If there was ever a time to count our blessings as we approach Thanksgiving, the time is now. Thoughts keep reminding me that the Bible is a valuable source to find hope and reason for gratitude and thanksgiving. “To everything turn, turn, turn, there is a season turn, turn, and a time for every purpose unto Heaven…” I was first introduced to this through a song released by the Byrds in 1965. You may have heard it on an oldies station.

The original source, Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 from the New American Bible, reads:

1 There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.
2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.
3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; and a time to tear down, and a time to build.
4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
5 A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace and a time to be far from embraces.
6 A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent and a time to speak.
8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Dr. Laurie Ann Reinhart, the Diocese of Reno Director of Lay Leadership Development, offers this reflection: “The book of Ecclesiastes was written after the Jews returned from the Babylonian Exile when many of their assumptions about life and faith had been called into question. How often are people today saying, “I never thought that…” referring to how Covid has impacted their life. Some of our assumptions about life and faith may have been called into question, too.

At Thanksgiving this year, we will be thankful for smaller blessings than we might usually feel. Hot running water. Dishwashers and washing machines. Shoes that are comfortable. A safe neighborhood. Phones and internet that keeps us communicating, even when we can’t do it in person. Books. The ability to read books. A church and the communion of saints with whom we are connected, even if not physically. We don’t have to give into despair or negativity. Inspired by Ecclesiastes, we realize that even in the midst of hard times, it can also be a time for thanksgiving, however small those blessings may seem. We recognize that everything good, ultimately, comes from God to whom we give that thanks.

While there is a ‘season’ for all the difficulties and hardships that Covid has brought, the book of Ecclesiastes also says that hardships are not the end. All seasons come to an end; that is our experience of the natural world as well as life. While Ecclesiastes begins as a pessimistic book, chapter three moves toward hope: ‘There is a time to plant. There is a time to heal. There is a time to build up. There is a time to laugh. There is a time to dance. There is a time for peace.’ Those times will return and for that, we give thanks as well.”

As we go through our own faith journey, certain lines from Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 may impact us differently. What lines from Ecclesiastes touch you most now? For what can we be thankful today?

Please enjoy the following stories about gratitude and Thanksgiving in each of our schools, exemplifying our Catholic Identity in word and in deed, while supporting our collective mission.
Please join our schools in supporting D.O.R.S. D.O.R.S. supports students in our schools.

Parents, please consider giving to #iGiveCatholic and selecting D.O.R.S. on Giving Tuesday.

For the first time, D.O.R.S. is joining #iGIVECATHOLIC for the National Day of Giving, Tuesday, December 1, 2020.

Since 2010, D.O.R.S. has provided tuition assistance to over 120 students in the Diocese of Reno Catholic schools. Little Flower, Our Lady of the Snows, St. Albert the Great, St. Teresa of Avila, and Bishop Manogue Catholic High School all have D.O.R.S. recipients. Your contribution helps to ensure that Catholic education is available and accessible to qualifying families who want to provide an academically rigorous faith-based education for their children.

PLEASE DONATE ONLINE DECEMBER 1, 2020!
OUR GOAL - $50,000!
(Early giving: November 16 – November 30, 2020)
www.igivecatholic.org/organizations/d-o-r-s or www.catholicrenoscholarship.org

Since the scholarship’s inception, every dollar donated to D.O.R.S. has been matched 100% by an anonymous donor. This means that all donations to D.O.R.S. have been doubled!
For more information call: 775.326.9430

Parents, please consider giving to #iGiveCatholic and selecting D.O.R.S. on Giving Tuesday.

CONSIDER DONATING TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND, WHICH IS AVAILABLE TO QUALIFYING STUDENTS IN ANY OF OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AS FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE:

WWW.CATHOLICRENO SCHOLARSHIP.ORG OR KAREN BARRERAS, 775-326-9430 OR KARENB@CATHOLICRENO.ORG

ALL DONATIONS TO D.O.R.S. HAVE BEEN DOUBLED SINCE 2010-2011!
The Diocese of Reno is committed to the safety of our children and vulnerable adults.

We are in full compliance with the Dallas Charter and remain diligent in maintaining this compliance.

Through the "Protecting God's Children" program we train people to be more aware of how to protect children and vulnerable adults, and also the possible warning signs of abuse and neglect.

As well, each year all children within our Religious Education programs and within our schools are provided the opportunity to participate in Empowering God’s Children.

Together, all of us can help to create safe environments in our parish, schools, facilities and even beyond.

To register for a background check and also take an online Protecting God’s Children Awareness Session, visit our website: https://renodiocese.org/safe-environment/. During COVID-19 restrictions, live training is postponed.

For additional information, please contact Elda Juarez at (775) 326-9445.
“Remember the past with gratitude. Live the present with enthusiasm. Look forward to the future with confidence.” - St. John Paul II

Our students have joked that the months in 2020 have actually been “January, February, March, March, March, ... SeptemberOctoberNovember.” We’ve all had to adapt this year when time seems to shift from stagnation to chaos then back again. With the uncertainty, fear, and fluctuating circumstances that 2020 has brought, it can be difficult to find gratitude. Bishop Manogue has tried to hold steadfast during this time by showing our appreciation and giving back in every way we can. Regardless of what obstacles are thrown our way, serving our students and community brings us the stability to persevere. We will prioritize the safety and exceptional education of our students always.

Bishop Manogue Catholic High School is committed to remembering our past as we plan for the future. We are thankful for the history that brought us here, the traditions that continue to make our school memorable, and the generations of Miners who have given back to the school they love. This year has shown us just how tough our community is, and that our strength will always reside in faith and family. Our Miner Family has shown unparalleled resilience, flexibility, and love during these difficult times.

We look forward to the future — no matter how times may change — knowing that our community will always support one another when we are called. Thank you for being a part of the Miner Family!

If you’d like to show your support for BMCHS, please consider donating to our annual fund.
OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

We, the community of Our Lady of the Snows Catholic School, in light of the teachings of Christ, are dedicated to promoting the Gospel values, pursuing academic excellence, and preparing students to be responsible citizens who live God’s Word.

Thanksgiving

Holidays with our families will most likely be different this year. Our school community is preparing our hearts to be filled with gratitude. For several years now, students have been keeping a daily record of life’s little blessings. Keeping a gratitude journal is among our most popular practices because it gives students a chance to reflect on what is most important to them and others. Some excerpts include:

“I’m thankful that my teacher is so nice.”  
“I’m thankful we had lots of food to give to Sister Carmen. She is really nice. She helps a lot of people.”  
“I’m thankful that we have had such nice weather to play in.”

To continue with our Faith Building Projects at Snows, we participated in the Big Reno Coat Drive (BRCD). This year, the BRCD partnered with the Washoe County School District and Education Alliance. The response here at Snows was overwhelming. We collected over $1,300 from our School Mass collection. These funds were given the BRCD to purchase coats for those in need.

We are grateful for our Veteran’s. In honor of Veteran’s Day, we held a virtual Veteran’s Day Assembly to honor all those who served. The entire school participated by singing songs, reciting poems and making a special art project to take to the Veteran’s Hospital.

We thank God for all of our many blessings!
We are thankful for teachers, staff, students, parents and our entire St. Albert the Great Catholic School Community for keeping us safe during COVID-19.
“There is always something for which to be thankful.”

This statement gives us pause in the year 2020. Covid has set us all on alert, but everything we do at Little Flower School is done with joy and needs to be done with joy.

Our families continue to contribute to the improvement and safety of our school. We donate cans of food for our food pantry organized by the society of St. Vincent de Paul and each Monday we stock the Little Flower Church pantry with perishable food items such as bread, fruit, yogurt, and dairy products. A designated grade brings in the items each Monday.

We are also concentrating on projects to support the Eddy House. The Eddy House is Northern Nevada’s central intake and assessment facility for homeless and at-risk youth. This year we held a Socktober October event. We encouraged everyone to bring in socks for the Eddy House and we received hundreds of pairs of socks.

Little Flower students and parents understand how lucky we are to be a part of the Reno Diocese and our wonderful school. Assisting these two projects shows our gratitude and gives the students at Little Flower the chance to give back to help those in need.

We are indeed thankful.
This year's beat might sound a little different, but St. Teresa of Avila Catholic School continues to march on...

Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now!
We're on the move!
Ain't No Stoppin' Us Now!
We've got the groove!

Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.

Don't stop, thinking about tomorrow
Don't stop, it'll soon be here
It'll be, better than before
Yesterday's gone, yesterday's gone.
Here come the holidays!

Here come the holidays! Catholic school families have the freedom to celebrate the holidays and focus on sentiment and Christian tradition, without losing the fun and wonderment of the seasons.

Some things will forever be associated with certain holidays. Halloween, costumes and candy are almost synonymous, for example. Thanksgiving, for most of us, is turkey-centered with pumpkin pie and sweet potatoes. Wreaths and Santa decor signal Christmas is here. But taking the time to focus on the cultural traditions of our Christian roots can teach our children to appreciate traditions and prepare them to carry on the faith for generations to come.

We can’t escape cupid's and candy at Valentine’s Day or presents and Santa at Christmas. These are fun holidays and filled with enchantment and wonder. Squeezing out the secular culture for heavy religious themes might seem like the right response to some holidays. But if the holidays aren’t fun for children, and for us, are we encouraging them to keep the faith or turning them off altogether?

Learning about St. Valentine, the early Church bishop and martyr, does not mean doing away with exchanging heart-inspired friendship cards/Valentines, chocolates and boxes of candy hearts. Santa doesn’t have to overshadow Baby Jesus, but exploring the tradition of St. Lucia in Sweden and St. Nicholas in Germany can help expand Christmas celebrations. So, too, Elf on the Shelf can sit in your house if it brings joy to you and your family, but be sure to balance Elf with Advent, including an Advent wreath, Jesse tree, Nativity scenes, etc.

Santa means “holy” or “saint” and evolved from St. Nicholas, from Clement Clark Moore’s Twas the Night before Christmas. Our Christmas trees represent lingering life through the winter and the tree lights remind us that God gave us light in the darkness. Those same twinkling lights light the way for the Three Wise Men, arriving on January 6 to pay homage to Baby Jesus. So in your home, make an effort to keep up your Christmas decorations through the entire liturgical season.

And before we know it, Easter will be here in April. Easter baskets can be overflowing as long as we let our families know that the jelly bean and Easter egg both represent the new life of spring. What can be more representative of the Resurrection? Even Mother’s Day began as a day devoted to prayer for deceased mothers.

Helping your family connect to the world around them through the eyes of your Catholic faith and connecting the holidays to our Catholic identity can make the holidays that much more meaningful for everyone.

Secular Holidays from a Catholic Perspective (adapted from a list by Kate Danuluk in the Catholic Teacher, 2016)

- Labor Day – Pray for all workers, talk about St. Joseph, the Worker
- Halloween/All Saint’s Day – Discuss the roots of All Hallow’s Eve, All Saint’s Day costumes and celebration, All Saints Day traditions
- Veteran’s Day – Send gifts and spiritual bouquets to veteran’s hospitals, say the prayer to St. Michael, patron saint of soldiers
- Thanksgiving – Create a “count my blessings” journal to remember to say prayers of Thanksgiving all year long
- Mother’s Day (Father’s Day) – As a family, say a novena for mothers leading up to Mother’s Day
- Memorial Day – An ideal time to learn about the Communion of Saints and Church teaching on Heaven and Purgatory, pray for the souls of our veterans

Contributed by Margaret Kaplow, NCEA, Director for Marketing Communications, Manager, Public Relations
A note of thanks regarding response to COVID-19:

We want to thank you for doing your part to keep our children, parents, and teachers safe during the pandemic.

You are our partners and respecting the health and safety of all is truly appreciated! Thank you for understanding. Please be sure to refer to the CDC website for direction if you are planning to travel. Things are changing, so what might be accurate today, may be different later.

Some symptoms/situations that would warrant keeping your child home from school and contacting your health care professional might be:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Unexplained Cough
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- Shortness of Breath
- Fatigue
- Loss of taste or smell
- Unexplained body aches
- Had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with, or who may have symptoms associated with COVID-19. *This would include having close contact with someone who is waiting for results from a COVID-19 test.