

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

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Remembering 911



“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” John 13:34

Last weekend, we remembered a solemn time in our nation's history. The events of September 11, 2001 will forever be etched in our minds and hearts. I don't think that the magnitude of the loss and sacrifice has diminished in the 20 years since this tragic day. This past week, I came across a reflective comment online that offered a perspective which really left an impression. The author of the comment acknowledged the horror of the day and how most people could recall exactly where they were when they heard the news. Many also could recall how they felt. As I read on, the author suggested that it was also very important to remember how we felt on September 12, 2001. For most, there was not only a deep sadness over the death and destruction, but also a strong sense of patriotism and urge to come together to help one another. There were countless stories that emerged of bravery, sacrifice, and selflessness. We watched and heard on the news how people rallied to lift each other up mentally, emotionally, and physically. Although there was devastating grief there were also the sparks of hope that we would stand by each other and persevere. On that day and those that followed, so many bore witness to the commandment to love one another. So many became rays of light for their neighbor and offered comfort, care, and compassion. It didn't matter who you

were, where you came from, or what your differences were; it didn't matter the color of your skin, your political beliefs, or what you did for a living. At that time, you were someone just trying to help your neighbor cope and move forward.

At preschool many of our classes, recognized Patriot Day in some way. While our teachers would not and should not go into details about the meaning behind the day, they certainly can use it as an opportunity to reinforce other concepts



and lessons, particularly related to a life following Jesus. I have often written about how beautifully our teachers interweave God's message of love throughout the day. Honoring the spirit of Patriot Day was no exception. Part of that spirit

involves not only being the member of a national family, but also remembering to extend care and kindness to those around you. To show our spirit, pride, and unity, everyone dressed in red, white, and blue. Both of our two year old classes enthusiastically waved tiny flags in a parade. One of our older classes made a patriotic "friendship quilt" and donated it to a local fire department. There was an abundance of red, white, and blue stars & stripes art projects and even some fun songs. It truly was special to see so much excitement!

The sadness of the events of 9/11 will always be part of our country's history. My prayer, however, is that the memory of the following day, the day when everyone united under a common mission of triumphing over tragedy, comforting strangers, and offering acts of unimaginable kindness ultimately becomes more powerful than the grief. I hope and pray that I always remember the example of our preschoolers in being happy to include and care for all in my extended family!

To learn more about becoming part of our preschool family and the opportunities we provide, please visit our website at www.preschoolatstfrancis.com or contact Shelley Freeman at: shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org.