



Saint Maria Goretti

Est. 1954

Catholic School

February 1, 2021

Dear SMGCS Families,

Today we met (virtually via Google Meets) for our February Faith Families assembly! Our focus this month is the virtue of Prudence.

In our whole group virtual session, we learned the meaning of prudence – making good decisions in specific circumstances. Prudence helps us to decide what is best to do in certain situations and is one of the four cardinal virtues. We also discussed other words for prudence including, discretion, diligence, foresight, tact, vigilance, and wisdom; and some thoughts on the virtue of prudence from St. Faustina, St. Augustine, and St. Francis de Sales. I also shared that the virtue of prudence traditionally has been depicted by a figure of a teacher, denoting wisdom.

We then discussed three saints who especially emulate the virtue of prudence: St. Junipero Serra, a Franciscan friar most well-known for founding the California missions. He was from Spain and he was a teacher of philosophy in Spain and Mexico in the 1740s. In 1768, Serra became head of the missionaries in Baja California, and started the first and only Franciscan mission there. He also started the first Spanish mission in Alta California. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1988 and canonized in 2015 by Pope Francis.

St. John Neumann was born in Bohemia in 1811. He tried becoming a priest but was rejected due to an overage of ordinations in Europe. A bishop in NY accepted him and assigned him to western New York state. He spent most of his time traveling village to village visiting the sick, teaching and celebrating Mass. As bishop of Philadelphia, he founded the first Diocesan Catholic school. He also increased the number of schools in the diocese from 2 to 100.

St. Pope John XXIII was born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli in Italy in 1881. Ordained a priest in 1904 and became the 262 Pope in 1958. He was loved throughout the world and nicknamed “the good pope” for having such a good sense of humor about himself (for instance, he said the men who carried him in procession should get a bigger salary because they were carrying a bigger pope) and for his deep kindness and care for others throughout the world. In 1962 he opened the Second Vatican Council, a gathering of bishops from around the world, because he recognized the changing situation of the modern world and the need for the Church to bring the light of the Gospel to bear on all of humanity’s needs.

We concluded our Faith Families (Virtual) Assembly with a special presentation from our Ballet Folklorico dancers, who were excited to be able to share all of their hard work and talent with us. Great work!

Students continued the lesson and discussion in their homeroom Faith Family groups, where teachers reviewed the virtue of prudence and presented the Faith Families service project that included a special collection for the Sisters of St. Mary Namur, who opened St. Maria Goretti Catholic School almost 66 years ago! Students created spiritual bouquets and wrote "Happy Notes" for the sisters, which we will deliver to the convent along with the generous grocery store gift cards donated by several of our school families. Faith Families concluded by praying the Faith Families prayer together.

Also this morning as we began Catholic Schools Week, Fr. Jim visited each classroom offering a special blessing - an ancient custom using blessed chalk on the classroom doors and building entrances to write 20 + C + M + B + 21 - asking the Magi: Casper, Melchior, and Balthazar for their intercession throughout the year, 2021. C + M + B is also Latin for the phrase "Christus mansionem benedicat," or, "Christ, bless this house."

It is our hope that the children continue to reflect on the blessing of our Catholic school and Catholic education, as well as the virtue of prudence and the many ways practicing this virtue helps us to make the good decisions God wants us to make in our lives.

Blessings,

Laura Behee, M.Ed.
Principal