



Saint Theresa Catholic School

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Thunder Counselor's Newsletter

Dear St. Theresa Parents:

Fall is one of my favorite times of the year. I hope that during this season you have many things for which you can be thankful. I can tell you that I am truly grateful for all of my students. We share laughter and success, setbacks and sometimes tears, but it is all part of growing up. In our Catholic community we are blessed to be able to share with our students about the source of all that is good, love, compassion and forgiveness. Without God, this wonderful community would not be possible.

I like to teach my students that not everything is going to be the way we like or want. It is all part of growing up as resilient and emotionally independent human beings. Disappointments are part of life and we strive to prepare our students to cope and, when appropriate, turn them into opportunities to learn and grow as strong and emotionally resourceful individuals. They will not always get the grade they expected, be with the friend they like, or have what they consider to be "fair". These are all learning experiences that God allows us to have so we can grow and also come to Him in prayer and hope. We are here for them to offer support through this process. We are here to listen, dry their tears and offer tools they can use to get through these life lessons. We provide a calm and confidential space in the school for your child to decompress, share his/her concerns, worries and also successes and accomplishments.

As part of the School Counseling program, we provide a confidential mailbox available to the students so they can drop a note or request to see the school counselor. These requests are addressed in the most discreet way to protect the student's privacy. Students can also make a request through their teachers or parents if they choose. Please feel free to call me with any questions about what we can provide your child, as part of our mission of caring for the whole child.

God bless!

Elsa



Counselor's office is located in the Student Support Center next to the Resource room.



Confidential mailbox located in the 5th-6th grade hallway,

School Counseling in the classrooms...

It is hard to believe that we are approaching the end of 2019! I have concluded the school counseling classroom lessons for the first trimester and am planning new ones for the next. These lessons on social-emotional learning are all addressed in light of our Catholic teachings.

Kindergarten discussed respect and how to use our words to express our emotions. The first grade learned about Growth Mindset and the power of the word “YET” to change the way they view their learning and their self-talk (Instead of the self-defeating thought of “I don’t understand Math” say “I don’t understand Math yet!”, and keep trying). Second grade was reminded how we have the power to lift others’ spirits by “filling their invisible buckets” with positive words and actions. They even played Bucket Filling Bingo, while learning different ways to make good choices and establish positive connections with others. The third grade discussed the difference between bullying, mean and rude behaviors as we read books from the points of view of the target of bullying, the bully and the bystander. Fourth grade is learning about the importance of building the 4th grade community and protecting it with our choices and actions. They watched and discussed the movie “*The Sneetches*” by Dr. Seuss and talked about inclusion and exclusion. We connected that lesson with the story “*The Stonecutter*,” a tale about being true to ourselves as God loves each one of his children just the way we are. Fifth grade participated in a Restorative Practice circle aimed to build community. They also watched the movie “*Chrissa stands strong*” and learned about standing up for bullies, assertiveness vs aggressiveness, the power of the bystander, and the difference between been rude, mean and a bully. We will continue this discussion throughout the whole year.

Middle school is discussing topics about choices and personal responsibility, bullying, relational aggression, accepting and respecting differences and tolerance. Sixth grade also participated in a Restorative Practice circle for community building. Seventh grade had the opportunity to create a comic strip based on the Pixar movie “*For the Birds*” covering the topics of bullying, perspective taking and tolerance. Seventh and eighth graders also learned about Growth Mindset and how mistakes and occasional failures are bound to happen in our lives and how these can help us grow as resilient and resourceful individuals. The eighth graders also received an orientation about the High School Placement Test and had the opportunity to ask questions and participate in a discussion about life in high school.



Have a blessed Advent!

2019 VSCA Conference:

The Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA) is the local chapter of the national professional organization that groups School Counselors from all over the country: the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). As a member of both organizations, I have had the opportunity to attend the local Conference for several years, and 2019 was not the exception. This year’s theme was “Closing Gaps and Opening Doors”. I attended a variety of breakout sessions that covered a diversity of subjects such as: Relational Aggression, Anxiety and ADHD, Restorative Practices, group counseling, learning differences and others. This was also a great opportunity to network with professionals from all over the state, including some of my fellow Diocesan School Counselors.



***Last call for
Career Day
speakers’ registration!
Please read the information and
complete
registration form here:***

<https://stsashburn.membershiptoolkit.com/newsletter/03502-NL20191125151419-003697800-45106791>