

PARENTS FIRST

Monthly bulletin for Parents of Southridge School

December 2022 Issue



Christ Triumphs through Humility

A Christmas Homily by St. Josemaria

"This day shall light shine upon us; for the Lord is born to us." This is the great announcement which moves Christians today. Through them it is addressed to all mankind. God is here. This truth should fill our lives, and every Christmas should be for us a new and special meeting with God, when we allow his light and grace to enter deep into our soul.

The Son of God became man, and he is *perfectus Deus, perfectus homo*: "perfect God and perfect man." There is something in this mystery which should stir Christians. I was and am moved. I should like to go back to Loreto. I go there now in thought and desire, to relive those years of Jesus' childhood and consider once more those words: "*Here the Word was made flesh.*"

There is only one race in the world: the race of the children of God. We should all speak the same language, taught us by our Father in heaven – the language Jesus spoke with his Father. It is the language of heart and mind, which you are using now, in your prayer – the language of contemplation, used by men who are spiritual, because they realize they are children of God. This language is expressed in a thousand motions of our will, in the clear insights of our minds, in the affections of our heart, in our commitment to lead a virtuous life, in goodness, happiness and peace.

("Christ Triumphs through Humility" is an excerpt from the homily given by St Josemaria Escriva on December 24, 1963. The homily is published by Scepter Publishers in the book "Christ is Passing By".)



Don't Take The Easy Path

By: Odette & Alexi Tanwangco

Grade 2 Parents

The talk given by the speaker was an eye-opener, especially for some parents who needed extra inputs on the ability of their kids to re-adapt to the new face-to-face challenges in school. Some points shed light on how we as parents should let the school and teachers prepare our kids for the tough roads ahead of them, instead of telling them to make an easier path for our sons. I really do like how the speaker delivered his message about the status of the kids' academic performance to the audience. He was able to reassure us that the school is aware of the situation and is dedicated to firmly mold these young gentlemen into what is expected of them. The talk was truly an enlightening and inspiring one.



Home-School Collaboration

By: Camilla Jacinto-Lagustan

Grade 2 Parent

When I received the results of the diagnostic tests of my son, I was genuinely confused. Thankfully, Mr. Ganar effectively explained the results and, Mr. Ganar gave concrete examples of behavior that parents should avoid

(e.g., being too grade conscious) and encouraged us to do small things at home like asking our sons to measure ingredients so that they get used to the units of measurement.

I left the talk feeling grateful that Southridge goes out of its way to teach us parents to become better guides for our children. Thank you, Mr. Ganar!



Each in His Time

By: Alexi Alunan

Grade 2 Parent

When I saw that the talk for the 2nd Parents' Forum would focus on Enhancing Academic Skills, I felt like it had my name written on it. Head PCs Maiqui and Gianina Dayrit couldn't have chosen a more apt speaker than the Science Department Head Mr. Rally Ganar, who exceeded expectations. His ample experience in teaching, coupled with enthusiasm and zeal, helped him deliver a presentation that was informative, captivating, and inspiring. Parents were entertained and motivated by his advice on how to improve our sons' linguistic and arithmetic competencies by instilling good study habits at home that nurture their love of learning. I was most encouraged by his reassuring reminder to be patient and always be present as our sons flourish, each at his own perfect time. It was a good couple of hours well-spent.



Positive Parent Involvement

By: Ma. Luisa A. and Michael P. Maningas
Grade 2A Parents

As we embrace changes and challenges of transitioning to the “new normal”, many parents like us wondered and have these lingering questions on our minds when it comes to the knowledge our son has gained for the past two years of Online Distance Learning. Thoughts such as “Would there be learning gaps due to circumstances?” “Is our son competent enough?” “Can he cope with the workload?”

Mr. Rally Ganar began his talk with a cheerful mode and has set a very lightly atmosphere, considering that he will be discussing an essential aspect of our kids education. He thoroughly explained the results of the diagnostic test the kids took and rationally stated the facts on how the kids are doing. As he was delivering his talk, I was re-awakened to my role and involvement to our son’s education, the deep rooted effect, and the establishment of a strong foundation in study habits. We are the primary educators and the school is our partner in the education of our kids.

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Awards, medals and other rewards should come second, focus on the method and the development of skills.

Our presence, participation and commitment to a child’s early education is vital especially during his formative years. And to note a very compelling quote from Jane D. Hull: “*At the end of the day the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of parents.*”

The 2nd Parent’s Forum “Enhancing the Academic Skills of Your Son” is very timely, relevant, very helpful and informative. It is very fitting for the concerns we have as the kids wrapped up the 1st term because we saw how our son struggled, experienced frustration and felt all the demands and challenges of being in a big school. Admittedly, we are uneasy to see him in such mood because we wanted him to enjoy school and have fun in learning new stuff. Mr. Ganar presented us with doable and achievable tips in guiding and coaching our kids making it enjoyable for them as well. It is also very significant for us parents to really understand our kids situation because it will be beneficial for all in the long run if we are able to intervene at the right time in helping our child’s growth and development. We must remember that high grades, scores, awards, medals and other rewards should come second, focus on the method and the development of skills.

The evening ended with a remarkable statement that focuses on the need to balance how we value the two pillars of education: academics and character formation. It is of primary importance to remember that ***we are not just raising our sons, we are raising them to become a man of wisdom.***



A Milestone of Faith

By: Mick & Coco Asuncion

Grade 3 Parents

As Catholics, we consider the First Holy Communion as a very important milestone in our faith, and we have been blessed to witness our firstborn child, Paco, receiving Jesus for the first time.

Leading up to the First Holy Communion, we saw how the Southridge teachers and staff worked patiently to prepare the boys through practicing and learning about the sacraments in school. We were in awe of the new things Paco learned in school, and the questions he had for us really challenged our own understanding about our Catholic belief and traditions. At home, we reiterated how receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Communion for the first time is a big milestone in his Catholic life. This made him nervous but excited, and made him work extra hard to prepare for these special occasions.

Seeing the boys sharing this special moment with their friends and family was such a joyous occasion. Seeing them trying their best to behave in church and participate in the celebration as they have practiced made me realize how much they have matured in their Catholic faith in just a few weeks. Paco whispered to us several times how nervous he felt about receiving communion for the first time. Walking with him to the altar and receiving the Holy Eucharist, brought tears to our eyes as it felt like a culmination and yet a beginning of a new chapter in his Catholic faith.

The First Holy Communion was indeed a milestone we hope our children will never forget.

We are grateful to Fr Francis, as well as the Southridge teachers and staff, who continuously guide and support our children in their journey. A big thank you also to our Parent Coordinators for their hard work in making sure our children remember this special day. But the biggest thank you goes to our Father, who entrusted us with His children, and who allows us to witness His blessing everyday through them.



With Jesus Comes Joy

By: Vince and Frances Daffon

Grade 3 Parents

Among the many activities in the Grade 3 calendar for SY2022-23, the boys' First Holy Communion was no doubt one of the most highly anticipated. The Holy Eucharist is truly a beautiful sacrament, and receiving it for the first time marks an important milestone in one's journey in the Catholic faith.

Kudos to Southridge for preparing the boys for this experience, including having them make their first confession, with some parents taking the opportunity to confess as well.

The blessed day was a Saturday, November 26, 2022, at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish. Fr. Francis Ong as always officiated a solemn Mass, with his homily commending the boys' efforts in preparing for this day. He reminded us all that with Jesus comes joy, and that we should strive to receive Him with the simplicity and joy of a child.

It was a heartwarming experience walking with our son Jaime and escorting him to receive Communion. It was like presenting him to the Lord, and entrusting his life to Him. Indeed, we pray that Jesus always take care of all our children.

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Definitely a highlight of the morning were the songs rendered by the batch after the Mass, sort of a surprise mini-concert of four beautiful songs - Anima Christi, Mary Most Holy, Tell the Word of His Love, Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow, with the boys' angelic voices filling the Church. What a wonderful way to cap the ceremony! Congratulations Southridge Batch 2032!

Thank you to all the teachers and parents who worked tirelessly to prepare for this day, may God's blessings come back to you one hundredfold. Thank you, Fr. Francis, may you continue to guide our boys in their faith journey in the years to come.



A Most Joyous Gift

By: Duncan & Sigrid Gates

Grade 3 Parents

Christmas came early this year as the families of Southridge Grade 3 Batch 2032 received the most joyous gift - their sons' First Holy Communion. We were overjoyed and touched during the occasion, as we are sure other parents were.

We are very thankful to Southridge for preparing the boys thoroughly by teaching the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Eucharist, and Communion. And how important it is to be one with God and to live in his grace.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is such a deeply humbling and loving act. All kinds of sin, no matter how small or petty, separates us from God. But if we say sorry and confess our sins, God will welcome us back with open arms. Jesus, with his blood as sacrifice on the cross, washed away our sins to make our life new again. It is important for children to understand this significance, for them to know, that no matter what, they are loved and accepted, despite transgressions and mistakes.

The Eucharist or Holy Communion, is the commemoration of the Last Supper, plays an important role to our faith. It is during this time, that we freely accept the gift of Jesus into our lives. The host is the food that sustains us spiritually so we can grow in His love and grace. It is important for the children to know that we have to be connected to God in order to live a peaceful and joyful life while on earth, and gain eternal life later on.

It was incredibly moving to see Rafa and his batchmates walk down the aisle to receive their First Holy Communion. This huge milestone will forever remind him of his connection with God and that he is a beloved child of God.

We were tearful while the boys were singing Anima Christi; Mary, Most Holy and Tell The World Of His Love. Anima Christi is such a powerfully moving song with poignant and solemn words and has been my favorite since my own First Holy Communion. Mary, Most Holy and Tell The World Of His Love are currently Rafa's favorite songs to hum and sing. Hearing him sing brings feelings of peace and calm as I know that he is now slowly understanding the significance of our faith and steadily growing under God's guidance.

Last Saturday was a beautiful and momentous day, and will forever remain in our memory, as it marked the beginning of a new Christmas season.

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God in the Center

By: Chid & Niña Reynoso

Grade 3 Parents

A child's first is always memorable. And when a milestone happens to your only son, it's more than priceless.

We have been looking forward to Codi's First Holy Communion since he turned Grade 2 but due to the pandemic, like many other plans and events, this was setback for a year. We view this as a blessing, more than anything else, as it allowed our son to mature more and our family has been able to prepare spiritually for a while longer. The First Holy Communion is a stepping stone to spiritual maturity and allowed our boy to appreciate and understand why we have to pray to God constantly, why we have to pray the rosary at night no matter how tired we are, why we have to attend mass diligently every Sunday.

Seeing Codi walk down the aisle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church gave us mixed emotions - our little boy is growing up to be a fine young man that we pray and aspire him to be. Flashes of his infancy, of his early years, came running down my head as we held back tears knowing that he is no longer our baby but proudly knowing he's a child of God. We made sure that he remembers that day with the people closest to him with God guiding our family to remain bound by His love.

The day after, when we went to Church, we had to catch ourselves when we realized that Codi will be receiving the Holy Sacrament with the rest of the family. His older sisters proudly lined up with him as they all received Christ.

And like many other parents, we will continue to pray hard that our children will remain and forever remember the importance of having God in the center of our lives.

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First Holy Communion is a stepping stone to spiritual maturity.



The Heart of a Christian

By: Bryan & Anna Abiol

Grade 3 Parents

The First Holy Communion of the boys was a holy and joyful occasion to witness. Receiving the Holy Eucharist, together with baptism and confirmation, is the heart of a Christian initiation so as a family, we were excited for this milestone.

We are very grateful for all the teachers and co-parents who prepared and guided our sons in capturing this beautiful, intimate, and momentous event. As parents, we wish to continue guiding our son in his faith journey to grow his relationship with the Lord.



Raising Men of Integrity

By: Sherwin Sikat

Grade 4 Dad

As someone who grew up in between the “online” and “offline” generation, I often find myself in awe every time I think about how drastically things have changed in the last 30 years or so. I remember, as a child, I would often be scolded by my mom because I was always out of the house up until the late afternoons or early evenings playing with my friends. Now, I have to tell my sons to go out of the house just to play instead of just being glued to their gadgets. That’s why I felt that the talk that we had last Tuesday was very timely. Especially now that our sons are at an age where they are beginning to discover and explore themselves and begin their transition to adolescence.

So how do we really raise “men of character” in this modern age of the internet, interconnectivity and the metaverse? Before, when we talk about character building, at least from my experience, it’s about discipline, following the rules, listening to what the adults were telling you to do, patience and hard work, etc. Egos were managed, feelings were controlled, responsibilities were emphasized. And when I grew up a little, it became about looking up to role models and patterning one’s self to “heroes”. It can be a comic book or a movie character, a persona from a book or history, a teacher or a mentor, or our plain old dad and mom. It’s about taking best characteristics of these people that we admire and trying to live and applying these characteristics to ourselves.

Now, in this age of social media, cancel culture and social validation can these “character building” practices still apply without being at risk of being the next viral story?

The answer is yes but tweaked to the manner and language appropriate in our current times.

Based on the talk we had last Tuesday, Mr. Rentoy pointed out that we are having a “character crisis” right now. Wherein patience, empathy and focus among the youth are at a low. And these are manifested through narcissistic tendencies, inflated/deflated ego, self-centered disposition and dissatisfaction, all negative effects of being online most of the time. So how do we correct this? Do we simply disconnect our kids or take them off line? Well, we can do that. We as parents have the power and authority to take these away from our kids. But will it actually help in developing “men of character” among our sons in these modern times? To a degree yes it will. Digital detoxification is something that we can practice with our kids. Taking them offline once in a while and providing alternative activities for them to do, like hiking or biking, will provide the necessary “reset” that they need to live healthier lives. But more so, what we, as parents, can do is to become better examples for our kids, “Being good, doing good”. If we want our kids to learn empathy, show kindness. If we want to teach our kids patience, show restraint. If we want them to build confidence, show appreciation. If we want to teach them discipline, learn to say no.

Our presence in our children’s lives, especially at this stage in their lives, is very vital in their development. The roles that we play in their lives will dictate the kind of man our sons will be in the future. These technologies are here to stay. That is a fact. They will even develop and improve at a much faster rate than what we have already seen.

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If we want our kids to learn empathy, show kindness.

If we want to teach our kids patience, show restraint.

If we want them to build confidence, show appreciation.

If we want to teach them discipline, learn to say no.

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The trick is not to cope up with them but to establish a solid and strong base for our kids to anchor on so that they will not stray off. With the help of their teachers, mentors and friends, we can concretize the values that we want our sons to have as they move to adulthood.

Mr. Rentoy said it best before closing his talk *"There comes a time in a parent's life, when you need to let go of your child's hands and hope to God they have learned the lessons we as parents have taught them!"*



Living in the Wired World

By: Atty Nicco and Atty Portia Bondoc
Grade 4 Parents

As parents today, we very well know and live the struggle on raising our son with the right parameters on using technology and the internet. On one hand, gadgets such as laptops and tablets, coupled with the internet are powerful tools to facilitate learning and new ways of working. On the other hand, these tools also bring a lot of disadvantages in the form of misinformation, malicious content and forming unwanted habits for our child. The timing of the talk could not be better as it gave us a chance to listen to the issues and learn some useful tips how we can strike that good balance.

Firstly, while obvious, it was good to know that we were not alone in this struggle as other parents were experiencing the same concerns. More importantly, Mr. Rentoy's discussion helped in shedding light on why we should focus on it, what we should do about it and how to go about it.

What struck us most with the talk were particularly two points: (1) the idea is not to remove the tools but to put a good structure in place for their use and; (2) one of the best ways to teach our child on the proper use is to lead by example.

The first point was an eye opener to us. Oftentimes, as parents, our first reaction when our son oversteps the usage of gadgets is to just remove them. The tendency however is that when there is a need to use the gadgets for an assignment, they are given back and the cycle repeats itself. It is important to recognize the balance. We realized that explaining to our son why we set limits, especially meant for his own good, is worth the effort. In the end, we still need to show our son that we trust him and that he will do the right thing even if no one is looking or checking up on him. We never really called it an addiction, but it is true that it could reach that point which can lead to worse things in the future so its best our son understands the perils of losing that balance.

As for point no. 2, both of us admittedly are guilty of often times not leading by example. When work is taking over, one cannot help that the laptop or the phone becomes an extension of ourselves. Sometimes, we tend to have no limits on when these are brought out (even unintentionally and due to force of habit) such as when having meals together or even just riding the car. These small acts do register with our son and being conscious of it now, we know better to put in more effort to act appropriately. How else can we ask our son to limit usage of these tools if we ourselves cannot do the same thing?

It was also reassuring to hear some of the tips Mr. Rentoy mentioned as it affirms that there are steps we were already taking that are on the right track. Being consistent, ensuring that we are open and available if our son has questions on what he encounters online, are some of the key actions we plan on continuing. Nevertheless, we also realized that as parents, we need to have more attention and time in helping our son build a schedule outside of school that would allow him to interact with peers or spark interests/hobbies. We cannot simply allow the gadgets to be a convenient babysitter. Active participation from us parents will be key in introducing our son to what life has to offer beyond the screen.

We would like to thank Southridge, the Parent Coordinators/Organizers of the forum as well as Mr. Rentoy for such a well thought-out session. Indeed, as primary educators of our son, everything starts in the home and with the knowledge that was shared, we hope to become better parents and friends to our son in this journey through this wired world.



BATCH OUTREACH SOUTHRIDGE CLASS of 2025 (GRADE 10)

By: Carol Tansingco

Grade 10 Mom

Last November 27, Southridge Batch 2025 (Grade 10) had its Outreach activity, in partnership with the Daughters of Charity - a fitting start to the Advent and Christmas season.

Several families in the batch donated cooked food (some of which were cooked by our very own Dads together with their sons!), plus Noche Buena grocery packs and toys for boys and for girls, while others donated the funds to buy these items.

Then on Outreach Day, nineteen (19) Grade 10 students, their teacher Mr. Dave Francisco and some parents (headed by HPCs Robert and Matet Sarile) went to Daughters of Charity in Paranaque. There, they interacted with 50 Outreach families (young boys, girls and their parents).

Grade 10 students Paco Tambunting and Enzo Carlos animatedly emceed the program. To start off the program, some of the Outreach kids prepared a dance number for us. Afterwards, the Southridge boys played fun games like Hip Hip Hooray and modified *Patintero* with the Outreach kids. Everyone shared some snacks afterwards.

The memorable afternoon ended with each Outreach family getting cooked food (for them to enjoy with their family at home), a Noche Buena grocery pack, and two toys (one for a boy and another for a girl) to bring home. The wide smiles on the faces of the kids who received this early Christmas present warmed everyone's hearts, and the Southridge boys promised to return next year to continue the wonderful tradition of giving.



UPCOMING EVENTS



PAREF Southridge



EDUCHILD
Loving Cousins. Great Parents. Happy Families.

SCHOOL FOR PARENTS 2ND PARENTS FORUM / PARENTING TEENS COURSE CASE 3 (GRADE 7)



15 DECEMBER (Thursday)

SCHEDULE

5:30 PM REGISTRATION

6:00 PM DINNER

7:00 PM GUIDANCE AND PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

7:30 PM MODERATED PLENARY SESSIONS OF CASE 3

8:45 PM WRAP-UP / Q & A / FILL-IN THE EVALUATION FORM

Venue: Conference Rooms A, B, & C



PAREF Southridge School

An invitation to the

Recollection for Men

(Filipino)

DECEMBER 18, 2022

(SUNDAY)

9:15 AM - 11:00 AM

followed by Holy Mass
for the families

SPONSORING LEVEL:

GRADE 10 AFTERNOON SCHOOL FAMILIES

@ PAREF Southridge School Chapel