



November 2021

Dear Families,

The end of October and beginning of November is often the start of the “holiday season.” For many parents, this is a time of tremendous stress, as you scramble to complete Halloween activities, prepare for family gatherings, and squirrel away the coveted Christmas gifts. This time of year, can be very secular in nature and while that should not be the focus, it is difficult to avoid getting caught up in the frenzy of toy lists and Instagram expectations.

The month of November provides us two focal points to center ourselves in gratitude, All Saints Day and Thanksgiving. We begin the month with All Saints Day on November 1st. During this celebration, the Catholic Church recognizes the saints who have come before us, as well as the saints who are not yet known to us. All Saints Day is a multi-faceted opportunity to share stories of the saints with your child, but also to remind them about the humanity of the saints. The saints are often viewed as holy, almost to the point of being inaccessible.

One of the greatest lessons we can learn from the saints is that they were ordinary people who were blessed with extraordinary faith. Children can see this in the actions of Blessed Carlos. While he has not yet achieved sainthood, his actions remind us that anyone can be blessed along the path to sainthood and a relationship with God should be our constant goal. By studying the saints, we remind our children to be grateful for all the individuals who provide us with the example of living our faith. I encourage you to take time this month and read about the saints with your child. A short passage can be coupled with a discussion for even the youngest learners. *How did this saint show their faith? How did this saint show gratitude? What can this saint teach us about living a faithful life?*

The conversation of faith and the saints can be a continuous reminder through the month of November about the practice of gratitude leading to the celebration of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is often watered down to a single day or less and rarely encompasses a true sense of gratitude. In the wake of a long-term pandemic, there is a great sense of fatigue and despair in the world. Our faith reminds us that God’s presence in all things provides us strength and hope if we seek it. Activities such as offering a family prayer of gratitude each day or creating a “gratitude tree” throughout the month of November provide the opportunity for families to share in the daily expression of gratitude. In doing this, you are modeling a positive approach to seeing the world as well as cultivating a relationship with God that is built upon the understanding that He is the provider of all our needs.

In this season of gratitude, I pause and consider the importance of the families that create our school communities. Your commitment to the faith and educating your child in a faith-filled environment is vital to the sustainability of schools and parishes. It is through the parents and families that children embark on a rich and vibrant faith journey. I thank you for your continued presence in our school communities, understanding the choices and sacrifices that are made to partake in a Catholic education.



May you and your family enjoy a blessed Thanksgiving, filled with the abundance provided from our Creator. Take the time to reflect on the greatest blessings of children, family, and friends.

In Christ,

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