During my formative years in Catholic school, the season of Lent was a special time, particularly for the nuns. They would spend considerable time making sure we all got ready for Easter. We would take extra trips to the church for mass and penance. We would be asked to give something up for the forty days of Lent and we talked a lot about repentance. The nuns knew well, as teachers and parents know now, that we are imperfect. We make mistakes. We sin. It was not a bad thing to be reminded that I was imperfect as a child and I know that I remain imperfect today.

I clearly remember a few scuffles I had and some pull-down drag-out fights my classmates had with one another out behind the school. I did my share of coloring the truth when the situation required to escape punishment. At home, my parents and eight siblings, lived in a small house. Sharing was not optional. Fighting for one’s turf was a rite of passage. I recently got together with my siblings’ and we laughed heartily and long about the things we did to torment one another. I felt it necessary to once again apologize to my older sister for trying out the newly invented ballpoint pen on her Barbie’s face.

At school, it is inevitable that conflicts will arise. I fully expect that today’s children are by nature no different than the children of yesteryear. They, too, will color the truth. They, too, will scuffle and call each other names. There are insecure children who feel they must dominate others. On the field, children are compelled to protect their turf. Conflicts arise. The faculty and staff help the children to reflect on what has happened and take responsibility for their part. In a perfect world, all children would not make mistakes. In a less perfect world, all children who make mistakes will regret their actions, apologize and learn from the experience. In the world we live in, the real world, this is not always the case. I can say, however, that at Saint Columbkille we have seen this happen more times than not.

If there were a mandatory parenting class before a family could bare a child, one of the first lessons would be that children are not perfect. They are beautiful. They are miracles. But they are not perfect. And so, the second lesson would be to help parents teach their children how to learn from their mistakes. Recently, a parent sent me a link to an article: Communication Tools Foster Healthy Relationships: The 4-part Apology. I was happy to see that the article mirrored the process we follow when helping children navigate conflict. First, it is necessary to have children acknowledge their role and take responsibility. Second, they must authentically apologize. The article suggests that we use the word “apologize” as it contains more gravitas than the word “sorry”. Third, children should be asked to make it right. This step if successfully accomplished, will enable forgiveness from the other child. Last, children must be given the opportunity to recommit to good behavior. They must be able to articulate what good behavior looks like. When a child does this, he or she will think twice before the next transgression.

Perhaps, the most important thing that adults must do is model the art of apology. The children are watching, and they are listening. While most of us have become mature adults, the human condition still afflicts us. We are not perfect. When we do another wrong, children need to see that we, too, accept responsibility and will make every effort to make things right. When we do this, we will give children a powerful tool for success in life. With a process for sincere reconciliation in place, we will communicate that it is not the end of the world when we make a mistake. We can remove some burden from their hearts.
When I do wrong, I still think of Sister Immaculata. She held me accountable while communicating her love for me. I am sure she is in a good place right now, sitting beside the many children, turned adults, who heeded her message. Join me in this Lenten season to pay special attention to the way we respond when we make mistakes.

The link below will give you the full article. It is worth a read.

https://www.supercamp.com/communication-tools-foster-healthy-relationships-the-four-part-apology/

Sincerely,

Dr. William Gartside
Head of School

**News & Updates**

**Restaurant Fundraiser at the Corrib Pub: Monday, April 8th**

The Corrib will donate 20% of sales from the event to our school. Take a night off from cooking and join other STCPS families at this event!

The event is during lunch and dinner for **EITHER DINE-IN OR TAKE-OUT**.

See the website for menu details: [http://brighton.corribpub.com/](http://brighton.corribpub.com/)

Grade 1 students use iPads to research for a project about the Statue of Liberty.

**April Vacation Program Registration**

The April Vacation Program will be held from Tuesday, April 16 - Thursday, April 18 from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Please note there will be no vacation program on Monday, April 15 and Friday, April 19. This program is for students in Pre-K through grade 4. Please note, all payments will be processed through the FACTS Payment Plan on Tuesday, April 16, 2019. All applications are due by Friday, April 5th.

Click here to register!

Students in Girls Engineering Club playing with the new architecture sets donated by Jean Mooney! We are very grateful!

**BC Race to Educate**

**Saturday, May 4th**
Registration is under way!
The race times have slightly changed...
Registration begins at 8AM
Kids Fun Run begin at 9:30AM
5K kicks off at 10:15AM

NEW THIS YEAR!
If you are not able to run the race, you can sign up as a Virtual Runner! We will have a fun run for all virtual runners on Thursday, May 2nd after school around the track.

Click here to register for the BC Race to Educate!

The Best Buddies Club decorated an STCPS T-shirt for Best Buddy ambassador, Chris Harrington, the challenge rider that our Spirit Day last week will sponsor! Thank you for your donations. We raised over $400!

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**Calendar Of Events**

**Friday, April 5**
- Out of Uniform Day for any student who has signed up for the BC Race to Educate
- Applications Due for April Vacation Program
- Early Dismissal
  - 1:05: Gr. 1 - 8
  - 1:15 PK, K1, K2

**Monday, April 8**
- Restaurant Fundraiser at Corrib Pub

**Tuesday, April 9**
- Easter Lunch: Click here to volunteer!
- Financial Aid Workshop 10 AM - 6 PM - Click here to sign up.

**Thursday, April 11**
- Grade 5 Morning Coffee in the library at 8 AM

**April 15 - 19**
- No School: April Vacation

The Boston College Neighborhood Center has many great community events and opportunities. Click here to read more: Boston College Neighborhood Center Newsletter

Visit Our Website Calendar  Download our School Calendar PDF