



ELEMENTARY COMMUNICATION

March 27, 2020

Dear Elementary Parents,

Another week has passed, and I am sure we have all learned something new! As parents, I would imagine you have had to learn a new math concept, had to learn to navigate Google Classroom, or had to figure out how long your child can remain engaged in a learning activity before a shift is needed. As teachers, we have had to learn about many new technologies, how to connect with our students when we can't be face-to-face, and how to keep the momentum of learning going. These are definitely interesting times.

We can take our new learnings in so many ways. Earlier this week when the sun hid behind the clouds and the temperature dropped, I had a few conversations related to the weather change that really drew my attention to the fragile state for which many are finding themselves. One article I read talked about how we are experiencing a form of grief as we navigate new restrictions and realities. My note today, I hope, sends you an uplifting message. This will not last forever. Take those learning moments and see them as opportunities - above all, the opportunity to spend time with your children in ways you may never have thought of before. As the weather improves, put a smile on your children's faces, ditch the math lesson and go for a walk! (Don't tell my teachers I said that!) Over the years, I have tried to make a practice of stopping throughout the day to just breathe and pray; it is in those moments of quiet that I have learned to let God in and relax my grip on the need to control things. I am finding right now, I need that more than ever. It isn't easy when we have so much on our plates, but it does help. I offer you this in case it might help you too.

From an academic perspective, I cannot emphasize enough - please just do what you can. We are here to partner with you. Your family's health and well-being are our first priority. When we are back to the long commutes, after-school activities, and list of "to do's," your teachers will take back the bulk of the learning responsibilities. We will get the children settled. We will do a plethora of diagnostic assessments, and then, we will do what we do best: we will love your children, we will teach them starting from where they are, and we will move them forward. Currently, we are working to find a good, manageable balance for those who want more activities, lessons, and academic work and for those who want less. Our teachers will continue to provide you with opportunities for learning. Have patience with them. They too are trying to manage the challenges of their work and home lives. We will continue to refine our practices and look for ways to make things even better. It is so important that you are letting them know, in the manner of Goldilocks, "*Is it too little, too much, or just right.*" We will get all three responses, but it will help your teachers get a sense of their group of learners and how they should be responding.

Many blessings to you all! Please be in touch if you need anything.

Sincerely in Christ,

Lori Blais
Director, Education and Formation - Elementary