

Memo to: Faculty, Staff, Parents and Guardians
Memo From: Sr. Margaret Mancuso
November 24, 2020



Thanksgiving - As the holiday nears, I want to wish you and your families a warm and wonderful Thanksgiving. For many of us, this year will be different from past family traditions on Thanksgiving. However, we count our blessings even if we cannot be together with all of our loved ones this year.

PLEASE continue to follow all safety protocols during the holidays – masks, hand washing and social distancing – to keep your loved ones safe and all of us here at school safe too. We have done an amazing job together so far, and I know we can continue to remain safe and well if everyone follows the CDC and Health Department recommendations.

Orange Zone Information - As you know from yesterday's news, parts of Monroe County have been designated the Orange Zone. Nazareth is located in that zone; therefore, we have to make some adjustments quickly.

We are required to close for four consecutive days beginning this Thursday. After the mandatory four-day closure, we can begin the process of reopening school for in-person instruction. At this time, we are awaiting word from the County Health Department on our next steps re: test kits. I will let you know our plan for next week as soon as Sr. Marlene and I get that information. Our goal is to reopen school safely, and as quickly as possible. At this time, plan on your children learning from home at least Monday, November 30.

Our school has been COVID free since September and we are extremely grateful for that. Nazareth remains a very safe place for the children. We are hopeful there will be minimal disruption to their in-person learning next week. *More to come later today...*

COVID Testing Update - Requirements for schools during the pandemic change frequently and often quickly. That was the case with the mandate for all schools in the yellow zones to test 20% of their staff and students each week starting last week. Thanks to the quick action of Sr. Marlene, our lead nurse, we were able to comply with great success.

Sr. Marlene and I attended zoom meetings with Dr. Michael Mendoza, and Sr. Marlene watched the training videos and completed the comprehensive on-line forms for reporting test results. *We are pleased to report that Nazareth's first 20% all tested negative!*

Thank you to all staff and to those children who participated in the first week of testing. Parents, your children handled it very well.



Reflection

How has God shared the gift of abundance with you, your family and your community, even during this difficult year?

What are you particularly thankful for at this time of celebrating and giving thanks?

Litany of Thanks

For the blessing of life, for the gift of each new day, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the food we eat each day, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the home we share with family, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the faith that renews us, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the hope that we have for the human family, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the charity that we are privileged to offer, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For the work for justice that we are called to do, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For all the graces we have received, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

For all the good we have enjoyed, Lord of Abundance, we thank you.

Education for Justice



Reflective Prayer of Gratitude

O Breath of God, fill us with a deep awareness of your unconditional love. Free us from all that keeps us distant from you. Reveal to us that which prevents us from being a blessing in the lives of others.

Help us to:

- To be grateful for what is, instead of underscoring what is not.
- To find good amid the unwanted aspects of life, without denying the presence of the unwanted.
- To focus on the beauty in the little things of life, as well as being deliberate about the great beauties of art, literature, music and nature.
- To be present to one's own small space of life, while stretching to the wide world beyond it.
- To find something to laugh about in every day, even when there seems nothing to laugh about.
- To search for and see the good in others, rather than remembering their faults and weaknesses.
- To be thankful for each loving deed done by another, no matter how insignificant it might appear.
- To taste life to the fullest, and not take any part of it for granted.
- To find ways to reach out and help the disenfranchised, while also preserving their dignity and self-worth.
- To be as loving and caring as possible, in a culture that consistently challenges these virtues.
- To remember to say or send "thank you" for whatever comes as a gift from another.
- To be at peace with what cannot be changed.

Generous God, help us to remember that moments of thanksgiving are a time to look beneath our external lives for the unwavering love, the ceaseless peace, and the enduring strength that lie in the deep waters of our souls. The more we trust the unknowable depths of our existence, the more the power of gratitude becomes a song we sing daily to you. Amen.

(Adapted from Fall Reflections by Joyce Rupp – The Circle of Life - 2005.)

