



Faces of Faith



Leading By Example: Catholic Social Teachings

On February 15th a few faculty and staff members of our St. Gregory the Great community put on our "Faces of Faith" and were "called to serve" lunch at the Open Door Café at The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. It was a good way to live out our Lenten promise to give to others and open our eyes to those in need of love and care.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person in Literature

The Fourth Graders' latest read aloud book is *The Man with the Red Bag* by Eve Bunting. Readers are led to believe that the man of Mideastern descent carrying the red tour bag with him everywhere he goes is hiding a bomb. Most of the story characters, who are other travelers on the bus tour of several western states, are rude, scared, and suspicious until the end of the book when he reveals that his father was a first responder on 9/11 who died trying to help others. The man was taking his dad's firefighting boots to bury at the base of Mount Rushmore because that was a place his father had thought of as a special symbol of our country and had always wanted to visit.

Students participated in discussions related to the importance of not being too quick to judge others, particularly solely based on their appearance. Written reflections provided time for students to think about their own actions when they have encountered someone who appears to be different in some way. Writings also revealed insights learned about appreciating what others value as precious or private and reviewed respecting all people, and their property, even though it may be difficult.

Student to Student: A Catholic School Response for Hurricane Relief

Our hearts and prayers were with Catholic schools and all those affected by Hurricane Harvey & Irma this past fall. St. Gregory the Great Parish School supported the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) who launched a campaign asking every Catholic school family around the country to contribute at least \$1 per student to help Catholic schools impacted by the storm to rebuild, reopen and reenroll students.

St. Greg's participation in "Student to Student: A Catholic School Response for Hurricane Relief 2017" was a powerful opportunity for our students to engage in living the Gospel message of compassionate service to others. We were able to contribute over \$500 to the student victims whose lives were turned upside down by the hurricane disaster.



Student to Student
A Catholic School Response
for Hurricane Relief 2017



Solidarity, Life and Dignity of the Human Person, and Care for Creation

Eighth grade students felt deep sympathy for the victims of the mass shooting that happened last month in a Florida high school. As a result, many of them took the initiative to participate in the nationwide walkout on March 14 at 10:00 am. We allowed the students to take part in this movement as part of our Catholic Social Teaching curriculum.

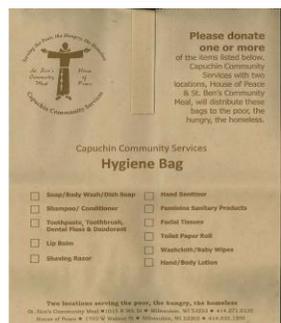
The students wrote an action plan for the event. When 10:00 struck, we walked in a line to the northwest entrance of the building. We then formed a circle around the flagpole. A student read her self-written introduction. We then engaged in silent prayer in honor of the victims who lost their lives during the tragic event. After silent prayer, students read the names of and a brief bit of information about each of the victims of the Florida school shooting. We then joined in Popcorn Prayer. At the end of the seventeen minutes, a student read a closing to the ceremony.

The reasons why students wished to participate in this walk out are two-fold. First: they feel that as a Catholic school, we have the responsibility to pray for those in need. Second: many students felt the need to advocate for the safety and the well-being of all schoolchildren in America. They used this as a time for prayer, reflection, and an opportunity to advocate for school safety to be a priority in our country. They stood in solidarity with those who suffer. I am very proud of our students for taking an initiative to plan and be part of this movement!

Ms. Julie Sostre - 7th Grade Teacher

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

During Catholic Schools Week the students at St. Greg's participated in a service project called the Capuchin Hygiene Bag Drive. We were able to assemble 39 bags filled with toiletry items that will be given out to the homeless at St. Bens and the House of Peace. The extra toiletry items were sent to the Capuchins and will be used to fill additional hygiene bags. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.



Faces of Faith



Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

One of the many areas of focus we have in 8th grade is looking deeper at our Catholic Social Teachings. One of the teachings that we focused on this year was the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers. This year, we had the privilege of learning about the work and workers in Nicaragua. We had a spirited discussion about how hard work makes us feel like we have a purpose. Many of the students were able to relate so many things they learned about the Nicaraguan people to their own families. The connections they made really help them understand the global importance. After, many of the students came up with a variety of ways that they could work to respect the rights of workers, promote the dignity of work, and wrote prayers asking God to guide all people to find the same respect for the Human worker.

Dear Lord,
Everyone deserves the right to work. No matter what background they come from.
We should not be biased towards race, religion, or wealth.

We as Christians should help those who don't believe they have human rights.

Help them also directly, Lord, to find work and the path to work.

Antonis Ybarra, 8th Grade

Dear God,

Human dignity is when someone or a group of people have self-respect, self-worth, and the right to work.

Please help those who are being prohibited from work.

Help them be strong and push through all the people who say they can't do it. All people have the right to work.

No matter what race, where you are from, or how you look, where you stand economically or spiritually. Give them the strength, power, mentality, and hope for what they want. Thank you, God, for the opportunity we have here in the USA! Amen.

Guadalupe Manuel Hernandez, 8th Grade

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

The K5 friends talked about our rights and responsibilities as members of a Catholic community. We took time to explore the story of the Good Samaritan and looked at the actions of the individuals of the story. We talked about those who made good, Godly choices and those who did not show love for their neighbor. We then reflected on a time that we showed compassion for our neighbor. We then reflected on a time that we showed compassion for our neighbor. K5 friends then wrote and illustrated to share these events with their peers. Some of these examples included helping parents take care of siblings, holding the door open for others, helping carry in the groceries without being asked, and helping a family member feel better when they were ill. The children enjoyed sharing these special moments with their peers and teachers.



A Good Citizen of the Community

In 1st grade we spent part of our year focusing on the Catholic Social Teaching Rights and Responsibilities. We spent the beginning of our year focusing on what it means to be part of a community and what our rights and responsibilities are to be a good citizen. We not only came up with some good responsibilities for good citizens in our community but we also came up with some responsibilities for us to be good citizens in our classroom. Here are a few that we came up with!



Caring for God's Creation

In third grade we focus on Caring for God's Creation. We learn about plants and animals in science. We learn about what they need to grow and live. We talk about ways we can help take care of plants and animals. We learn that pollution affects plants and that animals sometimes eat garbage that people leave on the ground and can get sick. One of the ways we act out this Catholic Social Teaching is by being the "Cleanup Crew" of our school. In fall and spring we walk around the outside of our school and clean up any garbage we see. We want to make sure we are truly Caring for God's Creation.