



Monthly Messenger – September 2021

Monthly Newsletter from the Secretary of Elementary Education



Message from Dr. Andrew McLaughlin

Dear Catholic School Educators,

As we begin a new school year, we thank God for you. In the midst of a time of many challenges and uncertainties, you have accepted the call to minister to a generation of students who need so much to experience the love of God. In their young lives so many children have experienced violence, hatred, loneliness, and seen examples of poor moral values. Some do not know how to reach out in kindness to others. Their world has been one that does not always focus on what is true. In your classrooms this year, you will have the opportunity to be for them a role model who gives them the example of faith, hope and love.

We are once again opening our school year with a firm resolution to do the very best that we can do for our students. There will always be those who disagree with our methods and beliefs, and there will be times when we, ourselves, do not agree with what we are asked to do. However, through all of it we are called to be "instruments of God's peace." It is so important that we model for our students what is right. There will be times when we need to step back and ask ourselves "What Would Jesus Do?" I am sure He would be patient, kind and caring.

Jesus would also want us to teach these same virtues to our students. In recent times we have been faced with many social challenges that need to be addressed from a perspective of faith. In each of this year's *Monthly Messengers*, we will be providing you with ideas for presenting the Principles of Catholic Social Justice to your students. We ask you to take some time each month to share them with your students. Help us to help them build a better future for everyone.

Each *Monthly Messenger* will also include ideas for incorporating some new and on-going initiatives that will be incorporated into our curriculum and instructional practices, including STREAM, Inclusion, Flexible Scheduling, Career Awareness, Interdisciplinary Learning and the Fine Arts. We are inviting you to see things from a new perspective as we prepare our students for new horizons.

Once again, we thank you for accepting the call to participate in the mission of Catholic Education. Let us put the challenges of the past year behind us and begin this new year on a positive note with an emphasis on **faith, hope** and **love**, and recalling for ourselves and our students the words of St. Paul who emphasized, ***"The greatest of these is LOVE!"***

God bless you.

Dr. Andrew McLaughlin
Secretary of Elementary Education

Upcoming Events

- Sept 7 - Faculty Organizational Day
- Sept 8 - Opening of School
- Sept 10 - Online Honors Math Assessments Registration Due
- Sept 13 - Start of EADP
- Sept 15 - Start Compiling NCEA Report and Update Student Information System
- Sept 21 - Middle States Meeting
- Sept 24 - All Beginning of School Year Documents Due
- Upcoming in September and October
 - Mentor Zoom Meetings
 - STREAM Professional Development
 - Math Integration Workshops

Catholic Social Teaching

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free.” Luke 4:18

Focus on: Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic social teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of human life and human dignity. Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family. Every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity. Human dignity comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment. (USCCB)

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The principle, **Life and Dignity of the Human Person**, is one of the seven themes of Catholic social teaching (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops). We believe that God created man and woman in his image (Genesis 1:26–27) and because of this all people have inherent dignity. There is nothing anyone can do to gain or take away their human dignity, since it is God given, not earned.

Because of this, we believe that every life is sacred and that no life—born or unborn—is disposable. All of the principles of Catholic social teaching flow from the core belief that every person has inherent dignity that must be respected.

[Lesson Plans and worksheets](#) for every level are provided on the Catholic Relief Services web site. The lesson plans help explain the principle through the story about Than, a young woman with disabilities in Vietnam.

Color the World with Justice - Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

- [Catholic Social Teaching Coloring Book](#)
- [Catholic Social Teaching Coloring Book Instructions](#)
- [Super Hero of Justice](#) - Interactive Activity (K - 3rd Grade)

Social Teaching for Children

These downloadable handouts and posters feature the USCCB's seven themes of Catholic social teaching, with images courtesy of Br. Mickey McGrath, OSFS:

<https://www.crs.org/resource-center/CST-101>

the seven themes of CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING for children

- 1 God made each person, so every life is important and should be protected.
- 2 God made us to be part of communities, families and countries, so all people can share and help each other.
- 3 God wants us to help make sure everyone is safe and healthy and can have a good life.
- 4 God wants us to help people who are poor, who don't have enough food, a safe place to live, or a community.
- 5 Work is important in God's plan for adults and their families, so jobs and pay should be fair.
- 6 God made everyone, so we are all brothers and sisters in God's family wherever we live.
- 7 The world was made by God, so we take care of all creation.

These themes are based on United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Evangelical Social Teaching: Guidelines and Examples*, 2010. Copyright © 2010 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. All rights reserved. Photos courtesy of Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS.

The Two Feet of Love in Action

"The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of justice and charity in society."
—*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 83

"Social justice... concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions."
—*Compendium*, no. 201

"To [those who lack what they need to live a dignified life] are proclaimed glad tidings that God loves them...and comes to visit them through the charitable works that the disciples of Christ do in his name... As we can read in Matthew 25, we shall all be judged on this."
—*Pope Francis, Address to Pastoral Convention*, 6/17/13



The Two Feet of Love in Action

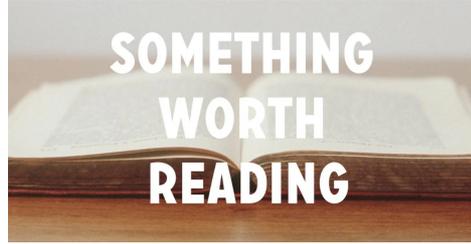
From the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: *Catholic disciples on mission are called to put Two Feet of Love in Action! This foundational tool describes two distinct, but complementary, ways we can put the Gospel in action in response to God's love: social justice (addressing systemic, root causes of problems that affect many people) and charitable works (short-term, emergency assistance for individuals).*



Fine Arts

With the release of the [National Core Arts Standards](#), we will be seeing some changes in how the arts are incorporated into the curriculum. The fine arts incorporate Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theater and Visual Arts. We will be moving from isolated Art and Music curricula to the integration of the arts in other areas. For example, our Phys. Ed. Committee has been looking for ways to bring Dance into their programs. Aspects of theater blend with the ELA curriculum. (Speaking and Listening) We will be looking for teachers to assist in these endeavors.

- [10 First-Week Mistakes You Must Avoid This Year](#) from *The Religion Teacher*
- [No Permission Required Bringing STEAM to Life in K-12 Schools](#) by Susan Riley



(A copy of this book was given to the principals who were present at the August meeting. It is also available on Amazon.)



Prayers During the School Day

At the beginning of the school year, it is good to review with the students the prayers that should be incorporated into the school day:

- **Beginning of the school day**—Morning Offering, Apostles Creed, Prayers for Special Intentions, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be
- **Before Lunch**—Grace Before Meals, the Angelus/Regina Coeli
- **After Lunch**—Grace After Meals, Acts of Faith, Hope and Love
- **At the End of the Day** - Guardian Angel Prayer, Act of Contrition
- **During the Day**—(Blessing the Hour, Change of Class)

Time Schedules

At the beginning of the new school year we often hear concerns about trying to “fit everything in.” In working with your schedules, there is sometimes a need to be flexible. There are two important things to keep in mind:

1. In a Catholic School, Religion is to be taught every day.
2. It is not as important to fit in the number of minutes as it is to allow the time to cover the content. It is OK to be flexible. For example, if you have a class that does very well in ELA, but not as well in Math/Science, it is OK to give a few extra minutes to Math/Science.

Blessing the Hour

This is an old, but powerful, tradition in Catholic Schools. Students took turns being the “clock watcher” for the day. When the minute

hand reached 12, they raised their hand and announced, "It is time to Bless the Hour!"

The student/teacher said, "*Let us remember the holy presence of God.*"

All responded. "*Let us adore His Divine Majesty. Glory be. . .*"

Prayer Before Class

In the upper grades, students should pray at the beginning of a new class. A prayer that could be used, based on the Direction of Intention is:

Dear God, I give you this class. I offer you now all of the good that I shall do. I promise to accept, for the love of You, all of the difficulty that I shall meet. Help me to conduct myself during this class in a manner pleasing to you. Amen.

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

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