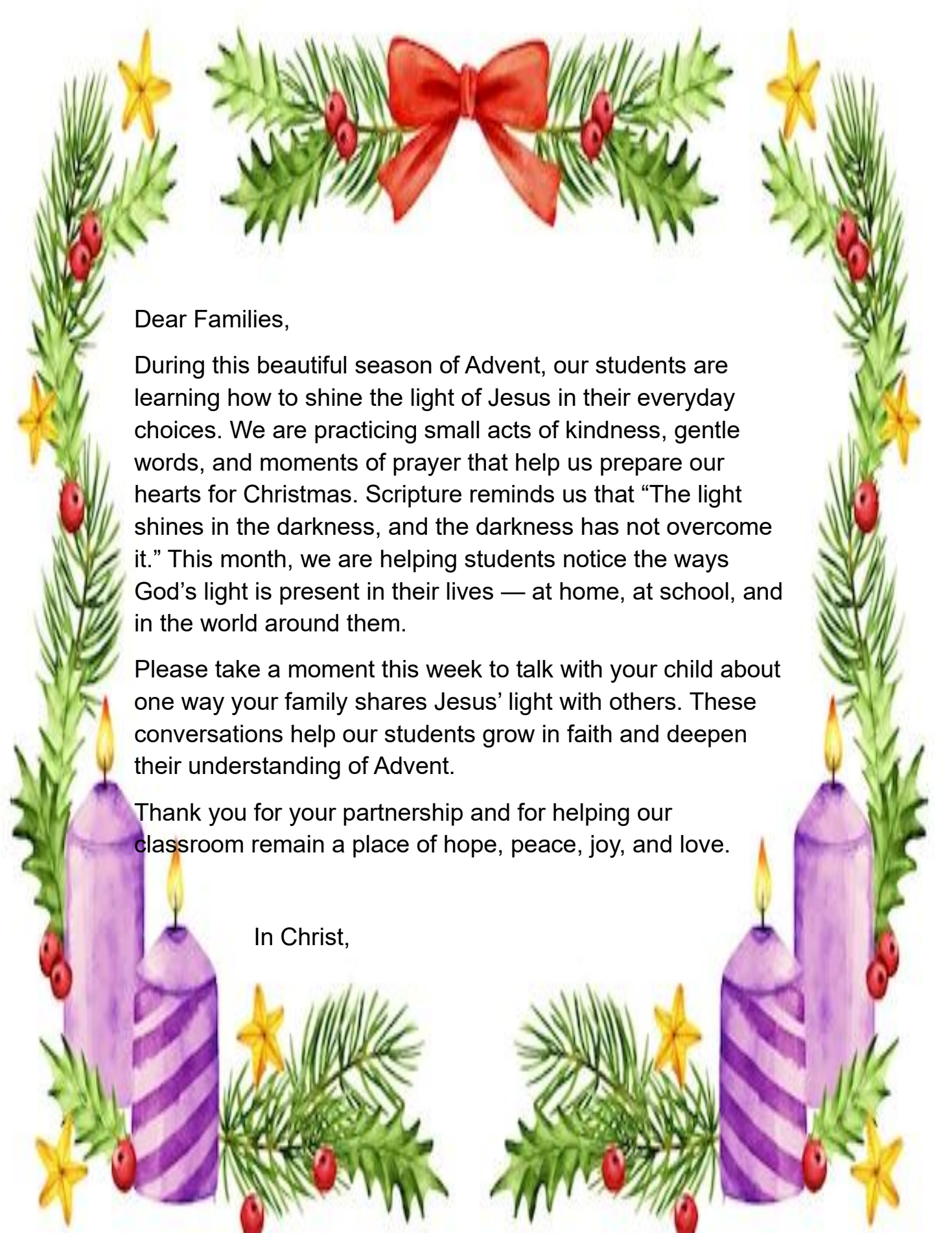
Reflection

Which act of kindness made you feel closest to Jesus? _____

Why? _____

My Goal for Next Week

Write one way you want to shine His light even more.



Dear Families,

During this beautiful season of Advent, our students are learning how to shine the light of Jesus in their everyday choices. We are practicing small acts of kindness, gentle words, and moments of prayer that help us prepare our hearts for Christmas. Scripture reminds us that “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” This month, we are helping students notice the ways God’s light is present in their lives — at home, at school, and in the world around them.

Please take a moment this week to talk with your child about one way your family shares Jesus’ light with others. These conversations help our students grow in faith and deepen their understanding of Advent.

Thank you for your partnership and for helping our classroom remain a place of hope, peace, joy, and love.

In Christ,

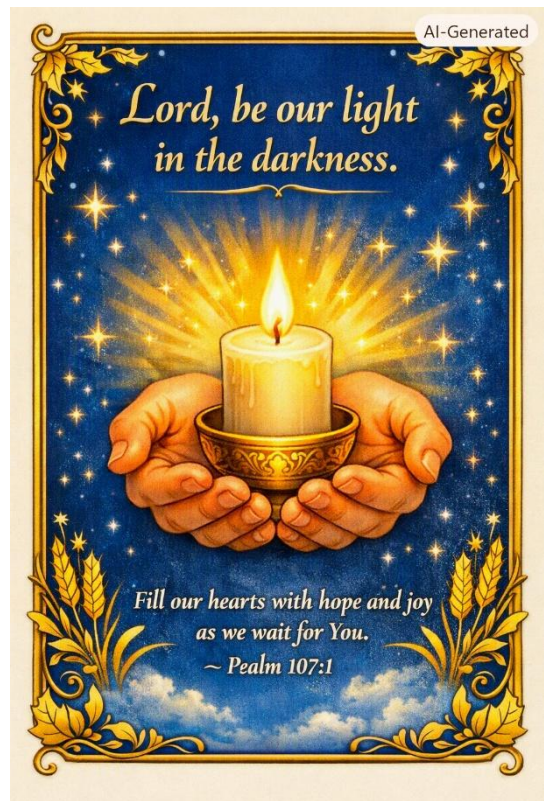
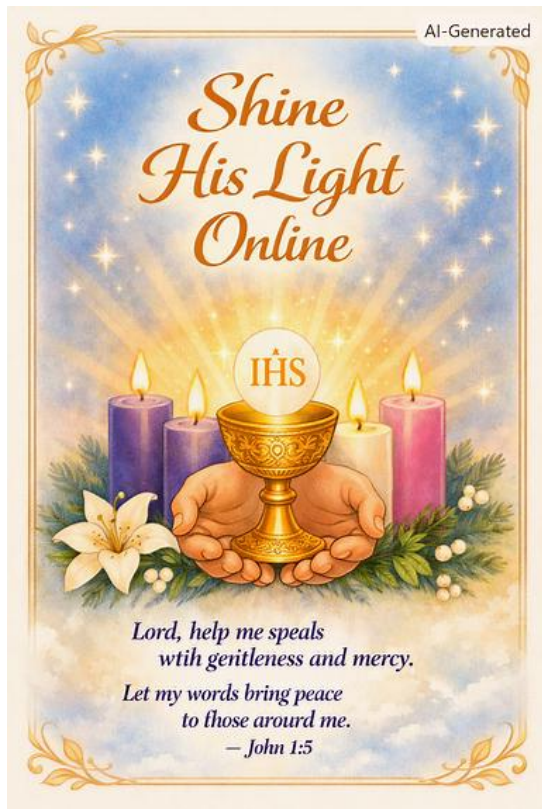


DECEMBER Bulletin Board IDEA—

His Light Shines

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Light in the Darkness</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor candle with gentle halo glow
Key Message	“Shine His Light.”
Student Interaction Area	“I brought light by...” stars
Border/Accents	Stars, soft yellows + Advent purples

Images for Posters/Prayer cards



AI-Generated

January

New Beginnings, New Choices





JANUARY — “New Beginnings, New Choices”

Helping Students Reset Their Digital Habits With Faith

Monthly Theme

January focuses on **new beginnings** — encouraging students to refresh their digital habits and recommit to using technology with virtue.

Student-Friendly Explanation

A new year means new chances to grow.
We teach students:

“Every day is a chance to make better choices — especially online.”

Classroom Applications

- “New Year, New Habits” digital pledge
- Teach simple routines for responsible tech use
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to self-control
- Practice digital kindness through classroom scenarios
- Encourage students to set one faith-centered goal

Reflection Prompts

- “What digital habit do I want to improve?”
- “How can I show self-control when I’m upset?”
- “What new choice can I make today?”

Short Prayer

Lord, thank You for new beginnings. Help us grow in kindness, wisdom, and responsibility in all our choices. Amen.

January Parent Letter — Catholic School Classroom

With Pope Leo's Teaching on the Virtuous Use of Technology

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy New Year to you and your families. As we begin January, our classroom turns toward fresh starts, renewed hope, and the quiet strength that comes from trusting God in all things. The children will reflect on how each new year is a gift — a chance to grow in kindness, faith, and responsibility.

This month, we continue our year-long focus on **Pope Leo's encyclical on the appropriate use of technology**. Pope Leo reminds us that technology is good when it serves truth, strengthens relationships, and helps us use our gifts for God's glory. In January, the children will practice "digital simplicity" — choosing calm, focused moments over distraction, and remembering that real presence with others is always more important than screens.

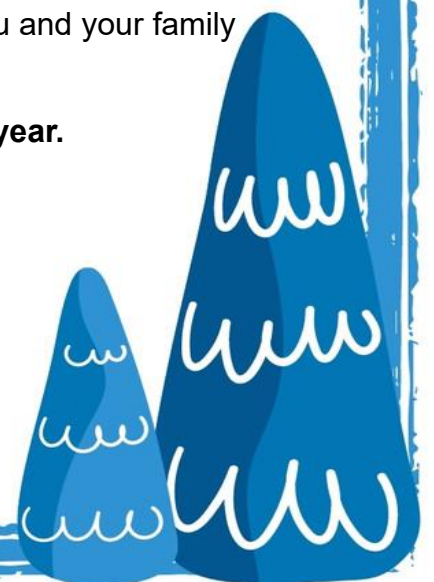
We will also talk about **new beginnings**. The children will set small, faith-filled goals for the year: praying with more attention, choosing kind words, helping at home, and using technology in ways that reflect Christ's love. These goals will be added to our "New Year of Grace" bulletin board.

In religion class, we will learn about the Feast of the Epiphany and the journey of the Magi. The children will reflect on how they, too, can bring their gifts to Jesus — their time, their kindness, their creativity, and their responsible choices online and offline.

As we settle into the winter months, thank you for your continued partnership and for the many ways you support your child's growth in faith, character, and responsible digital citizenship. Please know of my prayers for you and your family as we begin this new year together.

May God bless your home with peace and hope in this new year.

In Christ,



JANUARY WORKSHEET #1 — New Beginnings in Christ

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scripture: “Behold, I make all things new.” — Revelation 21:5

Hope for the New Year

Directions: Read each sentence. Circle YES if it shows hope, and NO if it does not.

I try again even when something is hard.

YES / NO

I say “I can’t do this” before I even try.

YES / NO

I believe God can help me make good choices.

YES / NO

I look for the good in each day.

YES / NO

Reflection:

Write one thing you hope to grow in this year:

 JANUARY WORKSHEET #2 — Practicing Prudence

Thinking Before We Act

Scripture: *“Teach me Your ways, O Lord.” — Psalm 25:4*

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Read each situation. Write what a prudent choice would be.

Your friend is upset and says something unkind.

Prudent choice: _____

You are using a tablet and a game pops up.

Prudent choice: _____

You feel frustrated with a classmate.

Prudent choice: _____

You want to send a message online.

Prudent choice: _____

(Teacher can add situations based on classroom observations)

 JANUARY WORKSHEET #3 — Charity in Action

Beginning the Year with Kindness

Scripture: “Let all that you do be done in love.” — 1 Corinthians 16:14

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Draw or write one way you can show charity at school.

My act of charity: _____

Technology with Virtue --Using Devices Wisely

Directions: Match the virtue to the correct example.

Write H for Hope, P for Prudence, or C for Charity.

_____ I pause and think before I click.

_____ I help a classmate who is struggling.

_____ I try again when something is difficult.

_____ I choose kind words online.

_____ I believe God can help me make good choices.

My New Year Prayer--Talking to God About New Beginnings

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Complete the prayer below.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for giving me a new year.

Help me grow in hope by _____.

Help me grow in prudence by _____.

Help me grow in charity by _____.

Walk with me each day and help me make good choices.

Amen.

How Am I Growing?

Directions: Circle the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

HOPE

😊 I tried again

😐 I tried sometimes

😞 I gave up quickly

PRUDENCE

😊 I thought before acting

😐 I remembered sometimes

😞 I acted without thinking

CHARITY

😊 I was kind and helpful

😐 I was kind sometimes

😞 I was unkind or impatient

Reflection:

One virtue I want to grow in next week is 😊 _____

January Poster



❄️ JANUARY — New Beginnings, New Choices

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>New Beginnings, New Choices</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor snowflake with Marian blue accents
Key Message	"Every day is a fresh start."
Student Interaction Area	"My new habit is..." snowflake slips
Border/Accents	Snowflakes, icy blues, clean winter palette

AI-Generated

February

♥ Love in Action ♥



FEBRUARY — “Love in Action”

Helping Students Practice Charity Online and Offline

Monthly Theme

February teaches students that love is more than a feeling — it is a **choice** to act with charity, patience, and respect.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Love means choosing what is good for others.

We teach students:

“Real love shows up in our words, our actions, and even our messages.”

Classroom Applications

- “Love in Action” kindness challenges
- Teach charitable communication online
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to loving our neighbor
- Practice responding with patience and gentleness
- Encourage students to notice classmates who need kindness

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I show love in my digital choices?”
- “Who needs kindness from me today?”
- “What does Jesus teach me about loving others?”

Short Prayer

Jesus, teach us to love as You love — with patience, kindness, and gentleness. Help us bring Your love into every part of our lives. Amen.

Jesus, teach us to love as You love — with patience, kindness, and gentleness. Help us bring Your love into every part of our lives. Amen.

♥ FEBRUARY Parent Letter

Theme: Love That Shows Itself

Dear Families,

In February, our students are learning that real love is something we do. Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's teaching in Magnifica Humanitas, we are helping children understand that every person has dignity — and that charity, kindness, and gentle words are ways we honor that dignity each day.

This month, students will practice small acts of love: helping a classmate, speaking kindly, using technology responsibly, and noticing ways they can brighten someone's day. We remind them that love is not just a feeling, but a choice to act with patience, respect, and care.

Please take a moment this week to talk with your child about one way your family shows love at home.

Your partnership helps our classroom grow in faith, kindness, and community.

In Christ,



February Worksheet #1 — Love That Shows Itself

Understanding Charity

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scripture: “Let all that you do be done in love.” — 1 Corinthians 16:14

Directions: Read each action. Circle **YES** if it shows charity, and **NO** if it does not.

1. I help a classmate pick up dropped papers.
YES / NO
2. I ignore someone who needs help.
YES / NO
3. I use kind words when I speak.
YES / NO
4. I share with someone who forgot their supplies.
YES / NO

Reflection: Write other ways you can show charity this week:

Patience in Daily Life --*Waiting with a Gentle Heart*

Scripture: “Love is patient.” — 1 Corinthians 13:4

Directions: Read each situation. Write what a patient response would be.

1. You must wait your turn for the computer.
Patient response: _____
2. A classmate is learning something slowly.
Patient response: _____
3. You feel frustrated during a group project.
Patient response: _____
4. You want to speak, but someone else is talking.
Patient response: _____

 February Worksheet #3 — Respect for Every Person

Name: _____ Date: _____

Honoring Human Dignity

Scripture: *“Treat others the same way you want them to treat you.” Luke 6:31*

Directions: Draw or write one way you can show respect at school.

My act of respect: _____

(Drawing box)

Technology with Love

Using Devices Kindly

Directions: Match the virtue to the correct example. Write **C** for Charity, **P** for Patience, or **R** for Respect.

1. I wait calmly for my turn on the tablet. _____
2. I use kind words when I message someone. _____
3. I listen when others speak. _____
4. I help a friend who is having trouble with a program. _____
5. I keep my eyes and words gentle online. _____

 February Worksheet #3— My February Prayer --*Loving Like Jesus*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Complete the prayer below.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for teaching me how to love.

Help me grow in **charity** by _____.

Help me grow in **patience** by _____.

Help me grow in **respect** by _____.

Help me treat every person with dignity and kindness.

Amen.

February Virtue Check-In

How Am I Showing Love?

Directions: Circle the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

CHARITY

 I helped others

 I helped sometimes

 I did not help

PATIENCE

 I waited calmly

 I waited sometimes

 I was impatient

RESPECT

 I used kind words

 I used kind words sometimes

 I was unkind

Reflection: One virtue I want to grow in next week is: _____

February Poster



This can be used to create a poster or make bookmarks.

♥ FEBRUARY — Love in Action

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Love in Action</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor heart with rays of light
Key Message	"Love shows up in our choices."
Student Interaction Area	"I showed love by..." hearts
Border/Accents	Hearts, pinks + reds, gentle script lettering

February Student Reflection Page

Love That Shows Itself

Name: _____ Date: _____

Scripture: *“Let all that you do be done in love.” — 1 Corinthians 16:14*

Reflecting on Charity, Patience, and Respect

1. Charity — Love in Action

How did I show love to others this month?

2. Patience — Waiting with a Kind Heart

When was it hard to wait or stay calm? What helped me

3. Respect — Caring for Others

How did I show respect for classmates, teachers, or family?

My February Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for teaching me how to love.

Help me grow in charity by _____.

Help me grow in patience by _____.

Help me grow in respect by _____.

Amen.

Student Reflection

One thing I learned about love this month is:

One way I can keep showing love next month i

Inspired by *Magnifica Humanitas* — Pope Leo XIV

March

✿ Growing in Faith ✿



MARCH — “Growing in Virtue”

Helping Students Practice Virtue in Their Digital and Daily Choices

Monthly Theme

March focuses on **virtue** — helping students understand that good habits grow when we practice them every day, both online and offline.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Virtue means choosing what is good again and again until it becomes part of who we are. We teach students:

“Every good choice helps your heart grow stronger.”

Classroom Applications

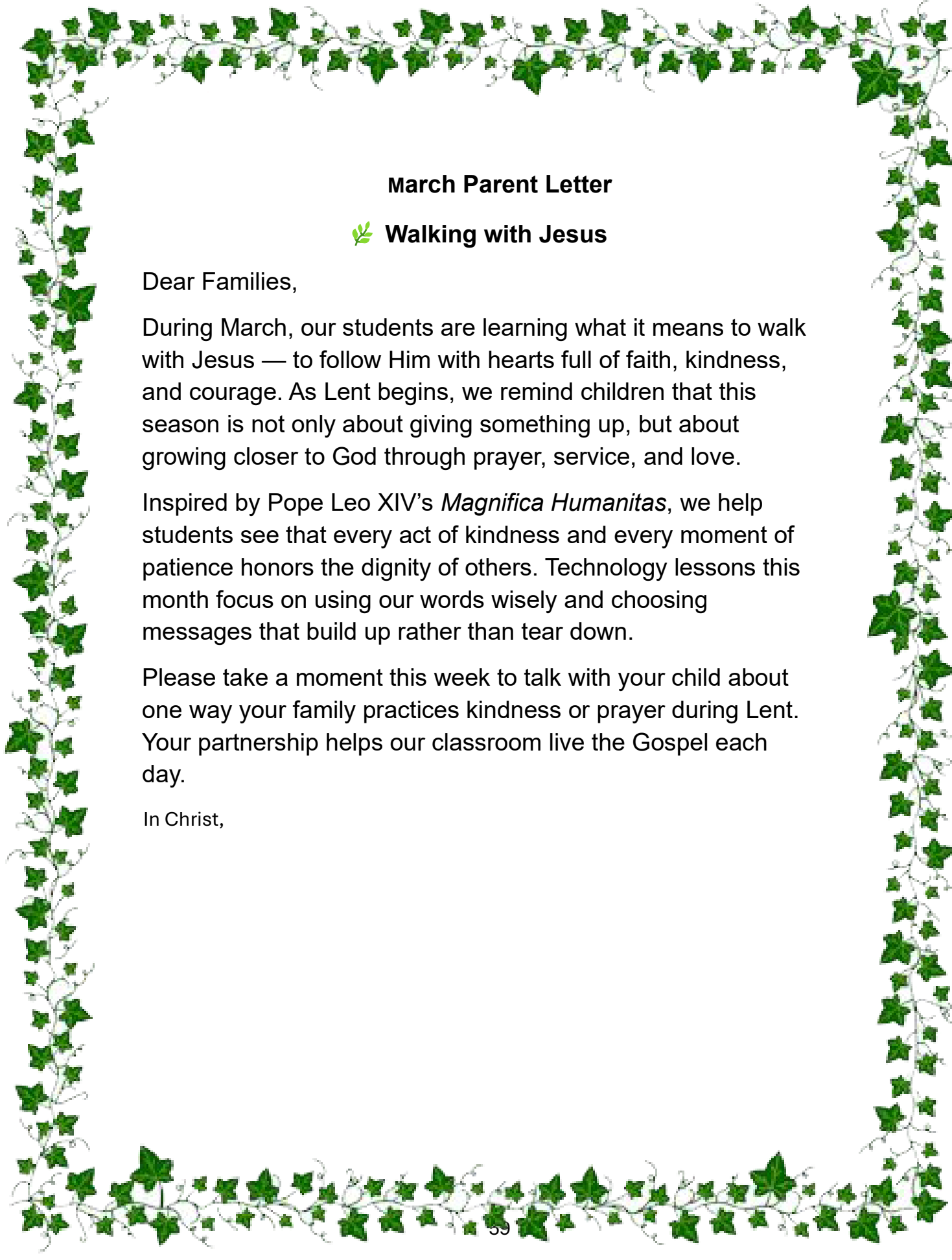
- Introduce the virtues of patience, honesty, and kindness
- Practice “virtue moments” during the school day
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to forming good digital habits
- Teach students how small choices online shape their character
- Encourage students to notice classmates practicing virtue

Reflection Prompts

- “What virtue do I want to grow in this month?”
- “How can I practice virtue when I’m using technology?”
- “What helps me choose what is good?”

Short Prayer

Lord, help us grow in virtue. Strengthen our hearts so we choose what is good, loving, and true. Amen.



March Parent Letter

Walking with Jesus

Dear Families,

During March, our students are learning what it means to walk with Jesus — to follow Him with hearts full of faith, kindness, and courage. As Lent begins, we remind children that this season is not only about giving something up, but about growing closer to God through prayer, service, and love.

Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's *Magnifica Humanitas*, we help students see that every act of kindness and every moment of patience honors the dignity of others. Technology lessons this month focus on using our words wisely and choosing messages that build up rather than tear down.

Please take a moment this week to talk with your child about one way your family practices kindness or prayer during Lent. Your partnership helps our classroom live the Gospel each day.

In Christ,

March Student Worksheets



March Worksheet #1 — Walking with Jesus

Name: _____ Date: _____

Following Him Each Day

Scripture: *“Come, follow Me.” — Matthew 4:19*

Directions: Read each action. Circle **YES** if it shows following Jesus, and **NO** if it does not.

1. I help someone who is having a hard day.

YES / NO

2. I ignore someone who needs help.

YES / NO

3. I pray before I begin my work.

YES / NO

4. I use kind words even when I’m frustrated.

YES / NO

Reflection: One way I can follow Jesus this week:

Name: _____ Date: _____



March Worksheet #2— Faith

Trusting God

Scripture: “*Lord, I believe.*” — Mark 9:24

Directions: Read each situation. Write how you can show faith.

1. Something is difficult and you want to give up.

I show faith by: _____

2. You feel nervous about trying something new.

I show faith by: _____

3. You pray for someone who is sick or struggling.

I show faith by: _____

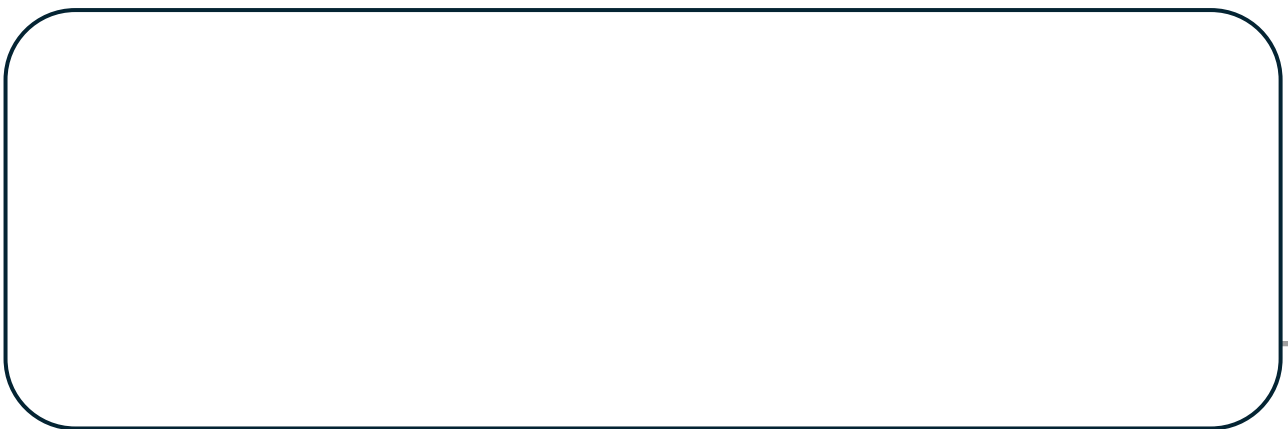
Courage

Doing What Is Right

Scripture: “*Be strong and courageous.*” — Joshua 1:9

Directions: Draw or write one way you can show courage.

My act of courage:





March Worksheet #3— Kindness

Name: _____ Date: _____

Loving Others Like Jesus

Directions: Match the virtue to the example.

Write **F** for Faith, **C** for Courage, or **K** for Kindness.

1. I help a classmate who is sad.

2. I try again even when something is hard.

3. I speak kindly to everyone.

4. I stand up for someone being treated unfairly.

5. I pray when I feel worried.



March Worksheet #4— My Lenten Prayer

Name: _____ Date: _____

Growing Closer to Jesus

Directions: Complete the prayer.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for walking with me each day.

Help me grow in **faith** by _____.

Help me grow in **courage** by _____.

Help me grow in **kindness** by _____.

Help me follow You with my whole heart.

Amen.

March Virtue Check-In

How Am I Growing?

Directions: Color the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

FAITH

😊 I trusted God

😐 I trusted sometimes

😞 I did not trust

COURAGE

😊 I did what was right

😐 I tried sometimes

😞 I was afraid to act

KINDNESS

😊 I was kind and gentle

😐 I was kind sometimes

😞 I was unkind

Reflection: One virtue I want to grow in next week is:



March Poster image

 MARCH — Growing in Virtue

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Growing in Virtue</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor sprouting plant
Key Message	"Every good choice helps your heart grow."
Student Interaction Area	"A virtue I practiced was..." leaves
Border/Accents	Green vines, soft greens + golds

April

New Life in Christ



APRIL — “Caring for Creation”

Helping Students Use Technology in Ways That Respect God’s World

Monthly Theme

April teaches students that caring for creation includes caring for the digital world — using technology in ways that protect people, respect truth, and honor God’s gifts.

Student-Friendly Explanation

God made the world beautiful and good.

We teach students:

“We care for creation when we use technology responsibly and respectfully.”

Classroom Applications

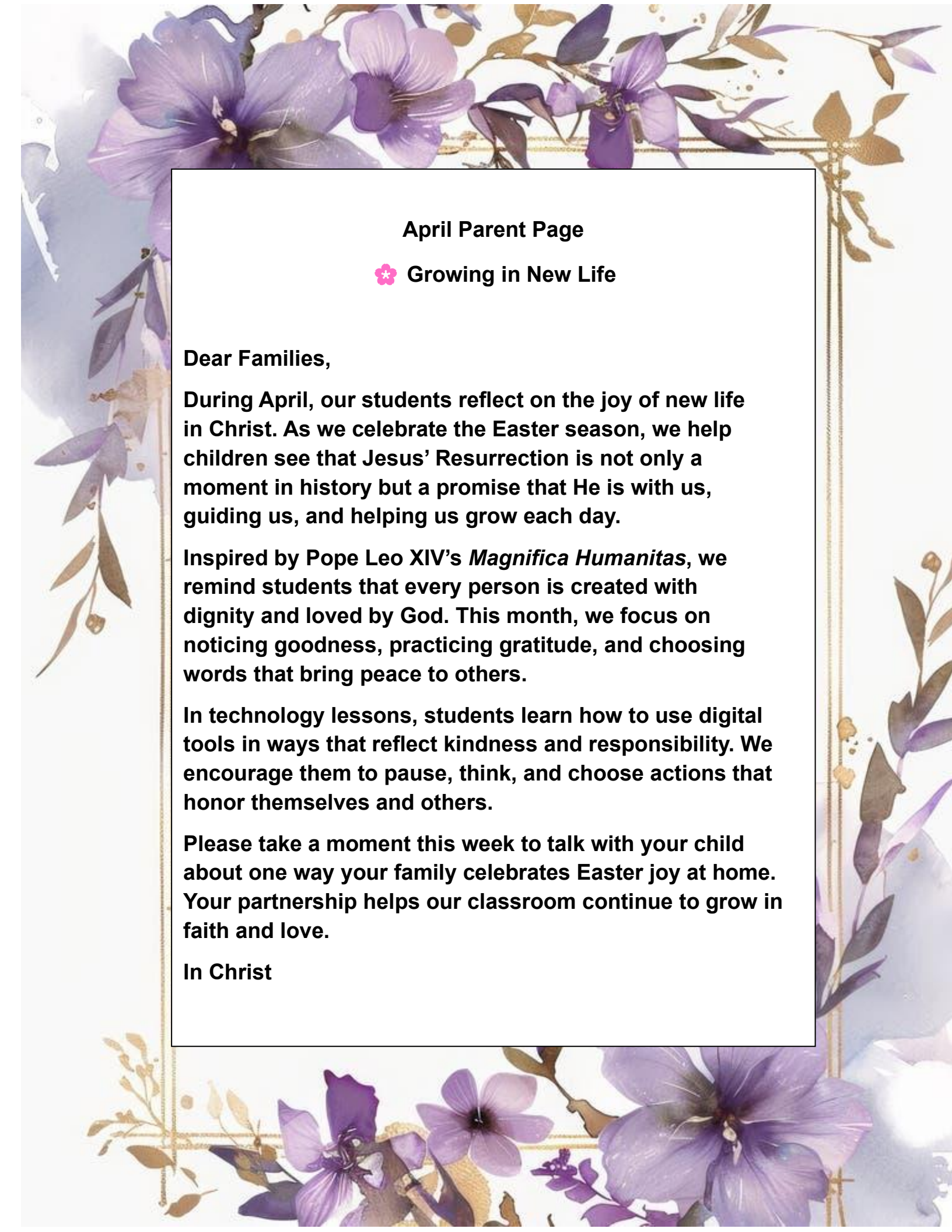
- Connect digital responsibility to stewardship
- Teach “care for creation” choices online
- Practice noticing how technology affects others
- Link Pope Leo’s teaching to protecting human dignity
- Encourage students to reduce digital waste (time, attention, kindness)

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I care for creation with my digital choices?”
- “What helps me protect others online?”
- “Where do I see God’s beauty today?”

Short Prayer

Creator God, thank You for the world You made. Help us care for creation in our choices, our words, and our digital habits. Amen.



April Parent Page

✿ Growing in New Life

Dear Families,

During April, our students reflect on the joy of new life in Christ. As we celebrate the Easter season, we help children see that Jesus' Resurrection is not only a moment in history but a promise that He is with us, guiding us, and helping us grow each day.

Inspired by Pope Leo XIV's *Magnifica Humanitas*, we remind students that every person is created with dignity and loved by God. This month, we focus on noticing goodness, practicing gratitude, and choosing words that bring peace to others.

In technology lessons, students learn how to use digital tools in ways that reflect kindness and responsibility. We encourage them to pause, think, and choose actions that honor themselves and others.

Please take a moment this week to talk with your child about one way your family celebrates Easter joy at home. Your partnership helps our classroom continue to grow in faith and love.

In Christ

April Student Worksheets

April Worksheet #1 — Easter Joy -- *New Life in Christ*

Scripture: *“He is not here; He has risen.” — Luke 24:6*

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Read each action. Circle YES if it shows Easter joy, and NO if it does not.

1. I thank God for His blessings.

YES / NO

2. I complain about everything.

YES / NO

3. I look for goodness in each day.

YES / NO

4. I share joy with others.

YES / NO

Reflection: One way I can share Easter joy this week:



April Worksheet #2 — Gratitude

Seeing God's Gifts

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Scripture: *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good." — Psalm 118:1*

Directions: Read each situation. Write how you can show gratitude.

1. A friend helps you with your work.

I show gratitude by: _____

2. Your family makes dinner for you.

I show gratitude by: _____

3. You enjoy a beautiful spring day.

I show gratitude by: _____

Bringing Calm to Others

Scripture: *"Peace I leave with you." — John 14:27*

Directions: Draw or write one way you can bring peace to your classroom.

My act of peace:



April Worksheet #3— Technology with Peace

Choosing Calm and Kindness

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Match the virtue to the example.

Write J for Joy, G for Gratitude, or P for Peace.

1. I pause before I respond online.

2. I thank someone who sends me a kind message.

3. I share something positive with others.

4. I avoid posting unkind words.

5. I notice good things in my day.

My Easter Prayer

Celebrating New Life

Directions: Complete the prayer.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for rising from the dead and bringing new life.

Help me grow in joy by _____.

Help me grow in gratitude by _____.

Help me grow in peace by _____.

Help me share Your love with everyone I meet.

Amen.

April Worksheet #4— April Virtue Check-In

Name: _____ Date: _____

How Am I Growing?

Directions: Circle the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

JOY

😊 I shared joy

😐 I shared joy sometimes

😞 I did not share joy

GRATITUDE

😊 I thanked others

😐 I thanked others sometimes

😞 I did not show gratitude

PEACE

😊 I brought calm

😐 I brought calm sometimes

😞 I did not bring peace

Reflection: One virtue I want to grow in next week is: _____

April Student Reflection Page

Growing in Easter Joy

Scripture: *"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad."* — Psalm 118:24

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Reflecting on Joy, Gratitude, and Peace

1. Easter Joy — New Life in Christ

How did I share joy with others this month?

2. Gratitude — Seeing God's Gifts

What blessings did I notice in my day?

3. Peace — Bringing Calm to Others

How did I help bring peace to my classroom or home?

My April Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for rising from the dead and filling the world with new life.

Help me grow in joy by _____.

Help me grow in gratitude by _____.

Help me grow in peace by _____.

Amen.

Student Reflection

One thing I learned about Easter joy this month is:

One way I can keep growing in joy, gratitude, or peace next month is:



APRIL — Caring for Creation

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Caring for Creation</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor earth with Marian blue ribbon
Key Message	"Care for creation with your digital choices."
Student Interaction Area	"I cared for creation by..." earth slips
Border/Accents	Flowers, greens + blues, stewardship icons

AI-Generated

May

Mary, Our Mother



MAY — “Mary, Model of Virtue”

Helping Students Look to Mary for Guidance in Their Digital Lives

Monthly Theme

May honors Mary and teaches students to follow her example of gentleness, patience, humility, and love — virtues that guide our digital choices too.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Mary always chose what was loving and good.

We teach students:

“Mary shows us how to be gentle, patient, and kind — even online.”

Classroom Applications

- Marian kindness challenges
- Teach “Mary’s Way” digital behavior
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to Marian virtues
- Practice gentle communication in class and online
- Encourage students to ask Mary for help in making good choices

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I follow Mary’s example today?”
- “What Marian virtue do I want to practice?”
- “How can I bring gentleness into my digital habits?”

Short Prayer

Mary, Mother of God, help us follow your example of love and gentleness. Guide our hearts so we choose sympathy in all we do. Amen.

Of course, Sister — let’s finish strong.

Here are **June, July, and August**, polished, mission-centered, and ready for you to paste directly into your binder.

You’ll now have the **full 12-month cycle** in your hands.

May Parent Letter

Blossoming in Faith and Friendship

Dear Families,

As we enter May, our students celebrate the beauty of spring and the joy of growing in friendship with Jesus and one another. This month, we honor Mary, the Mother of God, whose gentle faith and loving heart guide us to say “yes” to God’s call each day.

Our classroom focuses on the virtues of Faithfulness, Friendship, and Joy. We remind children that true friendship means seeing Christ in others and treating everyone with kindness and respect. Inspired by Pope Leo XIV’s *Magnifica Humanitas*, we continue to teach that every person reflects God’s goodness and deserves care and dignity.

Technology lessons this month encourage students to use digital tools to share positive messages and celebrate others’ successes. We practice gratitude for the gifts of community and creation.

Please take a moment this week to pray a Hail Mary with your child and talk about one way your family shows friendship and faith at home. Your partnership helps our classroom bloom with love and joy.

In Christ,



May Student Worksheets

May Worksheet #1 — Faithfulness --Saying “Yes” to God

Scripture: *“Be it done unto me according to your word.” — Luke 1:38*

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read each action. Circle YES if it shows faithfulness, and NO if it does not.

1. I finish the work I started.
YES / NO
2. I ignore directions and do my own thing.
YES / NO
3. I pray when I need help.
YES / NO
4. I try again even when something is hard.
YES / NO

Reflection: One way I can be faithful this week:

Friendship--Seeing Christ in Others

Scripture: *“Love one another as I have loved you.” — John 15:12*

Directions: Read each situation. Write how you can show friendship.

1. A classmate feels left out.
I show friendship by: _____
2. Someone shares good news with you.
I show friendship by: _____
3. A friend needs help with a problem.
I show friendship by: _____

 May Worksheet #3 — Joy--Sharing God's Light

Scripture: *"My heart rejoices in the Lord."* — 1 Samuel 2:1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Directions: Draw or write one way you can share joy.

My act of joy:



Friendship Online

Kindness in Digital Spaces

Directions: Match the virtue to the example.

Write F for Faithfulness, FR for Friendship, or J for Joy.

1. I send a kind message to someone.

2. I keep my promises.

3. I celebrate someone's success.

4. I avoid posting unkind words.

5. I try again when something is difficult.

 May Worksheet #3— My May Prayer

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Walking with Mary

Directions: Complete the prayer.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for giving us Mary as our Mother.

Help me grow in faithfulness by _____.

Help me grow in friendship by _____.

Help me grow in joy by _____.

Help me share Your love with everyone I meet.

Amen.

May Virtue Check-In

How Am I Growing?

Directions: Circle the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

FAITHFULNESS

 I was faithful

 I was faithful sometimes

 I was not faithful

FRIENDSHIP

 I was a good friend

 I was a friend sometimes

 I was not a friend

JOY

 I shared joy

 I shared joy sometimes

 I did not share joy

Reflection: One virtue I want to grow in next week is:

May Student Reflection Page



Scripture: *“My soul magnifies the Lord.” — Luke 1:46*

Reflecting on Faithfulness, Friendship, and Joy

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. Faithfulness — Saying “Yes” to God

How did I try to be faithful this month?

2. Friendship — Seeing Christ in Others

How did I show friendship to someone?

3. Joy — Sharing God’s Light

What brought me joy, and how did I share it?

One thing I learned about Mary this month is:

One way I can keep growing in faithfulness, friendship, or joy next month is:



 MAY — Mary, Model of Virtue

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Mary, Model of Virtue</i>
Central Visual	Soft watercolor Marian silhouette with halo
Key Message	"Mary shows us the gentle way."
Student Interaction Area	"A Marian virtue I practiced..." petals
Border/Accents	Marian blue, lilies, soft script lettering

June

The Sacred Heart of Jesus



Jesus, I Trust in You

JUNE — “Strength in Community”

Helping Students See That Faith and Technology Should Build Community, Not Break It

Monthly Theme

June teaches students that we grow stronger when we support one another. Technology should help us build community — not isolate, exclude, or divide.

Student-Friendly Explanation

God made us to live in community.

We teach students:

“We are stronger together — and our digital choices should help us stay connected, not pull us apart.”

Classroom Applications

- Practice teamwork and shared responsibility
- Teach “community-building” digital habits
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to unity and respect
- Discuss how online behavior affects classmates
- Encourage students to notice when someone feels left out

Reflection Prompts

- “How can I help build community today?”
- “What digital choices help us stay united?”
- “Who can I include or encourage?”

Short Prayer

Lord, help us strengthen our community with kindness, respect, and love. Guide our choices so we bring people together. Amen.

June Student Worksheets

June Worksheet #1 — Hope

Trusting God's Promises

Scripture: *"My hope is in You all day long."* — Psalm 25:5

Directions: Read each action. Circle YES if it shows hope, and NO if it does not.

1. I believe God is with me.
YES / NO
2. I give up right away.
YES / NO
3. I look for good even when things are hard.
YES / NO
4. I encourage others.
YES / NO

Reflection: One way I can practice hope this week:

June Worksheet #2 — Courage

Doing What Is Right

Scripture: *"Be strong and courageous."* — Joshua 1:9

Directions: Read each situation. Write how you can show courage.

1. A friend is being treated unkindly.
I show courage by: _____
2. I need to try something new.
I show courage by: _____
3. I feel nervous about a challenge.
I show courage by: _____

June Worksheet #3 — Kindness

Sharing God's Love

Scripture: *“Be kind to one another.” — Ephesians 4:32*

Directions: Draw or write one way you can show kindness.

My act of kindness:

(Drawing box)

 June Worksheet #4 — Summer Safety Online

Using Technology Wisely

Directions: Match the virtue to the example. Write H for Hope, C for Courage, or K for Kindness.

1. I ask an adult when I’m unsure about a website.

2. I stand up for someone being teased online.

3. I send a positive message to a friend.

4. I avoid sharing personal information.

5. I try again when something is confusing.

 June Worksheet #5 — My June Prayer

Growing in Summer Virtues

Directions: Complete the prayer.

Dear Jesus,

Thank You for being with me in every season.

Help me grow in hope by _____.

Help me grow in courage by _____.
Help me grow in kindness by _____.
Help me share Your love wherever I go.
Amen.

June Worksheet #6 — June Virtue Check-In

How Am I Growing?

Directions: Color the face that shows how well you practiced each virtue this week.

HOPE

-  I practiced hope
-  I practiced hope sometimes
-  I did not practice hope

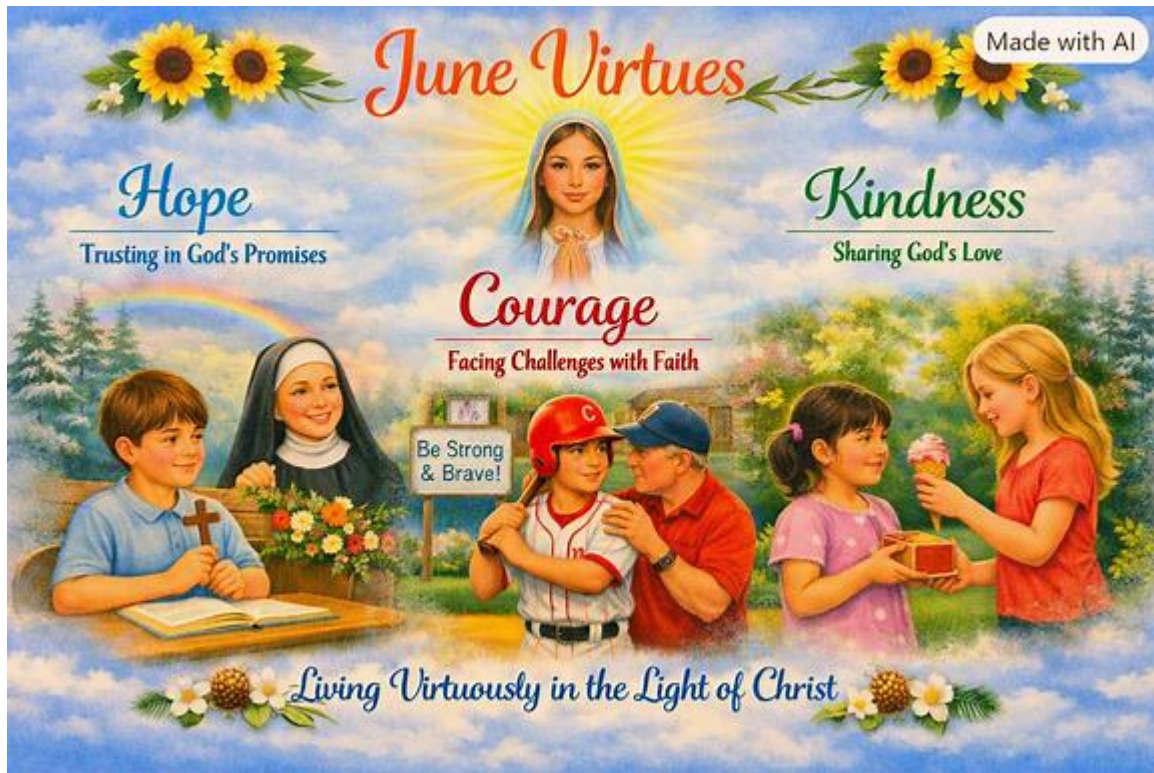
COURAGE

-  I was courageous
-  I was courageous sometimes
-  I was not courageous

KINDNESS

-  I was kind
-  I was kind sometimes
-  I was not kind

Reflection: One virtue I want to grow in next week is:



JUNE — Strength in Community

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Strength in Community</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor circle of children holding hands
Key Message	"We are stronger together."
Student Interaction Area	"I built community by..." circles
Border/Accents	Suns, yellows + blues, unity icons



Summer Supplement

JULY — “Rest, Renewal, and Balance”

Helping Students Understand Healthy Boundaries With Technology

Monthly Theme

July focuses on **balance** — helping students learn that rest, quiet, and time away from screens are part of God’s plan for a healthy life.

Student-Friendly Explanation

Rest is holy.

We teach students:

“God wants us to enjoy life, spend time with others, and take breaks from screens so our hearts and minds can rest.”

Classroom Applications

- Teach “Screen Sabbath” ideas
- Practice noticing when technology becomes too much
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to balance and moderation
- Encourage students to enjoy nature, family, and prayer
- Discuss how rest helps us make better choices

Reflection Prompts

- “What helps me find balance with technology?”
- “How do I feel when I take a break from screens?”
- “Where do I find rest and renewal?”

Short Prayer

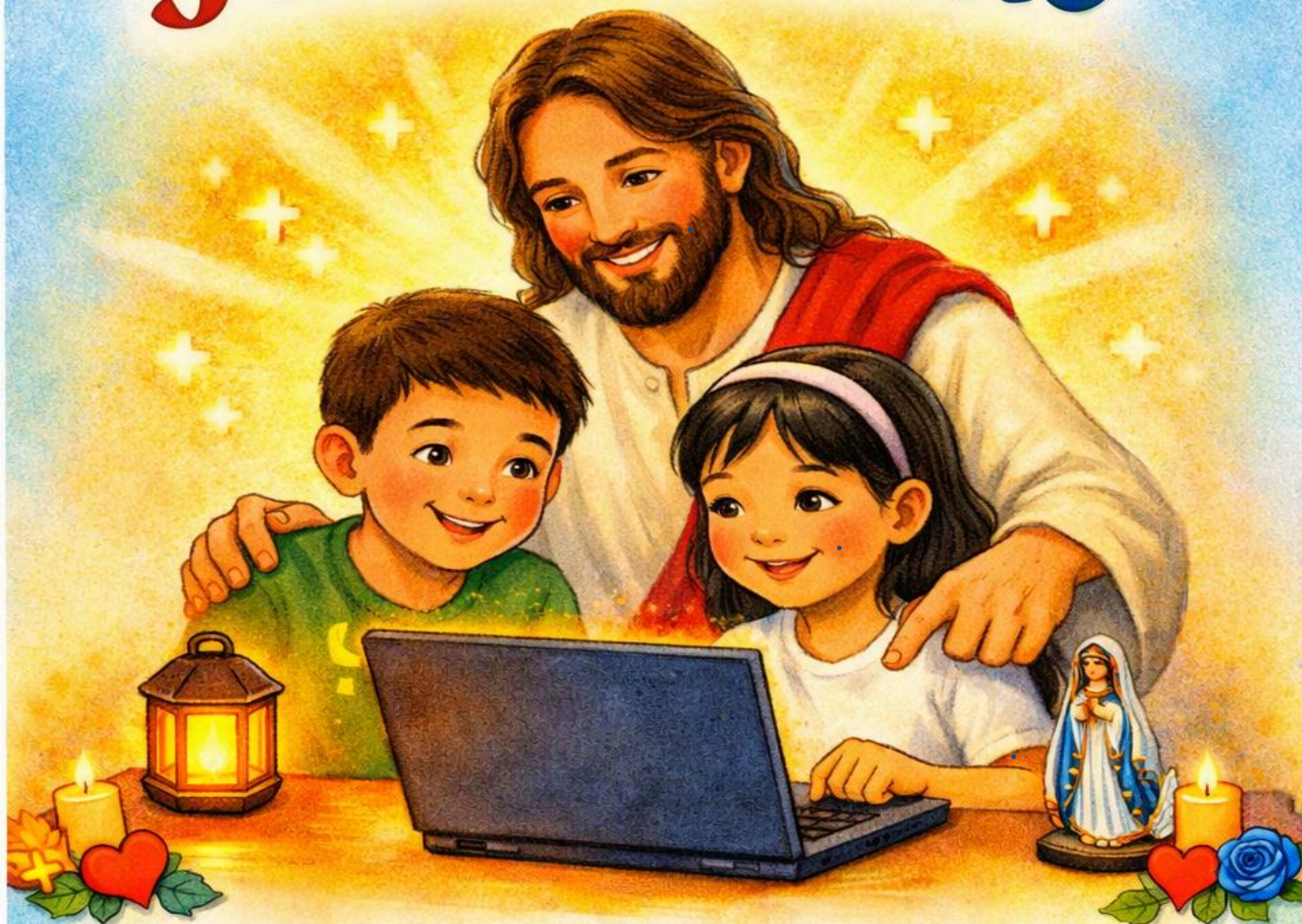
Heavenly Father, thank You for rest and renewal. Help us find balance in our lives and use technology in healthy, holy ways. Amen.



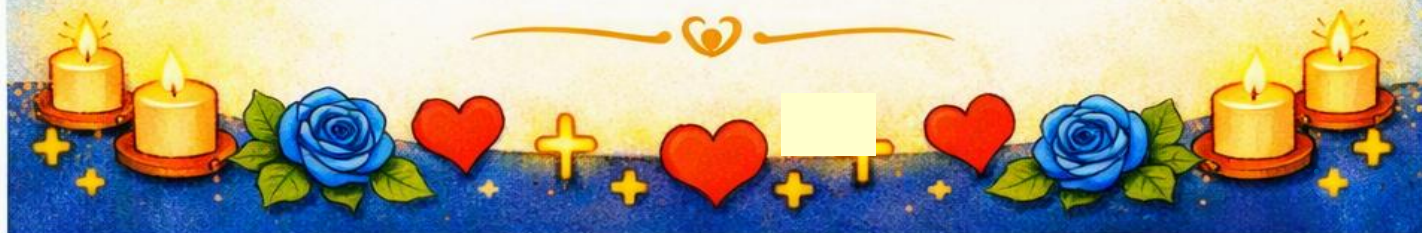
 JULY — Rest, Renewal, and Balance

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Rest, Renewal, and Balance</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor sun + hammock silhouette
Key Message	"Rest is holy."
Student Interaction Area	"I found balance by..." sunshine slips
Border/Accents	Sunflowers, yellows, soft summer palette

+ Guided by + Jesus Online



Inspired by Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical
"On the Use of Modern Media for the Good of Souls"



AUGUST — “Preparing Our Hearts for a New Year”

Helping Students Begin the School Year With Faith-Centered Digital Habits

Monthly Theme

August prepares students for the year ahead by helping them set faith-centered goals for how they will use technology with kindness, wisdom, and responsibility.

Student-Friendly Explanation

A new school year is a fresh start.

We teach students:

“We can prepare our hearts by choosing good habits — especially in how we treat others online and in person.”

Classroom Applications

- Create a “Digital Virtue Plan” for the year
- Teach routines for responsible tech use
- Connect Pope Leo’s teaching to new beginnings
- Practice welcoming classmates with kindness
- Encourage students to set one digital virtue goal

Reflection Prompts

- “What digital habits do I want to start this year?”
- “How can I welcome others with kindness?”
- “What virtue will guide my choices?”

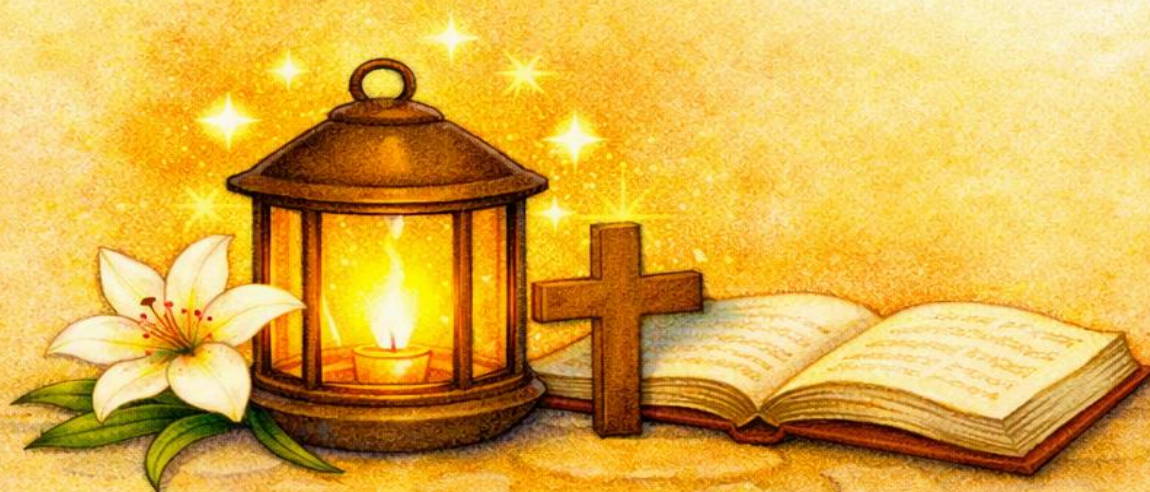
Short Prayer

Lord, prepare our hearts for a new year. Help us begin with kindness, wisdom, and love in all our choices. Amen.

 AUGUST — Preparing Our Hearts for a New Year

Bulletin Board Element	Content
Header Title	<i>Preparing Our Hearts for a New Year</i>
Central Visual	Watercolor backpack with Marian blue tag
Key Message	"Begin with kindness."
Student Interaction Area	"My digital virtue goal is..." backpack cards
Border/Accents	Wheat, golds + blues, back-to-school icons





*May every click, every word, and
every moment online reflect the love of Christ.*

*Inspired by Pope Leo XIII's call to use modern
tools for the good of souls.*



CATHOLIC TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

Catholic Podcasts

Catholic Sleep Meditation

Every educator knows the importance of a good night's sleep. The Catholic Sleep Meditation Podcast will help you surrender the worries of the day in order to rest. Each meditation slowly guides your mind to rest, swapping the day's anxieties for a peaceful sleep. Each meditation is inspired by a different Bible story or passage. Find it on your favorite podcast app.

The Saints Podcast

Each week a new five-part series about a particular saint is brought to life by the Merry Beggars. Join Joan of Arc as she leads the French army, Patrick of Ireland as he escapes slavery and many more faith-filled and inspiring stories. You can get daily episodes and activities delivered to your email by signing up at thesaintspodcast.com or you can listen to each episode on your favorite podcasts app.

Apps for Ipad, Iphone

Juice Box The Catholic Kids Show

Spirit Juice Studios created fun videos, stories, and crafts to teach children about Jesus. Your host, Dilly, guides you through segments involving toys, songs and crafts. Learn about Faith basics, an explanation of major concepts such as the Holy Trinity and the Sacrament of Confession. Watch animated and live-action stories detailing the lives of saints and important Catholic figures. It also offers seasonal guides and challenges. Juice Box is available for free at www.spiritjuicekids.com and on YouTube Spirit Juice Kids.



Calm Catholic Kids

Calm Catholic Kids is a gentle audio app for little Catholics PreK-K containing soothing stories, prayers and calming practices. Each story features an animal friend who helps the child name and work through their feelings. Every story also has a practice track you can play with your student the next time they experience that feeling. You can pray classic Catholic prayers, the Our Father, Hail Mary and Guardian Angel prayer, and others. The app is also great for parents to use at home with their young children. It is available for free in the App Store and also offers in app purchases and no ads in the app.



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.

Social Justice

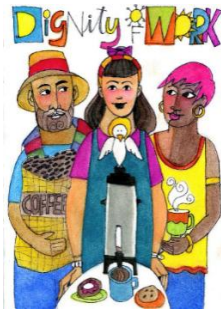
Catholic Social Teaching and Pope Leo XIV's Encyclical "Magnifica Humanitas"

by Sister Joyce C. Bell IHM, Coordinator of Social Justice

The origin of Catholic Social Teaching as we know it today actually began with Pope Leo XIII and his encyclical letter, "Rerum Novarum." This letter addressed all of the social inequalities that existed during the industrial age. It offered encouragement and proposed solutions endorsed by the Catholic Church. It was the beginning of Catholic Social Doctrine. Catholic Social Doctrine gave rise to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching which we wholeheartedly embrace today.

The foundational principle of Catholic Social Teaching is our belief that each person is made in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, each person possesses a dignity which deserves respect that both recognizes and honors it. It is this principle along with other elements of Catholic Social Teaching that Pope Leo offers as a tool for discerning the development and use of AI, artificial intelligence, which has become a dominant force in our world today. Pope Leo encourages all to look at AI through the lens of truth, responsibility, work, freedom, solidarity, peace and the common good.

For Pope Leo, the question is not simply to accept or reject AI but will it be used to promote the dignity of the human person and to improve the common good. This will be explored as we continue our journey through "Magnifica Humanitas."

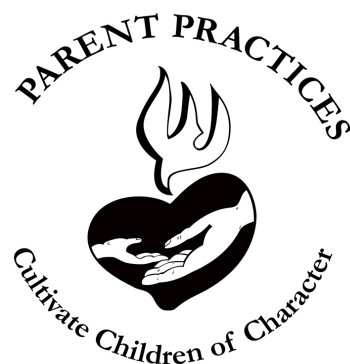


Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

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 God's creation

Catholic Family Character

Nourished by Spirituality



Psychologist Carl Jung once said, "Bidden or unbidden, God is present." Amen! God is always present. God keeps us always in mind though we often fail to keep God in mind. Belief in the all-present existence of God (*omnipresence*) and God's invitation to relationship with us leads to the development of personal spiritual character.

Spirituality, or *spirit-mentality*, is the quality, manner, or mode of responding to our experience of God in each concrete circumstance of personal life, that is, in relationships, duties, choices of leisure, books we read, movies we watch, etc. Spirituality embraces every facet of our living. Parent spirituality provides children with a spiritual heritage that is more valuable than financial inheritance. Some parents foster spiritual inheritance with the following practices:

- **Punctuate each day with formal prayer**, such as wake-up prayer, blessing of meals, a God-centered ritual for bedtime, and prayer at the sound of emergency police or fire sirens. For example, when a fire siren is heard some people stop and pray, "*O God, we beseech you to help your servants whom you have redeemed with your precious blood.*"
- **Celebrate the God-element of birthdays, name days, and holidays.**
- **Sprinkle conversation with spiritual advice**, for example, "*God will provide!*" "*This, too, will pass.*" "*Ask Jesus to teach you how to forgive Brian.*" "*What would Jesus do?*"
- **Create a spiritual environment**, i.e., crucifix in major rooms, liturgical table decoration (for Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time), religious statutes and symbols, a family slogan placed above the entry way door, for example, the words of Joshua 24:15: "*As for me and my house we will serve the Lord.*"
- **Name, define and model virtues that you hold sacred**, such as integrity, respect for differences, inclusion and hospitality/welcome. Practice one virtue a week and report progress or difficulties during a family meal or meeting.
- **Read to your child books and make remarks that promote virtuous living.** For example, "*I saw a woman in the checkout line today who deserves the patience award . . .*"
- **Set a spiritual example in casual ways.** For instance, "*I have to pray about that before I can give you an answer.*"

Personal Prayer

Prayer is merely conversation with the One who loves you most. It involves speaking, listening, and trusting. All good relationships require regularity in communication. Friends share interests and values that automatically determine the way you use time, what you add to or eliminate from your life, and what sacrifices you make. Growing in relationship with God implies a similar pattern of choices. Some ways that parents lead children into mutual friendship with God include:

- **Morning Prayer**

Offer the day's prayer, works, joys and sorrows to God. Stir awareness within you of the Divine Providence of God. Trust that nothing will happen during this day that together you cannot handle.

- **Prayer before Meals**

Express gratitude for the gift of food and the person who provided and/or prepared it.

- **Gospel ABCs**

Read a Gospel story. Identify what **attitudes** are the focus, what **behaviors** the main characters chose, and what **consequences** followed. Weave these pieces into your daily life and turn them into prayer for the week.

- **Bedtime Examination of Conscience**

Recall the graces of the day and the disappointing choices of the day. Make an act of sincere contrition, plan how to improve, and ask the grace of God

Sunday Mass and Eucharist

Participation is key. Pre-read a child-friendly translation of the Gospel. Join in singing. Think about the lyrics. Recite responses. Listen to the Liturgy of the Word. Take a life-message from it.

Prepare for the Eucharistic Prayer. When the celebrant refers to people who have died, name loved ones. When he prays for the living, name people and concerns. When he offers the bread and wine, imagine placing the events of the past week on the Paten and fears of the week ahead in the Chalice. Offer your life with Jesus to the Father.

Make an intimate act of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion. Speak with Jesus. Share the matters of your heart, speak of your love for him, and ask him to shape your heart and actions. Witness to your love in the week that follows.

Frequent Spiritual Communion

St. Alphonsus Liguori taught the practice of praying a spiritual communion throughout the day. Pray it often.

My Jesus, I believe that You are really present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You more than anything in the world and I hunger to be nourished by You. But since I cannot receive Communion at this moment, come into my soul at least spiritually. I unite myself to You now as I do when I actually receive You. Never let me drift away from you.

El Carácter en la Familia Católica

Nutrido por la Espiritualidad



El psicólogo Carl Jung dijo una vez: «*Invocado o no, Dios está presente*». ¡Amén! Dios siempre está presente. Él nos tiene siempre en mente, aunque a menudo nosotros no lo tengamos a Él en mente. La fe en la omnipresencia de Dios y su invitación a entablar una relación con nosotros nos lleva al desarrollo del carácter espiritual personal.

La espiritualidad, o «mentalidad según el Espíritu», es la cualidad, manera o modo de responder a nuestra experiencia de Dios en cada circunstancia concreta de la vida personal: en las relaciones, los deberes, el tiempo libre, los libros que leemos, las películas que vemos, etc. La espiritualidad abarca cada faceta de nuestra existencia. La espiritualidad de los padres otorga a los hijos un legado espiritual mucho más valioso que cualquier herencia financiera. Algunos padres fomentan esta herencia mediante las siguientes prácticas:

- **Marcar cada día con la oración formal:** como la oración al despertar, la bendición de los alimentos, un ritual centrado en Dios antes de dormir o una oración al escuchar sirenas de emergencia de la policía o de los bomberos. Por ejemplo, al oír una sirena de bomberos, hay quienes se detienen y oran: «*Oh Dios, te suplicamos que ayudes a tus siervos, a quienes has redimido con tu preciosa sangre*».
- **Celebrar la dimensión divina** en los cumpleaños, onomásticos (días del santo) y fiestas patrias o religiosas.
- **Enriquecer la conversación con consejos espirituales:** por ejemplo, «*¡Dios proveerá!*», «*Esto también pasará*», «*Pídele a Jesús que te enseñe a perdonar a Brian*», «*¿Qué haría Jesús?*».
- **Crear un ambiente espiritual:** colocando un crucifijo en las habitaciones principales, decoración litúrgica para la mesa (según el Adviento, Navidad, Cuaresma, Pascua, Pentecostés y Tiempo Ordinario), imágenes y símbolos religiosos, o un lema familiar sobre la puerta de entrada; por ejemplo, las palabras de Josué 24:15: «*Yo y mi casa serviremos al Señor*».
- **Nombrar, definir y modelar las virtudes** que consideras sagradas, tales como la integridad, el respeto por las diferencias, la inclusión y la acogida/hospitalidad. Practica una virtud a la semana y comparte tus avances o dificultades en una comida o reunión familiar.
- **Leer a tu hijo libros** y hacer comentarios que promuevan una vida virtuosa. Por ejemplo: «*Hoy vi a una persona en la fila de la caja que se merece el premio a la paciencia porque...*».
- **Dar un ejemplo espiritual de manera natural.** Por ejemplo: «*Tengo que orar sobre esto antes de poder darte una respuesta*».

La Oración Personal

La oración es sencillamente una conversación con Aquel que más te ama; implica hablar, escuchar y confiar. Toda buena relación requiere constancia en la comunicación. Los amigos comparten intereses y valores que determinan de forma natural el uso del tiempo, lo que se incorpora o se elimina de la vida, y los sacrificios que se hacen. Crecer en la relación con Dios implica un patrón de decisiones similar. Algunas formas en que los padres guían a los hijos hacia una amistad mutua con Dios incluyen:

- **Oración de la mañana:** Ofrece a Dios las oraciones, trabajos, alegrías y sufrimientos del día. Despierta en ti la conciencia de la Divina Providencia de Dios y confía en que no ocurrirá nada durante este día que juntos no puedan afrontar.

- **Oración antes de las comidas:** Expresa gratitud por el don de los alimentos y por las personas que los proporcionaron y/o prepararon.

- **El ABC del Evangelio:** Lee un pasaje del Evangelio. Identifica qué actitudes son el centro, qué decisiones tomaron los personajes principales y qué consecuencias se derivaron. Entreteje estas enseñanzas en tu vida diaria y conviértelas en intención de oración para la semana.

- **Examen de conciencia antes de dormir:** Recuerda las gracias del día y las decisiones desafortunadas. Haz un acto de contrición sincera, planifica cómo mejorar y pide la gracia de Dios.

La Misa Dominical y la Eucaristía

La participación es la clave. Lee de antemano una traducción del Evangelio adaptada para niños. Únete a los cantos, reflexiona en sus letras, responde a las aclamaciones y escucha con atención la Liturgia de la Palabra para extraer de ella un mensaje de vida.

Prepárate para la Plegaria Eucarística. Cuando el celebrante recuerde a los difuntos, menciona a tus seres queridos; cuando ore por los vivos, encomienda a personas y necesidades concretas. Cuando ofrezca el pan y el vino, imagina que colocas sobre la patena los acontecimientos de la semana pasada y en el cáliz los temores de la semana que inicia. Ofrece tu vida al Padre junto con Jesús.

Haz un acto íntimo de acción de gracias después de la Sagrada Comunión. Habla con Jesús, comparte los asuntos de tu corazón, exprésale tu amor y pídele que moldee tu corazón y tus acciones. Da testimonio de tu amor durante la semana posterior.

Comunión Espiritual Frecuente

San Alfonso María de Liguori promovió la práctica de hacer actos de comunión espiritual a lo largo del día. Rézala con frecuencia:

Jesús mío, creo que estás realmente presente en el Santísimo Sacramento del Altar. Te amo sobre todas las cosas y deseo vivamente recibirte dentro de mi alma. Pero no pudiendo hacerlo ahora sacramentalmente, ven al menos espiritualmente a mi corazón. Y como si ya te hubiese recibido, te abrazo y me uno del todo a Ti. Señor, no permitas que jamás me separe de Ti. Amén.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS FALL 2026

Preparing Student Leaders to Build Something Great Together

As a new school year approaches, we as youth and young adult ministers are given an opportunity and privilege to welcome a new generation of student leaders. We may begin the year thinking about schedules, retreats, service projects, meetings, and events—but beneath all of these plans is something much more important: forming young people who recognize that God has entrusted them with unique gifts meant to be shared, to help build up a community where others can truly encounter Christ.

Student leadership in ministry is about so much more than finding students who are outgoing, responsible, or naturally good at organizing events. Our task as youth and young adult ministers is to help young people discover that they have something unique to contribute to the mission of the Church, and each one of these gifts matters.

In his first encyclical, *Magnificas Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV begins with a powerful reminder that we each have a responsibility for the world we are working together to create. He says,

“Each generation inherits the task of shaping its own era, of guiding history to become a place where the dignity of every person is safeguarded, justice is promoted and fraternity is made possible.”

These words are a profound reminder to us that our student leaders have influence, and each of them are already at work helping to shape the communities in which they live.

Magnifica Humanitas reminds us that every person is unique and irreplaceable. Pope Leo speaks of each human being as ***“a free and intelligent subject with a conscience, capable of seeking God, serving one another, caring for our common home.”*** This vision challenges us to look at our student leaders not simply as volunteers who can fill positions, but as young people with God-given dignity, gifts, creativity, and responsibility.

The Gospel does not call us to build the Kingdom of God alone. We need one another. As youth and young adult ministers, we are not simply creating a team of students who can accomplish our ministry goals. We are forming a community in which students learn to recognize, affirm, and depend upon one another's gifts.

We must help our students to recognize these gifts both within themselves and each other, so that we can all work together to become co-creators of a community where others can encounter Christ. Let us consider some of the ways in which we can do just that in our own youth and young adult ministries.

FORMING STUDENT LEADERS:

Helping Student Leaders Understand their Baptismal Call

As youth and young adult ministers, we must help our students to understand their baptismal call. Every Christian is called to share in Christ's mission as priest, prophet, and king, reminding us that leadership in the Church is not reserved just for ordained ministers; every baptized person has a role in building up the Body of Christ. For young adult leaders, living this baptismal call means recognizing that leadership is a vocation, not simply a position, and we are called to use our gifts and talents in each of the following ways:

PRIESTLY ROLE - We are all capable of using our unique gifts and talents to make our lives a sacrifice. ***How can we intentionally live a life of sacrifice that models the life of Jesus so that we may provide an example for our student leaders?***

PROPHETIC ROLE - We are all called to witness to the truth and commit to giving testimony to the world. ***How can our own witness to the truth help our student leaders to understand the way we are each called to bring hope to the world?***

KINGLY ROLE - As leaders, we are called to build up a world where others flourish and to see ourselves as being about the transformation of the world. ***How can we help our student leaders to see this by giving them responsibilities and helping them to build up their own gifts and talents?***

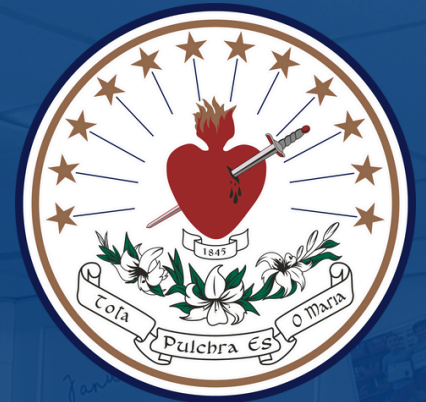
Inspired by "Rooted in Christ - Cultivating the Spiritual Life," a talk given by Dr. Susan Timoney at the CCMA LAUNCH 2026 Conference

Being Sent Forth as Missionary Disciples

By helping students to understand their baptismal call, we can also help them to understand how they are each called to be missionary disciples. We are all apostles who are "sent forth" to authentically witness to how Christ is at work in each of our lives. As youth and young adult ministers, we are called to model this for our student leaders and accompany them along the way using the following **Best Practices of Accompaniment**:

1. **Listening** - Pay close attention to student leaders and listen deeply to their concerns.
2. **Discernment** - Guide students in listening to the Holy Spirit at work in their lives.
3. **Patience** - Remember that God is always at work, and His timing is perfect!
4. **Empathy** - Be compassionate and meet students where they are at.
5. **Openness** - Be open to the many ways in which the Holy Spirit is at work.

Inspired by "Living as Missionary Disciples on Campus," a talk given by Father Frank Donio, SAC at the CCMA LAUNCH 2026 Conference



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 a healthy climate and learning in the classroom.



Social Skills

Accepting differences – When children spot a difference, it is natural for them to ask questions. While questions can sometimes be embarrassing, we should never ignore their curiosity. It is important to answer questions and talk about their curiosity. It is an essential way to help children to be inclusive of those who are seemingly (at first) unlike them.

Asking for help—Sometimes students struggle to ask questions. Failure to ask for help can affect students' academic performance, self-esteem, and potentially their access to learning in the future. Students must first recognize that they're struggling. This requires honesty and self-awareness even though some students don't think they need help even when formal or informal assessments indicate otherwise. Once students acknowledge that they're struggling, they may feel shame or embarrassment. They fear that asking for help signals weakness or failure in their character, though adults could tell them that asking for help is instead a sign of maturity and strength.

Teachers can help students understand how they learn best and empower them to be advocates for their own learning by teaching them how to ask for help.

Communicating clearly - Communication skills are essential for the growth and development of children. They help children express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in a clear and concise manner. Not only that, but they enable children to build relationships with others, develop problem-solving abilities, and become better decision-makers. Being able to communicate well can even increase their self-confidence.

For all of those reasons, it is important to encourage children to develop strong communication skills. This will be critical to helping them succeed later in life.

Complimenting others - In the hustle of life, it's easy to overlook the simple things we can do that have a positive impact on our wellbeing and relationships. One amazingly simple but effective thing everyone can do is give compliments. These are little nuggets of kindness that can make someone's day. Giving praise isn't difficult but can greatly improve the way children feel and interact. When students learn to give compliments, it can be a gamechanger for relationships. Compliments boost self-esteem and confidence, enhance performance and motivation, strengthen social connections, and encourage a ripple effect of kindness.

Disagreeing politely – Some skill steps in disagreeing appropriately are to look at the person, use a pleasant voice, respectfully tell why you feel differently, give a reason and listen to the other person. In doing this, we are more likely to be heard, and others will be willing to negotiate.

Encouraging others – Encouragement has the power to lift spirits and keep us moving forward.

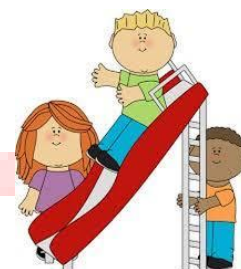
Following directions – Students who can follow directions are better able to learn how to perform skills efficiently.

Listening attentively—Children commonly learn through listening and paying attention to what they see and hear around them. Students who are focused on listening and understanding subject matter grasp the content more clearly and easily. Children who are active listeners can incorporate the things they hear faster in their framework of knowledge than a more passive counterpart. These children may also exhibit better concentration and memory. Alert and observant children thus have a higher chance of good grades and outstanding comprehension of lessons.

Resolving conflicts - Effective teachers create positive learning environments by helping children learn to regulate their behavior and emotions. Because conflict resolution skills develop throughout childhood, preschoolers (and even older children) may find it difficult to manage their behaviors and use appropriate strategies to effectively communicate during conflict. It is beneficial for teachers to use emotional vocabulary to help children understand and label feelings that might be related to their behavior. When teachers acknowledge children's feelings, they help children feel heard. They also set the stage for a compassionate discussion rather than a power struggle.

Sharing materials - Sharing is an essential life skill that needs to be developed in children from a young age. It is a complex concept to convey to young children as it requires emotion management, empathy, and basic language ability. Learning to share teaches many important life skills, such as how to make and keep friends, how to play cooperatively, how to take turns, and how to negotiate and cope with disappointment. It also teaches children about compromise and fairness.

Staying on task – Focus and self-control are essential skills for life. Focus refers to attention and involves being alert and “orienting.” Orienting refers to the ability to focus one’s attention on the specific tasks that will help children accomplish whatever their goal is. Concentration is also a big part of focus as children get older.



Taking risks - Children who are sheltered from risk and challenge when young will not be able to make judgments about their own capabilities and will not be well equipped to resist peer pressure in their later years. Children who learn in their early years to make their own reasoned decisions will be in a stronger position to resist the pressures they will inevitably face as they reach their teenage years.

Taking turns - Taking turns is an important social skill that helps children learn to share and cooperate with others. It helps children to develop patience, empathy, and self-control, and to respect the rights of others. Taking turns is also an important skill for children to learn in order to function effectively in social situations. In everyday life, children will often need to wait for their turn to speak, get help, play with a toy, etc. Taking turns is an essential part of social development and it is important for children to learn in order to get along with others and function effectively in a variety of social situations.

Using quiet voices - Having voice levels in the classroom is an essential part of maintaining a productive learning environment. It ensures that students can stay focused on task while also allowing for collaboration and interaction with peers. Voice Level 0 is when there is no talking in the classroom. This means that everyone is quiet and not talking to each other. This usually happens during silent reading or when students are working by themselves. In a science lab, voice level 0 might happen when the teacher gives instructions at the beginning or when someone else is presenting information. This voice level should be respected so that everyone can focus and learn. Voice level 1 is defined as a low conversation voice. This voice should be used when students are working together in groups, when they are discussing the material and bouncing ideas off one another. Voice level 1 should also be used during discussions with the whole class.

Waiting patiently - Waiting is an integral part of life and it is not easy. Whether it is in a line at school, for their turn while playing, for a treat, or to speak without interrupting, children must wait in many situations. Children find it difficult to wait because their need for instant gratification is strong and they do not have a well-developed concept of time. It is boring for them to wait! It is important for them to understand that waiting is a part of life. Waiting develops self-discipline as well as patience.



Great teachers empathize with kids, respect them and believe that each one has something special that can be built upon.

Anne Lieberman



Expectations at school



I will be responsible

- I will do my schoolwork.
- I will take care of school property.
- I will make good choices.

I will be respectful

- I will use kind words.
- I will listen to others.
- I will put my hand up to speak.

I will be safe

- I will use walking feet.
- I will keep my body calm.
- I will follow safety rules.



MAXIMIZING LEARNING FOR ALL

INCLUSION PRACTICES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND



When I was a child one of my favorite days was the first day of school. In our school all the students sat on the floor of the gym and listened as each teacher called the name of the students on their list. Once your name was called you waited with a mixture of anxiety and excitement to see if your friends would be in the same class. Now I am on the other side of the table and am the one welcoming my new group of students each year.



Our school is a small Catholic school outside of Philadelphia. This year my fourth graders entered the year knowing each other well

and were sure they would be in the same class with their friends because we have one of each grade. They have been together for many years and they know each other well. I have watched them and gotten to know some of them a little because we have a small school. One thing was very different for me this year, and one student was a bit more anxious about this new year than some of his classmates. His name is Logan.



Everyone in our school knows Logan and he has been in our school since Pre-K3. He has been with many of his classmates for all of these years and Logan knows me a bit from CARES and our summer camp. But this year was different because he and I would be a team full time.

*This year
Logan
and I
would be
a TEAM -
full time!*

Logan has diagnoses of autism, anxiety, and ADHD. I had tried to ease his anxiety for the transition into fourth grade by making time to build on our connection toward the end of third grade, and I met with all those who knew Logan to learn things that would help me help Logan

have a successful year. I have taught many children with ADHD and have a bag of tools

But this is not the most important part of the story. The amazing part of the story

because “I love sharing a birthday with Logan!” She had even brought him a

This article was written by Sister Teresa Haug, IHM, a fourth-grade teacher at Good Shepherd School, Glenside, PA.

Each edition of MAXIMIZING LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS explores inclusion practices that minimize barriers and maximize learning for all students. Email margaretlanger50@gmail.com if you would like to share your inclusion efforts or stories.

to help them. However, I was a little nervous because I knew very little about teaching children with autism and wondered how I would figure out how to meet his needs. Little did I know how much we would both grow over the year!



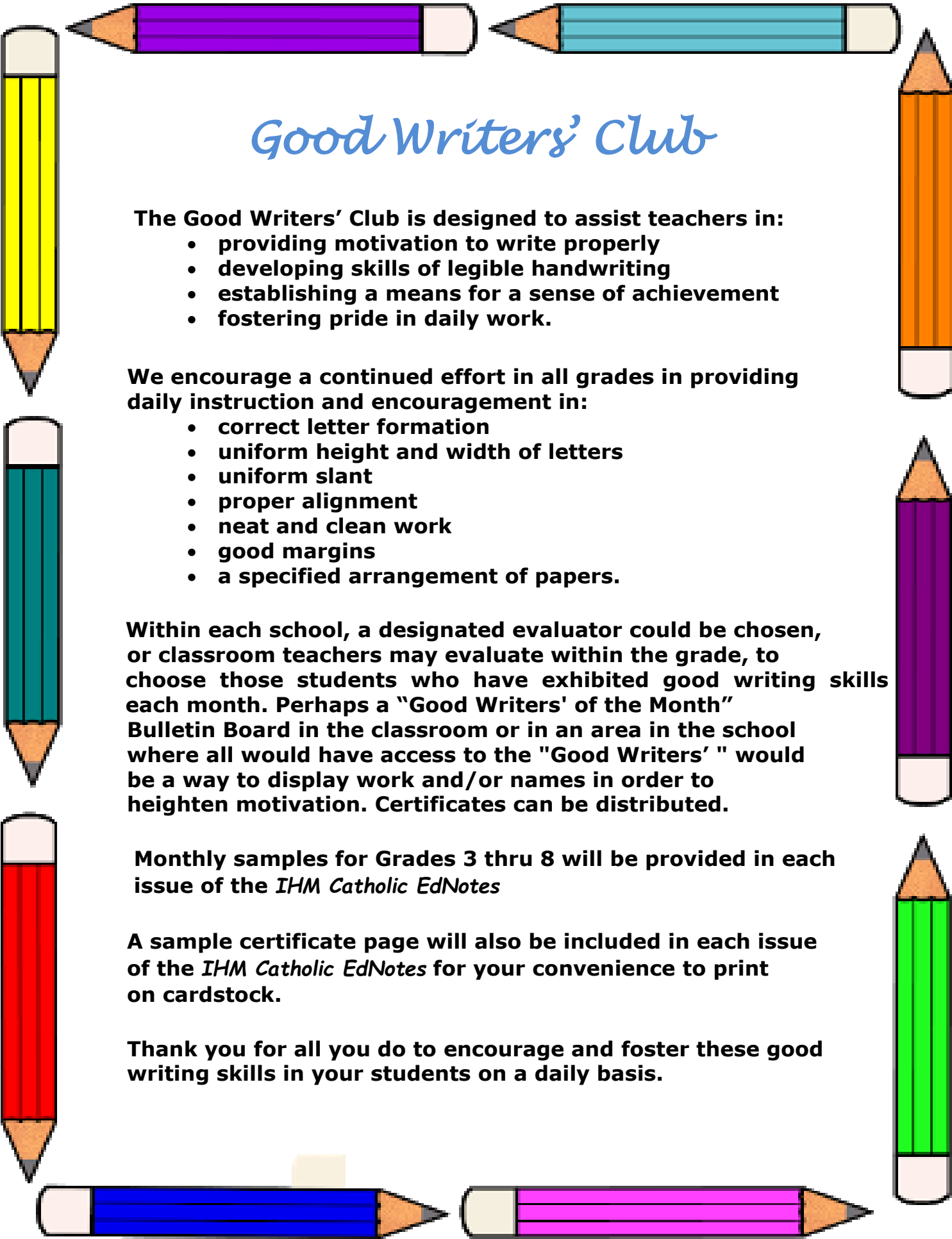
One of the things I learned was that Logan would teach me how to help him if I paid attention. As we worked together, I learned what helped, what didn't, when Logan was telling me he was anxious, and I learned to see the early signs. I learned where to get help when I didn't know what to do. We learned together how we would do fourth grade.

is how much Logan and his classmates have impacted each other. Logan succeeds in our school because he is known, loved, and feels secure. His classmates are the most important part of this equation. As I said, many of them have been together for years. Logan's classmates celebrate his successes with him and accept when he struggles. They find ways for him to participate in group work in ways that work for him. They try to gently help him when he struggles and can see when it is better to let him be. These children are such compassionate, caring, and loving classmates, and Logan is a big part of why they have learned to be like this. He has brought this out in them, and he thrives because they have responded. I heard one of his classmates say they missed him when he did not join us on our class trip. Another classmate shares a birthday with Logan and was disappointed when he was not there on their birthday

present! They really care about him, and he knows it.



I have also grown from this experience. When I look back at my nervous “beginning of the year” self, I have to chuckle at myself. I learned that what I don't know I can learn and figure out. I was reminded that what matters most is that we all grow from accepting and loving each person – student, classmate, parent, teacher, colleague, even ourselves – where they are, with the love we are all called to proclaim – the love of God. We think we are helping them, and we are, but we are really growing together. ***And the gift of Logan's presence in this class and in our school is helping us all grow to be more of who God calls us to be.***

A decorative border of colored pencils surrounds the text. The pencils are arranged in a rectangular frame, with colors including purple, blue, yellow, orange, teal, red, green, and pink.

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:

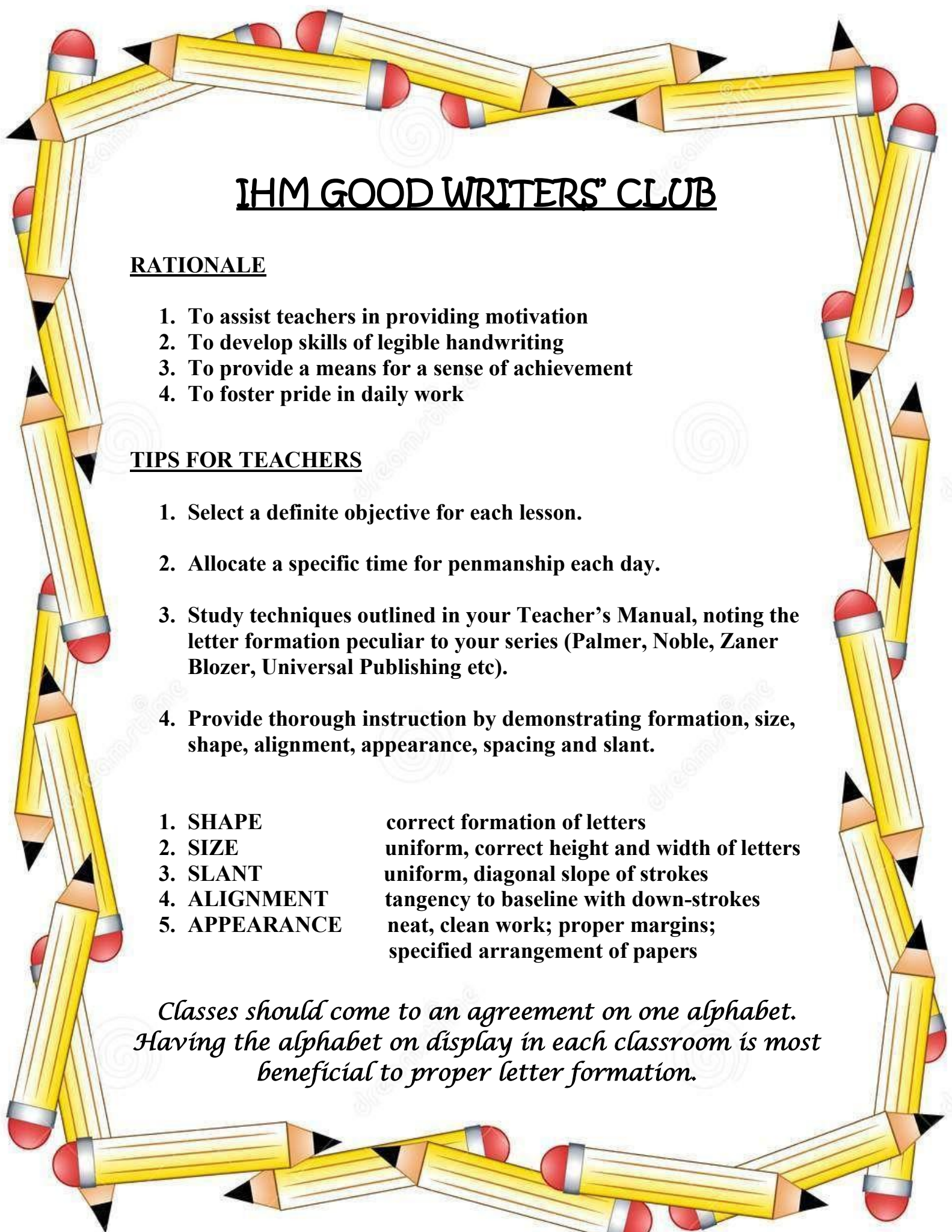
- correct letter formation
- uniform height and width of letters
- uniform slant
- proper alignment
- neat and clean work
- good margins
- a specified arrangement of papers.

Within each school, a designated evaluator could be chosen, or classroom teachers may evaluate within the grade, to choose those students who have exhibited good writing skills each month. 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 way 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 EdNotes*

A sample certificate page will also be included in each issue of the *IHM Catholic EdNotes* 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

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

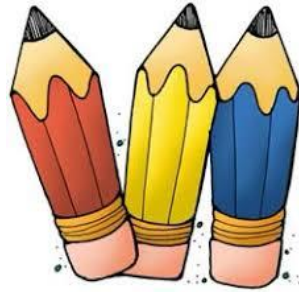
TIPS FOR TEACHERS

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.*

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)

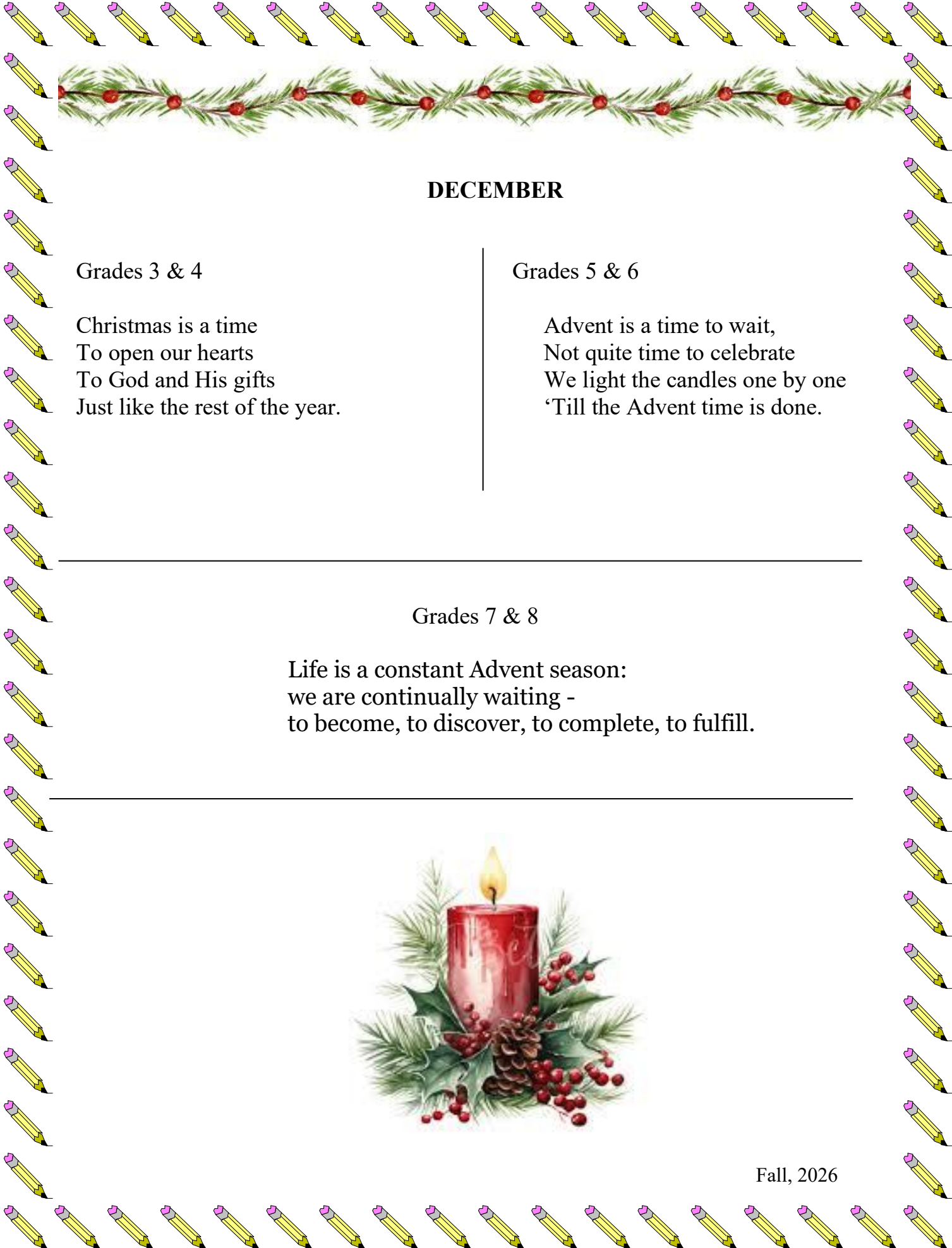
Grades 7 & 8

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, 2026

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



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has attained that level of proficiency in penmanship
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Date

Member of the official Board of Evaluators

Religion Bulletin Boards

2026-2027

Teacher Guide

Faith-Centered Bulletin Boards for the School Year

Purpose of Bulletin Boards in Catholic Education

Bulletin boards are an essential teaching tool in every classroom. When thoughtfully designed, they:

- Introduce new concepts
- Reinforce ongoing lessons
- Display student work connected to faith and academics
- Create a visually engaging environment that supports Catholic identity

Every classroom in a Catholic school or PREP program should maintain at least one bulletin board dedicated to faith formation. These boards should be updated regularly to keep students attentive and involved.

Guiding Principles for Teachers and Catechists

Effective bulletin boards should be:

- Interactive — inviting students to respond, participate, or contribute
- Educational — clearly connected to classroom instruction or faith themes
- Mission-centered — reflecting Catholic values, traditions, and current Church teaching
- Age-appropriate — accessible to the developmental level of your students

Interactive boards help students recognize that what is posted is not decoration but part of their learning and spiritual growth.

Beginning the School Year

The start of the school year is an ideal time to:

- Introduce students to key traditions in Catholic education
- Highlight concerns and teachings currently emphasized in the Church
- Review and reinforce foundational prayers students should know

This sets a strong tone for faith formation from the very first weeks of school.

Bulletin Board Themes for This Year

1. Spontaneous Prayer Methods

Students will be introduced to simple, accessible ways to pray spontaneously. Featured method: • The Five-Finger Prayer, reintroduced by Pope Francis This method helps students pray for others with clarity and compassion.

2. Traditional Prayers

Each grade level should highlight traditional prayers appropriate for student development. Boards may include:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| • The Sign of the Cross | • Act of Contrition | • Acts of |
| • Hail Mary | • Rosary parts, | Consecration |
| • Our Father | • Memorare, | • Litanies |
| • Glory Be | • Acts of Faith, Hope | • Morning Offering |
| • Prayers During Mass | and Love | • Prayer before |
| • Prayers at mealtime | • Divine Praises | Class |

Grade-level prayers

These boards help students build a strong foundation of memorized prayer as they progress through the grades. Each grade should have a special patron and should learn prayers to that patron. (e.g. Guardian angels.)

3. Teachings of Pope Leo XIV

We will introduce students to Pope Leo XIV's guidance on:

- Responsible use of technology
- Virtuous behavior on social media
- The moral responsibilities of digital citizenship

These teachings help students understand how faith shapes their choices in the digital world.

Implementation Tips

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Refresh boards monthly or bi-monthly | • Connect themes to lessons, morning prayer, and schoolwide activities |
| • Incorporate student work whenever possible | • Encourage student interaction (prompts, intentions, reflection cards) |
| • Use symbols and visuals that reinforce Catholic identity | |

Goal for the Year

By the end of this school year, students should:

- Recognize and practice spontaneous prayer methods
- Know and understand key traditional prayers
- Demonstrate awareness of Catholic teaching on technology and social media
- See bulletin boards as living parts of their faith formation

September

Teach-Participate-Reinforce



OUR CLASS PATRON

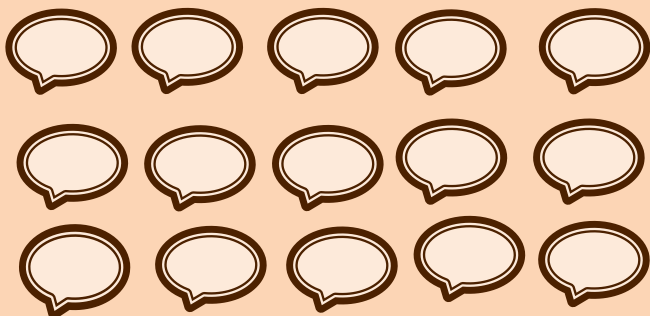
Pope Leo Teaches Us:

"Use Technology with Love!"

Be Kind Online

Be Wise With Screens

People Come First



Catholic Traditions and

Beginning-of-Year Prayers

Rollout Focus: Foundations of Catholic school traditions

Checklist:

- ☐ Display Catholic traditions
 - Class/school patron
- ☐ Post grade-level prayers
 - e.g, Confirmation class—prayer to Holy Spirit
 - • Add student prayer work
- ☐ Begin weekly intentions
- ☐ Connect board to early lessons

+++++

Digital Disciples --How to Use the Board Throughout the Month

Week 1 — Introduce Pope Leo XIV

Explain who he is and why he wrote about technology. Keep language simple and positive.

Week 2 — Teach the Three Lessons

Discuss each lesson during morning prayer or religion class.

Week 3 — Student Participation

Invite students to add their speech bubbles

Week 4 — Reinforcement

Connect the board to real classroom moments:

- Kindness during computer time
- Putting devices away when someone speaks
- Choosing good words online

Teacher Tips

- Keep explanations short and concrete.
- Use examples from students' daily routines.
- Reinforce the idea that **Jesus is with us when we use technology.**
- Encourage students to revisit the board and add new commitments.
- Tie the board into discussions about kindness, responsibility, and prayer.

October

Pause -Pray-Proceed

Theme: Prayer students can use anywhere

By engaging with this bulletin board, students will learn to:

- Recognize moments when they need to **pause** before acting
- Ask Jesus for help through a simple, spontaneous **prayer**
- Make loving, responsible choices as they **proceed**
- Connect faith to real-life situations, especially digital behavior

Invite students to add:

- **Pause slips** — moments when they need to stop
- **Prayer slips** — short prayers asking Jesus for help
- **Proceed slips** — commitments to wise choices

Students can add new slips weekly, creating a growing display of faith-centered decision-making.

Teacher Tips

- Keep explanations short and concrete.
- Model the three steps during class.
- Encourage students to use the board during morning prayer.
- Celebrate wise choices by highlighting student contributions.
- Remind students that **Jesus is with them when they make decisions.**

+++++

- Create a board explaining the Five-Finger Prayer
- Add icons for each “finger” intention
- Invite students to write intentions for each category
- Connect to Respect Life Month (optional)

Jesus Helps Us Make Wise Choices



Pause	Pray	Proceed
“I need to pause when I feel upset.”	“Jesus, help me...”	“I will proceed by putting people first.”

A FIVE-FINGER PRAYER GUIDE



November

Gratitude & Traditional Prayers



Helping Students Practice Gratitude Through Faith and Prayer

Purpose of This Bulletin Board

Rollout Focus: Thankful hearts and memorized prayer

This November bulletin board helps students recognize God's gifts. By engaging with this bulletin board, students will learn to:

- Identify people and blessings they are thankful for
- Connect gratitude to prayer using the Five-Finger Prayer
- Practice expressing thanks through words, actions, and reflection

Student Participation

Invite students to add:

- **Thankful Hands** (hand tracings with gratitude words)
- **Gratitude slips** ("Today I thank God for...")
- **Prayer intentions** for people they appreciate

Students can add new hands or slips weekly, creating a growing display of gratitude.

Week 1 — Introduce Gratitude as a Virtue

Discuss why Catholics give thanks and how gratitude reflects God's love.

Week 2 — Connect Gratitude to Prayer

Teach the Five-Finger Prayer with a focus on thanking God for people in each category.

Week 3 — Student Participation

Invite students to create their "Thankful Hands" and add them to the board.

Week 4 — Reinforcement

Use real classroom moments to revisit the board:

- Thanking classmates
- Showing appreciation to teachers
- Recognizing blessings at home



Student Worksheet: **Using Technology With Love**
Learning from Pope Leo XIV

Name: _____ Grade: _____

1. Who helps me use technology well? Circle one:

My friends

Jesus

My tablet

2 Leo XIV Teaches Us Three Big Ideas

Draw a small picture in each box to show what it means.

Be Kind Online (Draw someone using kind words on a screen.)	Be Wise With Screens (Draw someone using a timer or putting a device away.)		People Come First (Draw two people talking or playing together.)

3. My Technology Choices Check the choices that show love:

- ☐ I say kind words online
- ☐ I ignore people when I'm on a device
- ☐ I put my tablet down when someone talks to me
- ☐ I stay on screens all day
- ☐ I take breaks from screens
- ☐ I use technology to learn good things

4. Write one sentence:

"i can use technology with love when i..."

5. My Prayer

Write or trace this simple prayer:

"Jesus, help me use technology with love."

6. My Promise to Jesus



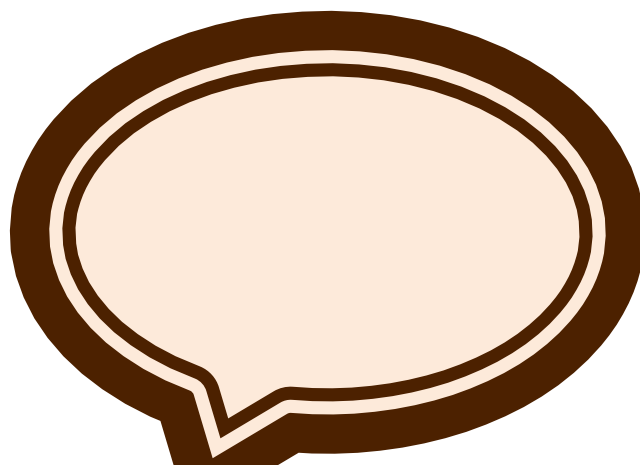
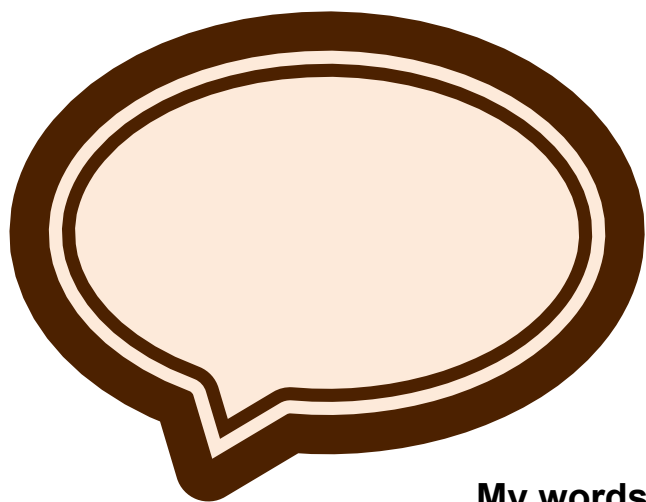
I will be kind online



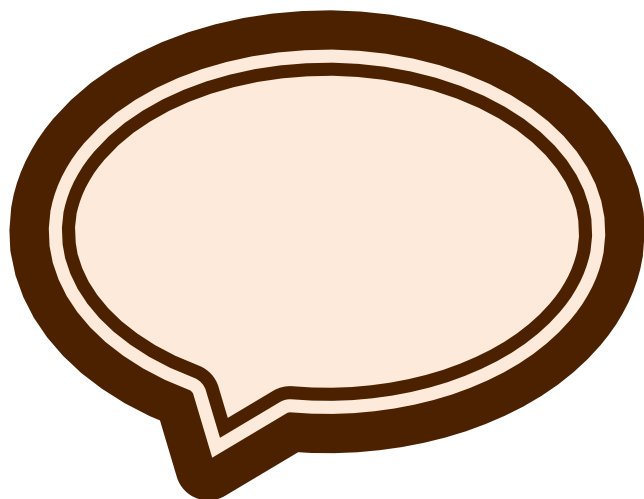
I will use screens

wisely  I will put people first

Choose one of these phrases and add it to a speech balloon to put on to the bulletin board.



My words should show love.
Screens don't control me.
Real friends matter more than devices.



Student Worksheet: *Using Technology With Love* Learning from Pope Leo

Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

1. What Should I Do First?

Circle the correct step:

PAUSE PRAY PROCEED

(Students should circle PAUSE — but let them choose first, then discuss.)

2. When Should I PAUSE?

Draw a picture of a moment when you need to stop and think before acting.

Ideas:

- When I feel upset
- When someone is unkind online
- When I want to grab my device right away



3. How Can I PRAY?

Write a short prayer asking Jesus to help you make a good choice.

“Jesus, help me...” _____

4. How Will I PROCEED?

Check the choices that show love and wisdom:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ I choose kind words online | ☐ I listen when someone talks to me |
| ☐ I put people first | ☐ I stay calm before I respond |
| ☐ I take a break from screens when needed | ☐ I use technology to learn good things |

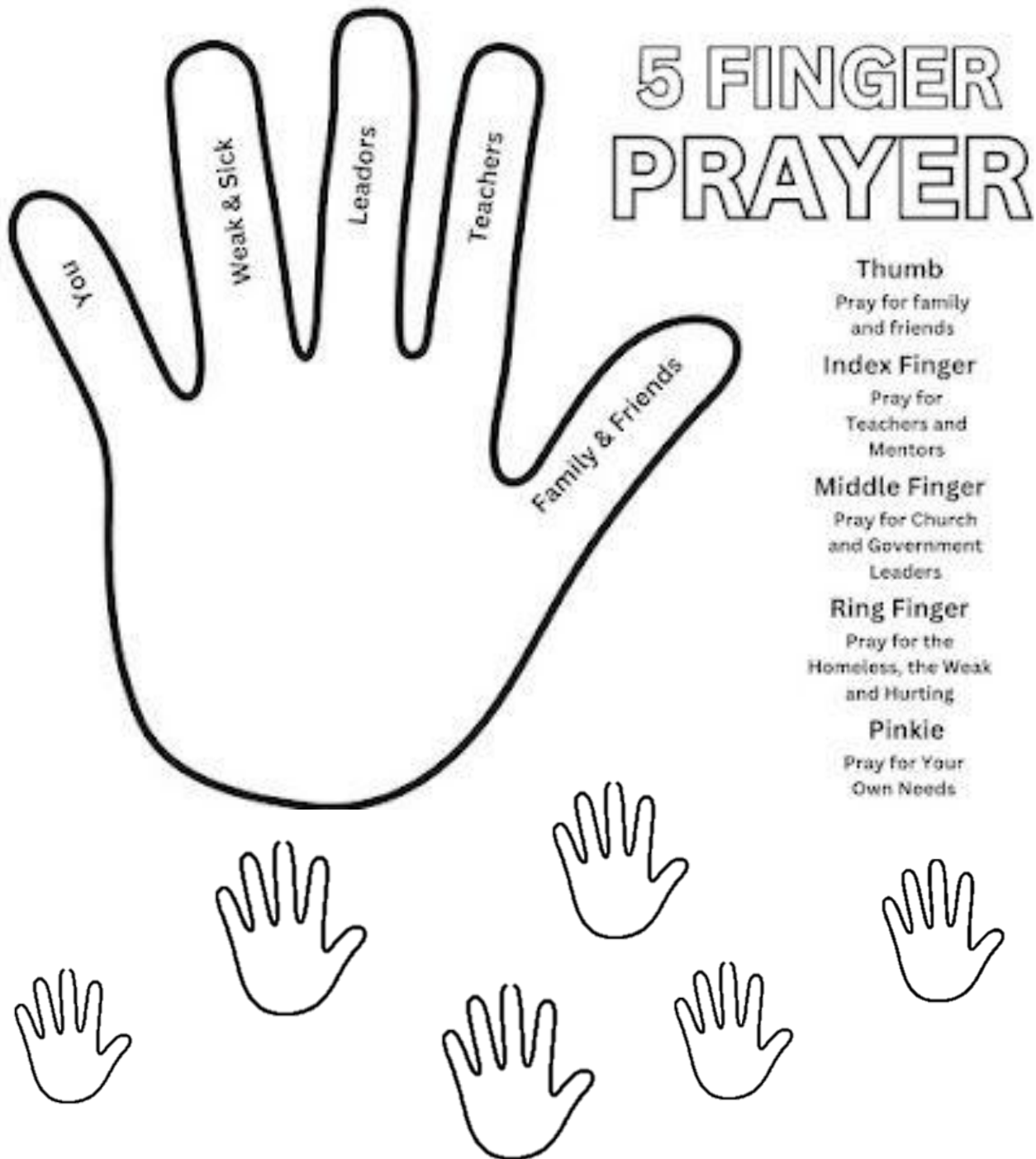
5. My October Promise

Write one sentence about how you will use technology with love this month.

6. My Prayer for October

“Jesus, help me pause, pray, and proceed with love.”

Write a prayer for each finger:



Trace your hand and cut it out. Write a phrase such as one of the following on it and place it on the bulletin board

“I thank God for...”

“I am grateful for...”

“My blessings come from God.”

Student Worksheet: **Using Technology With Love** *Learning from Pope Leo*

Giving Thanks to God

Name: _____ Grade: _____

1. Trace Your Hand

Trace your hand in the empty space below. Inside each finger, write one thing you are thankful for.

- **Thumb:** Someone who helps me
- **Index Finger:** Someone who teaches me
- **Middle Finger:** Someone who guides me
- **Ring Finger:** Someone who needs my prayers
- **Pinky Finger:** Something I need to thank God for

2. Thankful Choices

Circle the choices that show gratitude:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| • Saying “thank you” | • Ignoring kindness |
| • Complaining | • Sharing |
| • Helping someone | • Rolling my eyes |

3. My Thankful Prayer

Write a short prayer to Jesus.

“Dear Jesus, thank You for...” _____

4. My Gratitude Action

Choose one way you will show gratitude today. Write or draw it in the box.



5. Scripture Copywork

Copy or trace this verse:

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” — Psalm 107:1

6. My Gratitude Promise
