

# PARENTS FIRST

MONTHLY BULLETIN FOR PARENTS OF SOUTHRIDGE SCHOOL



## ROAD TO NORMALIZATION

**P A R E F**  
Southridge



**VIRILITER AGITE**

For the past two years, the whole PAREF Southridge community has proven how tough and resilient it can be. We have hurdled the demands of online learning, and even developed new habits that can play an important role in our lives. But nothing beats actually being in school, so slowly, we have been trying to go back. Southridge has encouraged some on site activities when alert levels allow it, so there has been activities last December and since February of this year. Activities such as play dates, varsity practices, school tours, some religious activities, varsity practices, and other small group, more manageable, and safer activities have been held on site. As the school prepares for “FLEX ONLINE” for school year 2022 to 2023, the Southridge community has been making sure that a safe and welcoming environment can be ready when the gates of Southridge open again for the Admirals.



## ***HE SAID. SHE SAID: Random Thoughts on Grit, Growth & Gratitude***

**by Mitch and Marita Gomez | Grade 9 Parents**

**Mitch & Marita:** Truth be told, we had not planned on going to our 3rd Parents' Forum. It had been a long week and we wanted to exhale. Having been Southridge parents for the last nine years (maybe more if one includes Ridgefield or has older Paref kids), and faithfully going to every single talk over the years, we thought we could pass up on this one.

**Marita:** But sometimes, you come across a speaker who actually walks the talk. After Mr. Encabo briefly and matter-of-factly shared his childhood experience and how his dad had made sure he and his sister finished school no matter what, I could not focus on the rest of the talk. Instead, I thought about how it must be like to have him as a teacher, since he would know what character traits to cultivate in his students, what challenges would break them, or what would make them grow. When they do break, he could tell them stories about how he hurdled hardships growing up and then encourage them to just keep going. And they will listen to his testimony of grit, which made me wish I had.

**Mitch:** I was also impressed that Southridge had someone like Mr. Encabo, who for sure, isn't the only teacher in school who has an amazing life experience. But to me, he probably stood out because I did not sense any hesitation in his storytelling. More importantly, I was struck at how he attributed a huge part of his success to his father.

**Marita:** Mr. Encabo also asked us to reflect on our own experience with our Grade 9 boys during the pandemic. A parent mentioned that they became closer to their son because he was able to talk about things he normally would not if he were in school with his friends. Mr. Encabo encouraged all of us to keep having conversations with our sons, and said we should allow our children "to see our weaknesses too." I found this quite refreshing because it was the first time I was hearing these things. I could almost feel neurons firing up in my brain.

**Mitch:** I started imagining how it would be like if our teen boys were engaged in open discussions with their teachers and parents. They would probably not hesitate to speak their minds nor be afraid to be judged for how they think. They might grow more from a healthy exchange of perspectives, rather than fold up and just vent their angst during virtual war games.

**Mitch & Marita:** There was a lot to reflect on and discuss with each other, just like in the good old days of NPEP, Middle Childhood and Teen Parenting. We ended up leaving the last Parents' Forum of the schoolyear feeling humbled and grateful we attended. Indeed, God allows us to hear what we need to learn even if we think we have heard it all before. Thank you, Southridge!





## Overcoming Obstacles with Grit & Independence

by Jojo & Josine Ignacio | Grade 9 Parents

Grit plus resilience equals independence and adaptability. During this new normal, specifically Online Distance Learning (ODL), I can happily say that the Grade 9 boys have displayed a strength of character and perseverance. They had to become even more independent as they had to navigate through the difficulties of ODL on their own.

They had to maintain their attention onscreen for a whole day and submit all tasks on time on asynchronous days. They also had to invest more time and effort in their self-study as online lessons are sometimes not enough. At first, most of them had to struggle, but because of grit, they learned how to manage their time well, engage with others for group work, and even not give in to the temptations of online gaming.

The social aspect was greatly affected, but they could adapt and even form their small groups of friends who would support and help each other. Indeed, we can be proud of the boys who have coped well, showing their independence and adaptability at the times when it counts the most. Bravo Grade 9!



## Love In The Time Of “Corona”

by Ellen Mortiz | Grade 9 Parent

On our second year of lockdown and online classes, we have seen our children grow (literally and figuratively) before our very eyes. Being cooped up at home with only us, parents and siblings to physically interact with, our “zoomers” may be feeling they are missing out on so many things that are out there. We’ve been hearing the words “grit” and “resilience” in this time of pandemic. I think this historical period we are in now could just be the best time to teach our children develop grit and practice resilience!

Home is where we first learn about things, and parents are the first teachers of their children. It may be a cliché, but it is true no matter how old our children get. Our actions speak much louder than our words. We are being watched... by our children. How we handle things can influence them and how we react to situations affects them. More than the learning from home setup, we can impart many learnings at home. Being with them 24/7 gave us so many “teachable moments”.

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For one, our own “House Rules” have been revisited and carefully implemented. The house chores that we assigned our children have been closely monitored. Doing chores reinforced the values of obedience, hard work and being mindful of their responsibilities. Our rule of “no gadgets at meal times” makes them appreciate the company of each member of the family and to really be there in the moment. The time spent at home made us more creative in thinking of activities that we can bond over and really enjoy as a family.

Online classes helped our children to manage their time better. They were able to work more independently. They found ways to be creative and resourceful with what they have. They faced challenges and viewed them as temporary hurdles, that with perseverance and fortitude, they can eventually overcome. With parental support always available, they were motivated and encouraged to carry on even through this trying time.

Looking at the positive (pun intended) side of this Covid pandemic, I could say that spending the lockdown at home with our children could so far be the best last 2 years for us. It gave us a chance to get to know our children more, it gave us more than enough time to really be with them and appreciate them for what they are and who they have become.

Our bonding activities helped us discover their interests as they are growing up. It made us see how they were able to adapt, thrive and even excel in this new normal. And most importantly, it made us admire how special and unique they are in their own way.

As parents, we would look at our children now with so much (more) love, appreciation, and gratitude for being the greatest gift that we have been blessed with.

***“Online classes helped our children to manage their time better. They were able to work more independently. They found ways to be creative and resourceful with what they have”***



## ***Kuya Tips***

**by Toto Tansingco | Grade 12 Parent**

Our Batch 2022 had our last Parents Forum (PF) – “Passionately Principled and Firmly Founded” -- last March 12, with both the parents AND students in attendance. And what a rousing last PF it was for our batch!

Mr. Paul Cheng excellently moderated the panel discussion, with six Southridge alumni speakers who are now in college : Kyle Reiner Pineda (from UA&P), Javi del Mundo (from Ateneo), Lem Budomo (from UST), Tobit Casillano (from UP), Luigi Cathedral (from DLSU) and Em Meer (from Fordham University).

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When we parents thought that we have heard it all through the many talks on parenting we've attended, in this talk we heard so much more! The six exceptional young men generously shared with us their experiences and imparted so many valuable learnings about college and life beyond Southridge. Some of these learning are captured here.

**FACE TO FACE VS ONLINE LEARNING :**

To the students : Learning face to face vs online are totally different experiences. College on campus puts you in situations you may not be familiar with, but this is what makes you learn and adapt. With online learning, you may be missing out on experiences and adventures, since everything -- even meeting others and becoming friends, and org events – is now online.

But even with online learning, it is important for you to continue doing things with friends and block mates. You cannot underestimate the importance of community, of going through experiences with others. Knowing that you have someone going through the same experiences with you is so important.

To the parents : Family support is very important. With online learning, your son is cooped up in his room the whole day. So he will appreciate seeing family members during dinner. This supportive and relaxing family atmosphere will help him cope with challenges he may face.

**BALANCING ACADS VS LAKADS (STUDIES VS EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES) :**

To the students : Young people really want it all and will try to make it work. But you will realize that you cannot have it all, and will have to decide what extra-curricular activities and clubs/organizations will stay and what have to go. Know yourself, your capabilities and limitations, your time and workload, to be able to set your priorities. At the end of the day, even if you want to devote more time to extra-curriculars and orgs, your priority is to be a student

You should never quit, even if there are times when you would want to. If you quit, you would never know how things would have turned out if you persisted. BUT failure is different from quitting. Failure is one of the paths to success.

To the parents : Give your son the chance to fail, to experience success, failure and excess. And it is not the end of the world if he fails. This is how he will know about life and will not live with regret. Let your son experience, then when he has to choose, let him choose (with your guidance). At the end of the day, it has to be him who will decide and set his priorities.

**KEEPING ONE'S VALUES IN A WIDER WORLD WITH PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT BELIEFS AND VALUES :**

To the student : In college, you will surely meet many different thinkers. What is more likely to happen is that you will see them in a more human light. People come from different backgrounds and experiences, so it is important that you acknowledge this.

**As you experience meeting people with different ways of thinking and different belief and value systems, you have to decide for yourself what values you want to uphold, and how you want to uphold them. Respect what others believe in, but stand your ground and defend what you yourself believe in.** Don't allow others to just casually take down your beliefs and values. Do not lose yourself in college.

You will come to appreciate the Southridge Virtue of the Month (VOM) talks and the formation that Southridge gave you, so try to internalize these now.

If you are not sure (what you choose to believe in), consult your parents (because they will always be in your corner), or a priest, or your mentor in Southridge. Sincerity with them is the best thing.

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It is very important for you to choose your friends wisely and properly. Choose friends who have the same goals and values as you.

For the parents : Your son may open up to you with some “crazy” ideas that he is thinking of or has heard about. Be open to him, hear him out, then guide him and show him your support. Allow your son to experience, make mistakes and learn.

A good way to prepare your son is to talk about and discuss difficult topics (drugs, sex, alcohol, gambling, gender ideology, fraternities in some university environments, etc.). Without a doubt he will be exposed to these different issues and situations, and will face pressures to respond, so he will need your support and understanding.

**OTHER “KUYA TIPS / PAYONG KAPATID” TO THE STUDENTS :**

Stay in touch with your Southridge mentors. And keep in touch with your Southridge batchmates. You were with them for twelve years, so it will be sad if you don't.

Make sure you know how to use your Freedom correctly. Whether you succeed or fail, it is all on you. Be responsible for yourself.

Learn, grow, don't be frightened, and have fun!

***“As you experience meeting people with different ways of thinking and different belief and value systems, you have to decide for yourself what values you want to uphold, and how you want to uphold them. Respect what others believe in, but stand your ground and defend what you yourself believe in”***



## Letting Our Sons Man The Ship

by Noli and Emmy Valencia | Grade 12 Parents

“Passionately Principled and Firmly Founded” - that is how batch 2022’s final parent’s forum in Southridge was entitled. In a conversation-like discussion spearheaded by Mr. Paul Christopher Cheng, there was never a dull moment as every exchange of insights and interesting experiences from the students were to be cherished. Definitely, it was a fruitful experience not only for us parents but also for our sons who were beside us during that time.

What the alumni guests have shared were relatable. As the Philippines slowly make transitions with regards to the new learning environment, different ways to adapt come into play as well. It’s absolutely helpful that we got to listen to their respective stories as their experiences may also happen to our sons soon, especially that they will be stepping into college starting next school year. Here are some points that we, as parents, found valuable and resonating.

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**The culture and values of being an admiral stay with our kids, even after high school.** One thing that worries most parents is if their sons are molded fittingly in handling the realities of the world outside Southridge. I can certainly say, from what was common in the alumni's insights, that this school had indeed formed our sons' character well enough for them to take on the challenges of the real world. The virtues do not only stay within the borders of Southridge, but rather "joins" them as they start a new chapter in their lives. A great example given in the forum was when an alumnus faced the temptation of vices which could possibly ruin what's ahead.

**Our sons know how to be adaptable.** Related to the previous point, the ability to adjust to a larger campus, different groups of people, and anything along those lines is something that alarms us parents. Would our sons be able to handle the challenges of college given the current state of the learning environment right now? – that is a question that continuously lingers within our minds. Although our sons do not seem to make it obvious to us, hearing these alumni made us realize that our sons are resourceful and versatile. As the generation Z, they definitely use technology to their advantage in order to lessen the burdens of the new setup, and the trials of school overall.

**Southridge taught our sons to bring out the leaders inside of them.** Given the right circumstance, our sons, though they may not seem like it, would take on the challenge of being a leader – may it be as small as a PT group work or as immense as leading the entire student body. The best thing we could do as parents is to give our utmost support, and provide necessary guidance whenever needed.

Quite similar to being a leader to others, our sons will also be leaders of their own selves. They will soon be independent. And as their compass, we only need to hand what is needed and give them a chance to finally navigate the seas on their own. This will help them be more wise and prudent – just as Southridge wants them to be.

***"I can certainly say, from what was common in the alumni's insights, that this school had indeed formed our sons' character well enough for them to take on the challenges of the real world"***



## ***The New-Found EQ under the New Normal***

**by Anna Vergara | Grade 9 Mom**

The pandemic has certainly brought about a new meaning to the phrase "the new normal". To a lot of us who have experienced different levels of normalcy, it gave an entirely new dimension on how to look and deal with things that are happening around us.

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Some would say that the pandemic has taken away a lot, especially from our young gentlemen. These were 2 years of not having the opportunity to travel, to play the sport/s that they love, to gain new friends (both boys and girls) and to maximize learning from their school on a face to face setting. Others would say that these were 2 long years of slowing down, resetting and cleansing. It felt like time stood still.

The talk of Mr. Encabo gave the past 2 years a different perspective. While majority of us feels we have lost a lot during these years, there were actually a lot that was gained that helped our growing up boys become better. I would say, these were 2 years that enabled our boys to develop Grit, resilience and social skills with a “new look” all together. Grit – it allowed our boys to showcase courage, strength of character to face a totally uncharted territory. They manifested Resilience – flexibility, toughness, advancing despite adversity as resources were scarce. Lastly, they matured on their social skills – ability to interact and communicate on a much deeper and meaningful way with his siblings, parents and friends through virtual platforms as we were able to reach more friends and family during this time.

During the talk, we were broken down to smaller groups and one of the questions asked was, “What was the one trait that you discovered that your son had during the pandemic?” Another question was, “Any tradition/rules that were created agreed upon by the family that had to be followed?” There were a lot of insights from the parents and time went by really fast as everyone had a lot to share. It was pleasing to hear that there were apparently a lot of good things that everybody was just very excited to share.

It was a good realization that while the 2 long years took away the old normal that we used to enjoy, the new normal is not that bad after all! Yes, the pandemic has derailed some aspects of our lives and have caused us to do major adjustments in how we do things. To a lot of us, it is easy to just highlight how we have suffered so much as a lot has been taken away since it felt like we lost 2 valuable years.

On the contrary, the time during the pandemic allowed our young gentlemen to grow in such an unlikely circumstance. We did not lose 2 years of our lives. We actually gained more than what we would normally have with the old normal. Apart from Grit, resilience and social skills that were developed, we were able to enjoy more family time together. Boys were able to develop new skills such as cooking, baking, playing a musical instrument or enjoying a new sport!

It was Grade 9’s last Parents’ forum and it was a good way of capping the year with a more welcoming attitude of the new normal. It was a good reminder that everything that happens would always have a silver lining on it as it really depends on how we look at things. Do we look at a glass half empty, or, half full? For us, what has become of our young gentleman now is more than enough for us to realize that the 2 years were not lost. While we lost the baby in our son during the pandemic, there were a lot of traits that were developed and we pleasantly enjoyed witnessing as we know he would need all these to grow and become a real fine gentleman moving forward. What has become of him now makes us value the time when the world stood still as Gab took advantage of this and worked on trying to be a better version of himself. I am sure all your sons did too.

***“We did not lose 2 years of our lives. We actually gained more than what we would normally have with the old normal”***







## ***Not “Back to Normal” But “Back to Better”***

**by Victor & Michelle Tambunting | Grade 9  
Parents**

When the pandemic began over two years ago, life as we knew it began to change in ways our minds and hearts could not keep up with. With schools closing down and most of us having to work from home, there was much to adjust, to coupled with the fear and uncertainty of the times. As soon as we realized that our momentary hiatus from physical school was going to be for the long haul, there was much to be changed about school and life as we knew it. We always say change is the only permanent thing in this world and yet, when it happens to us at lightning speed, in the midst of a pandemic, we are never prepared.

Mr. Encabo’s talk at the PQF allowed all of us to reflect on the past two years and how we had to all call on resources within us to face the challenges, the grief some of us experienced at the loss of loved ones and the overwhelming fear to keep our families safe. The pandemic pushed us to look into the values and ways of being and living that would help us survive and even thrive. We came face to face with GRIT and what it meant for us as individuals, teams and families.

We realized the importance of our Emotional Quotient over and above grades or awards.

It was how the boys coped that mattered and not so much if they excelled. It was about how we could best support each other as a community, how we could support each other as a family that truly mattered. We had to change narratives in our heads to be able to face the reality of our situation. We had to throw away old mindsets about living and take on new mindsets of growth rather than the limiting ones we used to adhere to.

The most precious thing about the Growth Mindset we learned at the PQF was how it inspires us to look for the positives in life even amidst difficult times. For the past two years, we looked towards RESILIENCE and aspired for it in each of us especially our boys, because we knew that that was what was going to get us through it, more than anything else.

The true gift in the challenge of the past two years is how we were given the opportunity to watch our boys “up close and personal” in the truest sense of the word. We consider it such a gift to be able to study and work alongside them, even if at times, it tested our patience so much. But to witness how they coped, managed, tried, failed, feared and rose up to the challenge is a precious gift we all learned from. The sense of community and connection we were all inspired to nurture through the crisis helped us realize the value of being part of this community. It also helped our boys find ways to connect with and support each other despite not being able to physically be together. To find ways and look for the positives to be grateful for were great deposits into their “resilience banks” and life lessons that will most definitely serve them in the future.

As we face even more change in the coming months as we transition back to physical school and work slowly, lessons from the past two years will always be a well to draw from, a pillar to lean on and a reminder to always connect with ourselves and more importantly to connect with each other in order to thrive. We won’t really be going “back to normal” as the world and schools open up again....we will be going “back to BETTER.”





## *A Community In Communion*

**by Carlos and Kim Tirona | Grade 3 Parents**

I remember First Holy Communion being one of the highlights of my gradeschool life –along with the other big ‘C’...

Thankfully, both not as traumatizing as that other ‘C’, but I can save that story for the summer edition of the newsletter in a couple years.

Quito is the second of three children, just a year younger than our eldest, Bowie. Seeing his sister receive communion made him more even more curious about the white coin-shaped thing people lined up for during mass. It didn’t help that when he would ask his sister about it, she would say it was “a secret.” He knew it was only a matter of time when it would be his turn to receive it, so he didn’t bother much with it. When we found out that First Holy Communion was pushing through this year, we made sure to prepare for it.

But first, confession. On the way to school, i would jokingly ask how long his list was, and that I’d come back for him in 3 hours.

Relax. I didn’t have to. I was surprised at how quickly Quito breezed through this one. I could hardly believe it myself. I didn’t ask him anything more. I wanted that to be between him, the priest, and God. But I did ask about his penance so I could compare notes.

I vaguely remember my first confession, but i may have said a few Hail Marys and Our Fathers enough to make my knees feel sore.

I took the rest of the afternoon off work so we could shop for clothes for his First Holy Communion. I don’t remember having to go through this with my parents, so I tried to make the most of the afternoon with him. We rummaged through the clothes at the department store, looking for bargain buys. ‘Ika nga nila, low cost, high impact. We found black shoes for 499 and the cashier rang it up and told us it was 70% off. 150 bucks for black shoes. BOOM! Thanks, Metro Gaisano (this is not a paid endorsement, btw)! We spent our savings on frozen yogurt and reflected on the day as I tried to ready him for what to expect the next day.

On the morning of his First Holy Communion, we put on our best and made our way to Southridge. it was great seeing all these kids again. It was held in the covered courts, and the ceremony was simple, yet serene. Father Ong was excellent in delivering his message in a gentle, calm, and cool voice. You could really feel his love for these kids. I heard the choir, and I turned to see Mr. Sacay first, joined by the other teachers. It was wonderful seeing them sing for these kids. You could really feel the school community welcoming these children into the sacrament.

After the mass, we gave Quito time to run around with his friends before heading out for brunch. It was a beautiful morning, and we were happy to have some sense of normalcy again despite masks on and other safety protocols in place. Many thanks to Father Ong, the faculty and staff of Southridge, and the parent coordinators for making this happen. Until the next big C... Confirmation, of course. But why is Franco Sarmiento still smiling?





# The First Holy Communion: An Encounter Like No Other

by Jimmy & Christine Azurin | Grade 3 Parents

The long-awaited day arrived! Finally, our son, Alvaro, together with all his batchmates in Grade 3, recently had their First Confession and First Holy Communion! It was all worth the wait! Alvaro was so happy to finally receive our Lord, a joy that he cannot explain or describe! When asked how his experience was, he just simply exclaimed “I felt happy receiving our Lord and I want to receive Him again everyday!”

During this time of pandemic and online class setup, it was indeed quite a challenge but definitely a great blessing for all Grade 3 boys to receive these sacraments for the first time! Honestly, everyone did not know what to expect and how the sacraments could be administered when the boys hardly have gone out of their homes for almost two years! Everyone had to patiently wait for the right time and had to just totally abandon plans set in stone and pray that things will all go well so the FHC could finally happen soon.

Thanks to the dedicated, hard working and supportive Chaplain of Southridge, Fr. Francis Ong, the Grade School OpCom, Grade 3 teachers,

staff and parent coordinators who all made the First Confession and Holy Communion (FHC) of the boys a reality despite the odds and uncertainties! And guess what, Grade 3’s First Holy Communion happened to be the most unique, special, the longest running and one of a kind experience and event ever in the history of Southridge!

The FHC of 85 communicants were conducted for 2 months, February & March 2022 with a total of five batches! Each batch had no more than 20 communicants which made the celebration more meaningful, intimate, personal and solemn. Needless to say, the long wait made Alvaro more eager and excited to receive our Lord for the first time with great fervor! The waiting time enabled the Lord to prepare his heart to focus only on one important thing which is receiving our Lord with full sincerity, humility and simplicity. Being humble enough to confess and to tell his sins to the priest for the first time was also a challenge for Alvaro. He said he was scared of what penance the priest would give him. He thought that the penance would be difficult but was surprised that the penance the priest gave was so simple. He said right after his first confession, “Father Francis was nice,

God is good and merciful because for all the sins that I did, I just had to say a short and simple prayer as my penance then I am already forgiven! Cool right?”

The FHC became more meaningful and memorable when we all patiently waited. It enabled us to focus only on what is essential and important. It made us realize that in receiving these sacraments, the interior preparation is more crucial than all the other external preparation. Unlike the previous years, this time FHC ceremony was very simple, no practices, no presentation nor program, no walking down the aisle but simply just a solemn and meaningful Holy Eucharist! Perhaps this was how the Lord wanted our boys to encounter Him with no fancy fanfare, costly, grand celebration, preparations and decorations.

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The boys were simply focused on just one thing which is receiving our Lord for the first time! This allowed everyone, including the parents, to focus only on the boys receiving Christ and nothing more. The teachers singing as the choir made the mass special. Together, the teachers, staff and all families present made the event a celebration of one big Southridge family caring for each other, walking together in their journey and helping each one to grow in faith.

Indeed, holy confession and communion are very personal and intimate encounters with Jesus Christ that can transform our sons as well as parents, little by little from within. I pray that Alvaro and all Grade 3 boys and parents continue to receive our Lord frequently with great excitement and fervor and to grow in love more for our Lord each time they go to confession and communion! What great blessings and graces abound in every encounter with God. It is truly a priceless, indescribable happiness and joyful experience like no other!

Thank you so much Fr. Francis Ong! Alvaro is so happy to encounter our Lord in the sacraments of Confession and Communion!

Boys were so happy to see and be with each other after two years!



## ***The Greatest Love Story Ever Told***

**by Nestle & Trina Jeturian | Grade 4A Parents**

I can still vividly remember the time when my then 7 year old son asked me and husband how we met. It was also the time when my brother got engaged so the circumstance sparked his interest. Nes, my husband, told him that we met at work and that we got to know each other well when I joined him in Singles for Christ. We “fell in love” and got married. We weren’t really sure if he understood the concept of marriage, except from the notion of a man and a woman being together forever. It was perhaps, the last time we shared our love story with him.

The talk of Father JP Menchavez entitled “**Teaching Your Child About Supernatural Helps to Be Good: Grace & Sacraments**”, was not what I expected it to be. From the title itself, I initially thought of it as something to supplement their religion lessons. It was such a pleasant surprise for me to learn about the sacraments as a personal “love story” with the Lord. Fr. JP shared about his own love story with God and how He pursued him by His grace through the Sacraments. It made me realize that God has been endlessly pursuing me from the day I was born. First, through the Sacrament of Baptism when he restored grace in my soul and welcomed me to His church as His child.

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He's been by my side always as it was a blessing that I was raised as a Catholic and regularly received the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist with my family growing up. When I received the Sacrament of Confirmation in grade school, it was an affirmation of His continuous pursuit of me. When I met my husband and the Lord gave us the holy gift of the Sacrament of Marriage, it was a season of Him revealing Himself to me, not just as my Father but also my Bridegroom. Keeping this truth in my heart has made my marriage centered on Him. I recalled all of these while listening to Fr. JP's talk and it was a fitting ending when he said - **"This is your love story with the Lord. This is the love story you should tell to your children. It is when they see you fall in love with God that they will learn about Him."** The Lord uses us, parents, to reveal Himself to our children. Fall in love with the Lord and everything will follow.

**To fall in love with God is the greatest romance; to seek him the greatest adventure; to find him the greatest human achievement.**

**-St. Augustine of Hippo**

***"This is your love story with the Lord. This is the love story you should tell to your children. It is when they see you fall in love with God that they will learn about Him."***



## **Face to Face**

**by Noe and Ria Arriola | Grade 4B Parents**

Father John Paul Menchavez discussed about the Sacraments that our children should understand and appreciate, as well as the grace it brings to our families. These sacraments are important to us as it makes us holy and brings us closer to God. Our children should first love God in order to fully embrace the sacraments. One important thing is that our children should fully understand the meaning of the sacraments and enjoy the experience in order to be whole heartedly immersed in it. Father Menchavez also emphasized that we should have a physical contact with the Lord when these sacraments are administered, through the Church.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hindered our families going to the Church physically. We were not able to receive the sacraments as administered by the Priest. It tested us Catholics on finding ways to strengthen our faith despite not being able to go to Church. Now that it is Alert Level 1, we should try to go back and physically feel the presence of the Lord in the House of God.





Apart from our daily Rosary, I bought Miloy (Me and Bea also) a comfort cross that he could hold anytime. This will remind him that God has a hold on his hand all the time; all he needs to do is talk to Him. This is also one way of telling Miloy to have a relationship with Him and ensure Miloy that God will surely listen. So then on, I do notice that the Cross is always on his hands. Again, this was after Fr. JP's talk and grasping that we shouldn't let ourselves curb our relationship with God.

The grace of the Sacrament of the Eucharist will always be present and ready for us; only us will be the variable if we will be engaging beyond what is ordinary. And by nurturing our relationship with God is an opportunity to be drawn nearer to Him, thus allowing Him to reveal his love and greatness.

*And because we have accustomed ourselves to hearing mass online, having the choice of time and the officiating priest, we have somehow yielded to convenience*

## Timely

by Eggie and Bea Estrera | Grade 4C Parents

With what had happened the past 24 months, families have been restricted, just about entirely, inside their homes. This somehow placed relationships (outside our direct family) in a strain; family and friends became remote, even technology could only do so much.

This is also true with our relationship with God. And because we have accustomed ourselves to hearing mass online, having the choice of time and the officiating priest, we have somehow yielded to "convenience". This convenience tapered our relationship with Him, because of not being able to sense Him that much; seeing, hearing, touching and tasting him (through the Sacrament of the Eucharist).

The talk of Fr.JP was timely, as we were reminded of the need to check the cycle of convenience, and do rather more to strengthen our relationship with Him amidst this pandemic. This would also be a great time to enlighten our kids that there are instances that will move us away from God, and that we should do a little more than what is required and expected. That is to say, to be constantly walking nearer to God.





## Our Faith in Practice

by Cj and Mia Sarino | Grade 4D Parents

Our 3rd and last parents forum for the year tackled the issue of fostering our children’s spirituality. Father Menchavez provided us parents with very practical advice on how to help our children grow in the image and likeness of our Lord. This pandemic has made it a bit difficult for us to receive the sacraments, Father Menchavez tells us that while it is important to receive the sacraments what is of equal importance is our faith in practice. Our children need to see us parents model the faith through our daily activities. We would highly recommend this talk to all Southridge families.



## Sacraments: God's Love

by Paolo and Ria Acosta | Grade 4E Parents

Like most, if not all of us, I grew up in a Catholic household. But one may say that my family had a very flexible concept in practicing the faith, prayerful when we needed to, not because we wanted to.

Sunday masses were an optional event that we mostly saw as a chore. Procrastinating, we always did the last mass.

Studying in a Catholic school gave me the understanding of Grace and the Sacraments or from the pointers we had to drill in our heads to pass Christian Living classes from grade school to high school.

But true knowledge only happened much later.

To help illustrate.

Our Baptism we do not really remember. Confirmation, apart from the slap and the new set of Ninongs and Ninangs, nothing really takes. Eucharist, one’s first holy communion is a highlight, but the novelty wears off quickly. Reconciliation, after grade school and high school my numbers really dipped.

Matrimony, I admittedly focused on the celebration more than its true meaning.

Anointing of the Sick is what really started my turnaround. The duty of making sure a loved one receives this final sacrament and how significant it is made me assess the value of the grace the Sacraments bring.

While I never really got the call, I always remember his message that he would not give me a cross I cannot bear, and I turn to these words whenever I feel it gets too heavy or too many.

Receiving the Holy Communion weekly nourishes me for the coming crosses. Reconciliation lightens my soul and does not add to the weight of everyday. Knowing the value of Matrimony as my foundation to survival makes me thankful. The Baptism of my kids has laid the foundation for their future in God’s loving Grace. Like Baptism, they may not know the value immediately, it’s up to me to continually build.

When my time comes I hope they remember their duty of helping me receive my final sacrament and be Anointed by God’s love.



**Grade 12 Parents Forum with the Southridge Alumni**



*Learning  
from the  
Young*





by Denis Lim | Grade 12 Parent

I often worry about how my son will be in the future. If we, as his parents, have taught him well and if we have guided him to the best ability that we can. Listening to the graduates of Southridge assured me that everything we have taught him and the values that the school have instilled in my son would be a good guiding light for him someday. It is heart warming to see former students do well in life. I have seen how the school have helped shape my son into a better person and prepared him to face his future.



by Virginia W. Setias | Grade 12 Parent

The discussion made me more confident that I should not worry about my son when he enters college. The values that he learned from our home and from Southridge are what will make him survive and excel in school. I believe Southridge is doing a great job in molding men of integrity.



by Aileen Tagum | Grade 12 Parent

In the 2nd parents forum we get to pick out so many pointers during the discussion. A lot of times you will just nod and say "oo nga noh", every speaker gets to relate their experiences and since they came from different schools they somewhat have different stories to tell. Peer pressure is real but you really have to stand with what you believe in and always remember that personal values are important. New experiences will always teach you something: There is always room for improvement, and to learn to accept failures & never give up.



by Prince Mark Talampas | Grade 12 Parent

We gained a lot of insight as to what our son's college experience will be like, based on the experiences of the panel. It definitely helped our son get equipped with the idea of what to expect. Through their sharings, it shows how the values taught by Southridge were manifested and carried through college life. Thank you Southridge!





**by Jasmin Claro | Grade 12 Parent**

For a parent who will have a college/university student for the first time, the panel discussion with former SR students was very informative. I'm very glad that we are able to hear from SR Alumnus the real challenges and experiences they had in transitioning from online to face-to-face setting to University, also the tips they shared on how to overcome those challenges. One of the things that I learned and shared with my son, Josh, is to be proactive in school activities because he is capable and intelligent and to always remember and adhere to the values we taught him and he learned from SR in determining the choices he will make when he starts going to the university - from choosing his friends, activities, studying, reaching his goals, habit formation etc. I wish the panel forum video can be shared with the Gr12 students as well.



**by Camilo Bawagan | Grade 12 Parent**

Cultivating the moral compass in my children has been sealed through the school's formation program all geared towards a healthy, strong mindset for the good. As I listen to the young adult/alumni panelists, I lauded the self discipline and the sound decision making skills. As a parent I realized the value of the monthly virtues that our children emulate throughout their stay in Southridge. This will help them sail the rough seas of the outside world.



**by Pancho & Beth Del Mundo | Grade 12 Parents**

The Parents' Forum proved to us that even after attending more than a decade of parenting talks, we can always learn something new. The stories and advice given by these 6 gentlemen were incredibly insightful and wise beyond their years. It further reinforced our belief in the PAREF system and assured us that our Grade 12 son will be starting his college years equipped with the formation to carry him through.



**by Roberto L. Figueroa | Grade 12 Parent**

What made this Parents Forum remarkable was because those who did the talking were not the parents. This time, the invited speakers were recent Southridge graduates who shared their experiences as college students. My key take away is that even though Southridge taught them many useful skills, they realized that there are still a lot more they have to learn. College life made them realized that there is a bigger world outside Southridge. Having an open mind while at the same holding on to their Catholic values formed while at Southridge would be key in navigating College life.





**by Ronnel & Rose Domingo | Grade 12 Parents**

We were both interested to hear about the Southridge boys' experiences on getting out of their comfort zone from Prep to Senior High School at our last PQF meeting. These were the key takeaways we heard from the alumni:

- Know your priorities and goals and focus on them
- The need to learn to strike a balance between everything and be aware of your boundaries
- There are going to be people better than you; but it shouldn't let you down. Push yourself to perform to the best of your capabilities



**by Jonathan Limlengco | Grade 12 Parent**

Listening to how these young gentlemen were able to communicate eloquently their struggles and victories in their new environment under more challenging circumstances was quite reassuring. They displayed maturity, flexibility, adaptability and most especially resiliency in dealing with the unique experiences the times have foreshadowed.

Despite the difficulties facing them, they never wavered on their faith and optimism because they could always rely on the strong foundation that the PAREF system had laid for them.


Top notch character formation paved the way for them to navigate with ease through the rough waters outside the comforting world of Southridge School and beyond the nurturing human bonds that saw them grow into passionately principled and firmly founded members of society. Of course, they are fully aware that it would not be smooth sailing from hereon and even admit to have given in occasionally albeit momentarily. At least they are humble enough to realize that they still need constant formation to withstand whatever it is they will have to contend with in the days to come for them to stay true to their personal convictions continuously being shaped amidst the many hardships and triumphs they together with their families encounter daily.

It is with fervent hope that our graduating sons in the next chapter of their lives would also have the strong resolve to persevere in prayers and to strive to attain unity of life as excellently upheld by the guest panelists. And this will only be possible if we as parents will also continue to seek the formation that the PAREF system has started in us even after our children have moved on.





# CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND VIRTUE OF THE MONTH



PAREF Southridge



## April Calendar of Activities

2	Saturday	Grade 1 Father & Son Activity Vigil and Benediction Sponsor Gr. 11 Grade 12 Batch Family Rosary
3	Sunday	AS Family Day First Sunday Recollection (English)
4	Monday	Free Day for AS
6	Wednesday	Student Assemblies
6 – 8	Wed - Fri	Gr 11 Mid Sem 2 Period 2 Exams
13 – 17	Wed - Sun	<b>Holy Week Break</b>
20 – 22	Wed - Fri	Gr 6 & 10 Final Exams Gr 12 Final Exams
21	Thursday	Parenting Teen Case 5 & Graduation
24	Sunday	Fourth Sunday Recollection (Filipino) AS Grade 7 Batch Family Rosary
25 – 29	Mon - Fri	Gr 12 Research Defenses
30	Saturday	Confirmation Ceremony

### Virtue of the Month *Fortitude*

Some tips to help your son practice Fortitude:

- Demand effort from your son. Have confidence in his strength and courage.
- Make your son sleep and rise at a fixed time.
- Make him eat whatever is put in front of him unless he is sick.
- Do not do things which your son can do for himself.
- Teach him to finish everything fully and properly.
- Encourage him to offer sacrifices for other people.
- Discover his weaknesses and help him find ways to overcome them.
- Help him realize his strengths and encourage him to develop them.
- Observe how he faces up to challenges. Give words of encouragement.
- Dare him to take on new challenges to develop his character further.
- Make him give up things which prevent him from doing his work well.
- Make sure that he prays daily to ask for God's help.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**PAREF**  
Southridge  
VIRILITERAGITTE

**EDUCHILD**  
Loving Couples. Great Parents. Happy Families.

## HYBRID PARENTING TEENS CASE #5 & GRADUATION

**21 APRIL  
(THURSDAY)**

6:00 PM LIGHT DINNER (FOR THOSE ATTENDING ONSITE)  
7:00 PM ZOOM MEETING TO OPEN  
(FOR THOSE ATTENDING ONLINE)  
7:15 PM START OF THE MODERATED PLENARY SESSIONS  
FOR BOTH ONLINE AND ONSITE  
8:45 PM BACK TO MAIN ROOM FOR THE GRADUATION

via **zoom** MEETING ID: 847 4299 2001  
PASSCODE : 693864

**FOAGE AHEAD**



Please observe the following health protocols.

1. Please wear your mask at all times except during meals.
2. Observe physical distancing.

The retreat fee is PHP 2, 400.00 (with meals) or PHP 1,500 (w/o meals) for the three days. Please pay to Andy Palmieri or to Bernie Pasadilla.