

Sometimes we need to stop and celebrate what we got right

Dear Friends of Catholic Schools,

Sometimes we Catholic school educators can be our own worst critics. Because we are always striving to be better and because we are immersed in what we do on a day to day basis and can become desensitized to what we do well.

I was reminded of this recently when, for some reason (thank you, Holy Spirit!), I was blessed to hear a plethora of stories of how Catholic schools in our Archdiocese have “gotten it right.” Please allow me to share some of what I heard:

One of our schools held a “Custodian Appreciation Day.” The idea of the day originated with the students, and the day’s events were completely planned by them.

Fourth grade students took it upon themselves, unbeknownst to their parents and teacher, to gather to pray the Rosary at lunch for their teacher’s father who was gravely ill.

Many schools offer Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament to all grade levels and report that it is the one thing students comment on as being what they “like best” about their schools, saying it is “more fun than recess”.

Students have initiated “Promise to Pray,” Prayer “Drop Boxes,” and other ways those in the school community can hold each other in prayer in both good and bad times.

Teachers, when asked about what an evangelizing Catholic school should look like, responded with beautiful and articulate testimony rooted in their schools’ lived ministry.

Parents who are new to our schools report the overwhelming and positive difference they see and feel in how their children are welcomed and treated.

Consultants who have worked with our schools tell us how impressed they are with our schools’ understanding of and fidelity to our primary mission – forming disciples of Jesus.

The Gaudeamus event sponsored by the Catholic Education Foundation showed the talent, dedication, and faithfulness of students, faculty and staff, and parents in our Catholic schools.

These are just a sampling of “good news” stories that have been shared with me in the last month. What is gratifying to me is that these stories are not out of the ordinary; they are part of the everyday fabric of what happens in our Catholic schools.

Because we realize what a gift Catholic schools can be to our faithful, we take very seriously the need to always improve. However, it is important to understand, appreciate, and celebrate what we “get right,” and to remember that we are only stewards of our Catholic schools. They really are the Lord’s schools. We just need to rely on Him to do what He calls us to do.

¡Vaya con Dios!