



Our Lady of the Hamptons Regional Catholic School

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Office of the Principal

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My dear Parents,

When we turned the calendar yesterday and welcomed the New Year, our hearts were filled with joy and the hope that these next twelve months will be better than the past . We have been **GIVEN** a clean slate....a new year...to build on the lessons we have learned, utilize the inner strengths we have discovered, and get beyond what has been a challenging time for everyone.

Building on the idea of **GIFT**, let's remember that the Wise Men presented three special gifts: **gold**, **frankincense** and **myrrh**. For us at OLH, let us "modernize" the concept, and translate them into **GENEROSITY**, **RESPECT** and **COMPASSION**.

Having a **giving spirit** is more than being aware of, and supporting the myriad fund raisers and campaigns that besiege us every day. Knowing our own personal inner resources and how we can be wise stewards of our assets is important, (as is our timely paying of tuition, supporting special school projects). Working with our children to understand the family's financial capabilities and being realistic as to what he or she "needs", as opposed to "wants" is so needed in this day and age. We need to make our children **aware** of what is essential, to **care** about the earth, family and each other, and to **share** what is possible !

The gift of **frankincense**, as presented by the Magi, was a sign of profound **respect** for the person of the Messiah. Not commonly used today, it stands as a sign of what we must foster in today's youth. **Respect** for the person of others....family, peers, authority...and themselves.... is essential. Acknowledging the gifts and talents of others, and showing appreciation and kindness must be part of what we do both at home and at school. (And, of course, the example we model as parents and teachers must be evident.)

Myrrh was commonly an oily balm used in medicine and soothing physical discomfort. It is not readily available at CVS, but stands as a symbol of the gentleness and calming effects needed as we move from place to place interacting with others, many of whom are "just like us" and many whose backgrounds are diverse. Let this stand as a sign of our personal compassion for the needy both in foreign lands, and in our own classrooms and neighborhoods. Each us is truly needy and genuinely needs a soothing, reassuring presence.

With these things in mind, we need to re-group a bit and jump right back into school, hopeful that we will see an ease of restrictions:

The **GOLD** or fiscal matters include

- a reminder that we are now in month 5 of the school year and that *tuition payments* are now due for the second half of the year.
- The major fundraiser of the year, **BUCKS FOR BOOKS**, is now in its final month. We have every hope that the remaining five hundred tickets will, indeed, be sold between now and February 2. Please do your part! The children count on this support.
- **TOMORROW'S HOPE**, the diocesan program that facilitates some financial aid for families of Catholic elementary schools, will open its portal for applications for the 2021-22 school year later this month. Please watch for the notice. This is a wonderful vehicle for assistance, and many of our families do benefit from the generosity of the donors.

The *FRANKINCENSE*, sign of respect, embraces several simple things within the school community:

- The following of guidelines issued for the health and safety of everyone include
 - Adherence to the general running of the school program: attendance, punctuality, submission of notes and required paperwork
 - Consideration for the protocols regarding emails, telephone calls and written communication
 - General respect for procedures for arrival and dismissal, care in the parking areas
 - On the children's side: adherence to uniform regulations (including good grooming)...and, of course, good manners

MYRRH, our sense of understanding and compassion, must also embrace these trying times of COVID and extend to our sense of openness and honesty about family health matters, daily precautions and protocols to keep everyone safe.

- The weekly health attestations are not optional, and need to be submitted each week
- Open and frequent communication with the school nurse regarding children's health matters needs to be consistent
- Understanding and a lack of "judgement calls" for those whose families may have been affected by COVID is absolutely essential as we move forward.

We all must agree that the only way we can confront the difficult issues presented to us at this juncture in time is with a team effort. Remember that there were **THREE** Wise Men who traveled together to bring their gifts to Bethlehem. The progress we have made at restoring in-person learning for our children is predicated on the fact that...so far....we have been a TEAM! We need to journey together...all **THREE HUNDRED** plus!

Let us enter this new year filled with hope and acceptingand passing along.....those gifts of **GOLD, FRANKINCENSE** and **MYRRH**.....in other words: **GENEROSITY, RESPECT** and **COMPASSION**.

God bless you and grant you every grace and sense of joy!

Peace always.... *Sister Kathy*

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