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Msgr. Javier Echevarria

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for Parents

ACTIVITIES FOR PARENTS

- Sept. 6 - BCD Class for Fathers
- Sept. 7—1st Sunday Recollection (Sponsoring Level: Grade 4 parents)
- Sept. 11 - Introduction of Middle Childhood Case 0 to Grade 3 Parents
- Sept. 12 - Small Group Discussion of Middle Childhood Case No. 1 for Grade 4 parents
- Sept. 13 - BCD Class for Fathers/NPEP Module 3 at Woodrose
- Sept. 18 - 3rd Thursday Recollection at Molave Study
- Sept. 19 - Plenary Discussion on Middle Childhood Case No. 1 to Grade 4 Parents at Southridge School
- Sept. 20 - BCD Class for Fathers/NPEP Module 2 at Southridge/2nd Parents Quarterly Forum (Afternoon School)
- Sept. 27 - Beatification of Don Alvaro del Portillo at Madrid, Spain
- Sept. 28 - 4th Sunday Recollection for Afternoon School fathers (Sponsoring level: Grade 7 Parents)/BCD Class for Afternoon School fathers (8:30—9:10 am) & BCD Class for Afternoon School mothers (9:15 - 10:45 am)

THE SIX F’s OF SOUTHRIDGE

Allow us to go back in time to the schoolyear 2010-11. That was the only time that we had two sons in Southridge: Lance, a graduating senior, and Matthew, an incoming Prep student. Looking back, that year was particularly symbolic as it spoke of what had been and what was to come for our own Southridge journey. This journey can best be described in what we belatedly realized can be collectively called as the Five F’s.

The first F is of course, Formation.

Southridge will forever be known as the school that forms real gentlemen. We’re sure that our fellow green blooded schoolmates as well as our friends from Katipunan will admit that our Southridge graduates are exponentially more formed than most of us. The values instilled from years of personal mentoring, complemented by what is taught in the classroom are imbibed by our boys till adulthood. All these are founded on the basic precept of love of God.

Our older son Lance, now 21, admits that he still prays the prayer after Communion that his Religion teacher Mr. Barrientos taught him when he was in grade 1. When he moved in to his dorm in the US last year, we were pleased to note that he had brought the prayer cards of St. Josemaria and Bishop Alvaro with him and pinned them on the corkboard on his desk. Without any prompting from us.

No matter what, Lance will do everything he can to make sure he is able to go to Sunday Mass, even if it means going to the 6AM mass during debate tournaments that start first thing in the morning till late at night.

We also see how both our sons show kindness and respect for all school personnel, from the executive director to the janitors and security guards, and this extends even to other ordinary people outside of school. When his teacher in 6th grade, Mr. Carandang, passed away last year, Lance made sure he went to his wake. In the same manner, he also paid his respects when one of the school’s janitors, Adrian, died around 2 years ago. It must have been all those outreaches and auxiliary Christmas parties he helped organize. Our younger son Matthew does the same, insisting that he come with us to Mr. Carandang’s wake even when he was never his teacher, and always waving hello to our village security guards.

This brings us to the second F: Family

Southridge is an extension of what we do and who we are in the family. The teachers are our boys’ second parents and their classmates are their brothers. Our children feel the warmth of the love of family in school, highlighted by the annual Father’s Day celebration and complemented by the Family Day in Woodrose. It is no wonder that Matthew could spend consecutive days in the house of his best friend Joaquin, to have a playdate over the course of summer. Our classmates’ friends are welcome to our home as family, the same way they are welcome in their friends' homes.
The close camaraderie among Southridge families also give us a strong army of prayer warriors who are quick to come to your aid when the need arises. It is not uncommon to have good friends from among the Southridge family, oftentimes including teachers as well. This really makes the school an inviting and non-threatening environment that both students and parents will appreciate. Southridge is really a second home. No wonder the boys grow up treating each other like brothers.

This of course leads us to the 3rd F: Friends

The friends that our boys make in this school will be their friends for life, and as we found out, even until death. A batchmate of Lance passed away in an accident and we personally witnessed the bond which holds these boys together forever. During the wake, we saw how young men would cry and how they would pray and comfort each other at the loss of a friend. Matthew has his own set of friends too. They still have several more years together before they separate ways. We are assured, as early as now, that these are the people who will remain his truest friends decades from now.

Of course not to be forgotten is the 4th F: Faculty

In Lance's acceptance speech when he won the Muntinlupa's Most Outstanding Student (MOST) in 2011, he paid tribute to his teachers, enumerating those who had molded him into what he had become. It was an act of humility, as none of the teachers were there to actually hear him, to recognize those who have practically sacrificed blood, sweat and tears for our boys. Imagine what our sons' teachers have to go through, from teaching our boys how to sing and dance all the way to how to appreciate Latin. We re-affirm what our son has said as we also express our gratitude to our Southridge teachers and mentors. We make special mention of Mr. Luis Barrientos, who was the mentor of both of our sons, taking care of them as his own.

Throughout Lance’s 12 years in Southridge, he had been blessed with mentors who did exactly that: mentor him. They mentored him on not just what will help him get good grades, but what will help mold him to become a leader. Not just what his gifts and talents are, but how can he use these to serve others. Not just what virtues he needs to develop more but also how the school and the family can help him acquire these virtues. We see the same caring and guidance in Matthew’s past 3 mentors these last 5 years.

All these give us security for the fifth F: Future

The future does not appear to be as scary. We know that our children, with the help of Southridge, have discovered their passions and have been guided to work on them. Lance could well be on his way to being a world renowned film-maker. Matthew could be the first Filipino to make it in the NBA. Who knows what is in store for our children? We can only wait till that time comes, but for now, what gives us comfort is the last F.

Faith. Allow me to add this 6th F.

Our children have been introduced to the faith early on in Southridge. It is not unusual to see them visit the chapel or hear confession. Lance would tell us how the noon time mass in UP was one occasion for the Southridge alumni to see each other.

We have also witnessed how our son is not afraid to stand up for what is right, especially when principles and truth are questioned. Lance has been very vocal about his stand on issues against life and about his Catholic beliefs. Our Southridge students know our faith and our God and are geared towards living their lives towards Him.

We could go on and on, for Southridge has really become a part of our son’s life, and that of our whole family. Lance is now in his dream school in the US, very much different from Southridge (although the buildings have brick walls too), and pretty soon he will be what many call a global citizen. He no longer has a personal formation mentor, and there may be no regular parents meetings for us to attend or Plautus plays to watch. But although these externals have changed, our family holds on to the seeds of virtue planted and nurtured in him in his 12 years in Southridge. Seeds planted in the family and nurtured carefully and lovingly by the strong partnership between home and school.

As for our 5th grader, who is slowly becoming his own unique version of the Southridge gentleman, still a work in progress, we look toward each year always with much hope and eager anticipation. We look forward to what he will become, knowing so well, that the school will also guide him to harnessing his strengths.

Thank you Southridge for molding our children. Congratulations on your 35th year. We look forward to seeing our grandchildren in these halls one day. - Aldy & Joy Katigbak
A Faithful Man

Alvaro del Portillo, St Josemaría’s first successor at the head of Opus Dei, was born March 11, 1914. A “good and faithful servant” – words of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, that Pope John Paul II applied to Bishop Alvaro del Portillo.

Bishop Javier Echevarría says: In the telegram John Paul II sent me ten years ago upon receiving news of the unexpected departure of Bishop Alvaro del Portillo, the Pope applied to my predecessor Jesus’ words in the Gospel: “a good and faithful servant.” With gratitude to God, the Holy Father recalled “the diligent life of Don Alvaro as priest and bishop, his constant example of courage and trust in divine providence, his fidelity to the See of Peter and his generous service to the Church.”

A few days before being called into God’s presence, Bishop del Portillo reflected on this virtue. He was undertaking days of prayer in the Holy Land, where he followed the footsteps of Jesus with great piety. Among the greetings he sent from there to various persons was one addressed to Msgr. Stanislaw Dziwisz, the secretary of John Paul II. Reading it today takes on a special meaning for us. I cite this episode with the explicit authorization of the recipient of the postcard.

Don Alvaro wrote: My esteemed friend: in these holy places, I have prayed—we have prayed—a great deal for you, vir fidelis, with the request that you present to the Holy Father our desire to be fideles usque ad mortem, faithful unto death, in the service of the Church and the Holy Father.

Fidelity to God in the first place. Born and educated within a deeply Christian family, Don Alvaro learned from his parents a conduct in full conformity with the faith he had received. With naturalness, without sanctimoniousness, he combined the normal activities of a young man—study, sport, friendship, etc.—with a sincere and deep piety. Thus God prepared him for his encounter with St. Josemaría Escrivá, which took place when Don Alvaro was twenty-one, and which was to give full meaning to his life.

From then on, with the help of grace, under the direct guidance of the Founder of Opus Dei, Don Alvaro strove with all his strength to carry out the mission providence had chosen for him: to learn the spirit of Opus Dei from St. Josemaría, to make it the marrow of his life, and then to transmit it with extraordinary faithfulness to many other people.

Don Alvaro’s earthly path could be defined as a constant progress in fidelity to God, which means a daily struggle for personal conversion. This invitation is addressed to us as well, especially during the liturgical period of Lent. With words from St. Josemaría, and taking as a backdrop the words of my predecessor cited above, we can ask ourselves: “Am I advancing in my faithfulness to Christ, in my desire for holiness, in a generous apostolate in my daily life, in my ordinary work among my colleagues? Each one of us, silently, should answer these questions, and he will see that he needs to change again if Christ is to live in him, if Jesus’ image is to be reflected clearly in his behavior.” (St. Josemaria, Christ Is Passing By, no. 58).

Inseparably joined to his fidelity to God was Bishop del Portillo’s fidelity to the Church and the Roman Pontiff. In this respect his many years of service to the Holy See, beginning with his arrival in Rome in 1946 and continuing right up to his death, speaks for itself. For almost fifty years, in so many ways, Don Alvaro poured his energy into serving efficaciously the Church, the Pope and all souls.

From his first assignments in the offices of the Holy See, to his intervention in the work of the Second Vatican Council and his participation in episcopal synods, the course of those long years in Rome was characterized by silent and fruitful service to the Church and the Pope. He never said no when his help was requested. He took on everything with a smiling peace that eased the burden of others.
His fidelity to the Church and the Roman Pontiff shone forth with renewed light at particular moments. This was especially so when the Holy Father expressed his wishes in regard to the new evangelization that had to be carried out in countries with an ancient Christian tradition. Or when the same Roman Pontiff manifested his concern for the cause of peace in various parts of the world.

We don’t have time to go into all this here. But we all remember specific deeds by Bishop del Portillo, gestures of support and solidarity with the Holy Father that showed his dedication and loyalty. As I mentioned a few days ago, in the opening session of the Tribunal of the Prelature set up for his cause of canonization, Don Alvaro’s conduct was always inspired by the motto he learned from St. Josemaría: to make the noise of three while doing the work of three thousand.

We see here a shining example of faithfulness to one’s vocation in carrying out the tasks God entrusts to each person. Don Alvaro put all his human and supernatural qualities, and they were truly many, at the service of the mission he had received.

Today, as we recall at the altar this good and faithful servant of God, I invite you to go to his intercession. Our Lord wants the human and Christian virtue of fidelity to shine in our daily life as it did in Don Alvaro’s. This possibility is within the reach of all of us, with God’s help, if we truly decide to make a daily conversion in big things and in little ones, because everything is great when done for God’s love.

So let us follow what St. Josemaría teaches us in one of his homilies: “When you sincerely desire to live by faith, hope and love, the renewal of your commitment is not a matter of picking up again something neglected. When there really is faith, hope and love, renewal means staying in God’s hands, despite our personal faults, mistakes and defects. It is a confirmation of our faithfulness. Renewing our commitment means renewing our fidelity to what God wants of us: it means expressing our love in deeds.” (St. Josemaría, Christ Is Passing By, no. 43)

Let us entrust these resolutions to our Lady, Virgo Fidelis, and to her spouse, St. Joseph. Through their intercession we too will be faithful to our Christian vocation. And we will be happy. For, as St. Josemaría assures us, faithfulness is synonymous with happiness: happiness in this world, within the limits of our present condition, and complete happiness in heaven.—Msgr. Javier Echevarria

**FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR MOTHERS AT WOODROSE SCHOOL**

- **THEOLOGY CLASS** - every 1st and 2nd Thurs, 9 to 10 am, Function Room
- **RECOLLECTION** - every 3rd Thursday, 9:15 - 11:00 a.m.
- **CONFESSION** - Monday to Friday except Wednesday, 9 am - 12 noon

For inquiries, you can contact PAREF Woodrose School at 850-6380 to 83: 809-5508 or 807-6735 (local 123 for the Chaplain’s Office or 118 for the Family Orientation Office or locals 120,151,152 for the Central Communications Office)

- The Parents Formation Office welcomes personal write-ups about parenting principles and experiences.
  Please email them to mininawat@southridge.ph

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For reservations and inquiries, please contact Ms. Leila Lerios of the Philippine Foundation at 817-2318 local 201 or 0928-5063688 or email philfoundation@pldtdsl.net.