



Notes from Mrs. Nash

Embracing curious minds. Nurturing compassionate hearts.

St. John Fisher School

April 9, 2020

Dear SJF Families,

We made it to Spring Break! Rather than visiting and traveling with friends and family, we are all still sheltering in place and likely celebrating Easter from home. Although this break will look and feel much differently than in years past, I hope you will still find the opportunity to rest and rejuvenate. I am so proud of the remarkable work over these past four weeks; I know it hasn't been easy.

Not a day has gone by where the staff and I haven't discussed how much we love and miss being with our awesome students. Below is a link to a video we created for all of you. Remember, we are still here. We are still learning. We are still praying. We are still falcons. Thank you for your continued support of Catholic education, but specifically St. John Fisher School. Stay well and take the best of care.

Have a Blessed Easter and relaxing Spring Break,

-Mrs. Maura Nash

Important Announcements

- **WE MISS OUR STUDENTS SO MUCH!** [Please CLICK HERE and enjoy this video we created for all of you!](#) *Keep your head up – we will get through this!*
- Please celebrate *Holy Week* with us through our *virtual presentations* lovingly created by Dr. Chermak and Mrs. Corley @ www.sjfschool.net.
- Visit our **Youth Ministry Page** created by *Kim Madonia* to engage, pray and learn during this time: <https://www.sifmhrym.com> *Consider this your personal God-wink!*
- I know that times are tough, if you can continue to give virtually to our parish's weekly collections, we would be very appreciative. Every little bit counts! Thank you for your generosity: <https://giving.ncsservices.org/App/Giving/stjohnfisherparish>
- Stay connected with us: follow us on **Instagram**: [stjohnfisher](#) and like us on **Facebook**: [facebook.com/sjfschoolchicago](#)
- **Mrs. Corley's Daily Virtual Art Projects** can be found on Instagram: [@artroom_sjf](#) *Let's All Be Well!*
- **Missing Assignments**: We are here to support you during this difficult time. Let's work together to ensure your child is able to complete his/her lessons. Reach out to your child's teachers, Mrs. Larmon, Mrs. Carey and me for assistance. Together, we've got this!
- **How are we doing with E-Learning?** Please *complete this survey* to provide us with your very important feedback. Thank you! <https://forms.gle/HNXF5DhcjwSKggWSA>
- **Return Date**: Our tentative scheduled date to return to school is ***May 1st***.
- **Morning Prayer & Pledge**: Thank you to all of the families who have been participating in the morning prayer and pledge! We will re-circulate the sign-up sheet when we return from Spring/Easter Break.
- **SJF MANNA Program** – Because our building must remain closed during this time, we cannot sell Manna. We are coming up with creative ways to rectify this issue. Stay tuned for additional information. Thank you for your patience!

- In case you missed it last week, please enjoy reading this heartfelt message from Mrs. Carey. You won't regret it!

A Note from Mrs. Carey

Three weeks of e-learning in the books with at least a month more to go! Reflecting upon the last three weeks, you likely have experienced an array of emotions; worry, anxiety, boredom but also connectedness, calm and rejuvenation. As the novelty of this situation is subsiding, the rollercoaster of emotions will likely continue. With that in mind, how can we, as parents, ensure that we are coping with the various emotions and many practical challenges of this time, while simultaneously remaining productive in our own work and supportive of our children academically, emotionally and spiritually? The answer likely lies in our ability to care for our own mental health and wellbeing. Now more than ever, it is imperative that we restore our own physical and emotional energy, so we can best serve our families.

Easier said than done, that's for sure! However, self-care can be simple and easily implemented in our daily lives by intentionally aligning our values with our practices. Identifying what is important, what you value, and then building your day around those principles, has the potential to shift your day and your mindset. Quite frankly, it allows you to "let yourself off the hook," when what your day has in-store is simply not manageable. I have found that reflecting and honestly evaluating what I can possibly accomplish in one day, and then ensuring those tasks are congruent with the values I have for myself, my work and my family, has grossly improved my mood and my feelings of accomplishment each day. Through this practice I have let go of the guilt, stress and irritation that accompanies not completing all my tasks, and my childrens', on a given day. Instead, going to bed each night I know that my professional and personal work products mirror my values and the intentions I set for the day.

In addition, self-care practices such as expressing or journaling gratitude (scientific data suggests even adults can rewire their brain pathways and shift negative thinking to positive), exercise, fostering friendships, setting boundaries, and finding time to be alone can improve our outlook, mood and productivity. Through self-care we can find balance, which will best equip us to care for our families in these incredibly trying times. While the self-care practices mentioned above may be, somewhat, common knowledge I challenge you to give them an honest try, with intentionality and commitment. These days, who isn't looking for a reason to be alone---even if just for a few minutes?

Be well,

**Nichole Carey, MEd, LPC
Assistant Principal of Student Support
St. John Fisher School**





RESOURCE AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT INFORMATION

Parents and Guardians,

Below you will find resources to use for struggling students. Please know that we are all in this together and are available via email for any questions or concerns you may have. These are very unprecedented times and we are aware that stress levels are high. E-Learning is not set up to make anyone uneasy or overwhelmed. Many of us educators are at home with our own children implementing E-Learning. Believe us when we say we know the struggles and frustrations you may be experiencing. We are using E-Learning so our kids will not fall behind. Please use any strategies you see fit to make the process of E-Learning go smoothly in your own home. There is no right or wrong way to complete assignments. We want our kids to continue to flourish academically and implementing E-Learning will help our kids do just that. If you or your child are having trouble please try the following tips:

Setting Up the Learning Environment:

- Designate a quiet work space.
- Clearly stated expectations (behavioral and academic).
- Set up seating away from high-traffic or distracting areas.
- Post a written schedule for daily routines and rules.
- Develop screen schedules if you have limited screens available so that each child in your home can complete their assignments.

Tasks/Assignments:

- Frequent breaks.
- Chunking work (10/20/30 minute increments depending on the age of your child)
- Extended time on tasks (email the teacher that the assignment wasn't finished today but will be turned in at a later date).
- Extra time and warnings before transitions.
- Frequent check-ins for understanding.
- Rewards and praise for finishing tasks.

Free websites that can explain confusing content/skills:

- Youtube.com
- [khanacademy.org](https://www.khanacademy.org)

Other Resources:

Apps & Resources for **Reading**: https://padlet.com/win_biernacki/f365wexktxnv

Creative Ideas for **E-learning**: https://padlet.com/win_biernacki/fbmmkxmly5fz

Audiobooks/E-books: https://padlet.com/win_biernacki/ol6fmsx9qqou

Math resources, all grades: https://padlet.com/win_biernacki/alsmisuvxv2g

Speech-to-text apps & tools: https://padlet.com/win_biernacki/qz93k2sc8d74



As always please continue to communicate with the SJF staff if you have any questions,