

The Weekly Newsletter of Mr. Courchane, SJE
September 25, 2020
Together in God's Name!

Dear Parents and Students:

In an educational year unlike any other, we have almost made it through an entire month. I have been happy with how the 8th grade has accepted their leadership role in the school. Their first mass went well. They have led the Monday morning prayer service. They model correct behavior in the hallways; most of the time. So far, so good.

I have been trying to incorporate Google Classrooms into my teaching more and more. There are two main points I should make about this. First, students should check their school Gmail daily. It is there that they will see notifications about items being posted in Classrooms.

Second, some items will be put in the class "Stream." In Stream I will make a note almost daily of the pages we covered in class, homework, etc. If an assignment is listed there and nowhere else, it is a formative assignment. Yes, it needs to be done. It may or may not be graded. But it is necessary for learning. In "Classwork" students will see assignments that are graded. When an assignment is there, students need to view it and either complete the attached assignment (maybe a worksheet, quiz, and so forth) and turn it in via classroom, or do the assignment elsewhere (such as a lab write-up, a poster, or other items that cannot be attached electronically) and click "done" when the assignment is done. Either way I can then offer feedback either by written comments, communicating a score, or both.

This past Tuesday, September 22, was National Hobbit Day. It is the birthday of both Frodo and Bilbo Baggins, fictional characters, hobbits, in J.R.R. Tolkien's classic tales of Middle-earth; [The Hobbit](#) and [The Lord of the Rings](#). Tolkien was a devout Catholic whose faith influenced his writings and all aspects of his life. I enjoy reading Tolkien because of his beautiful and comprehensive grasp of the English language, but also to reflect on his themes of good, evil, morality, and truth. I first read the Hobbit in third grade after my teacher read a chapter of the book out loud to my class. We never did a test or homework on that book, but few assignments or class activities had as great an impact on me as did that chapter of a book read for pleasure. Learning can occur many ways, even if it is not "graded."

Have a wonderful weekend.

Sincerely,

Mr. Courchane

8th Grade Homeroom
7th/ 8th Grade Religion
Grade 5-8 Science



"Autumn... the year's last, loveliest smile." - William Cullen Bryant