ACTIVITIES FOR PARENTS

- Dec. 2-4 - Eucharistic Triduum
- Dec. 5 - Theology Class for Dads/3rd PQF (Afternoon School)
- Dec. 6 – 1st Sunday Recollection (Sponsoring Level: Grade 7 Parents)
- Dec. 12 – Theology Class for Dads
- Dec. 14-17 – Outreach Week
- Dec. 16 - Grade School Christmas Program
- Dec. 17 - 3rd Thursday Recollection at Molave Center
- Dec. 18 - Start of the Christmas Break
- Dec. 19 – Theology Class for Dads
- Dec 27 - 4th Sunday Recollection for Afternoon School Parents/BCD Class for the Afternoon School Parents

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear fellow Parents,

You might have noticed that my family picture here is not our latest one and I have decided to share with you a family picture taken in 1995, nineteen Christmases ago! How time really flies and I would like to appeal to you fellow parents, especially the fathers to really ‘waste time’ with your children during their Christmas break.

Here are some personal thoughts that I would like to share with you:

- **Parents set the tone for Christmas.** If you don’t, the advertisers and the shopping malls will!
- **Don’t ever get tired of putting up the Belen for Christmas.** The happiness and joy that radiate from your Belen at home will have a rippling and profound effect in the future families of your children and their children’s children. Encourage this practice with your children by involving them. Maybe they can add new characters in the Belen each Christmas but I hope you don’t buy a larger snowman or reindeer.
- **The family warmth and joy on Christmas Day comes from the little preparations done daily by each member of the family, in their heart.** If you have not adopted this practice yet, I suggest that you hide the Baby Jesus from the crib first and encourage your children (no matter how old they are) to prepare a comfortable crib for the arrival of Baby Jesus on Christmas Day. For each act of service or little sacrifice done each day, they can put a strand of hay on the crib. Cut pieces of hay that you can neatly put in an elegant container beside the crib to make it easy for them to notice.
- **More importantly, don’t let Christmas pass by each year without making your heart a bit softer and larger...especially the hearts of your children.** This is usually done by keeping the poor children and families around us, in our hearts. Visit them as a family and give them your time and affection.

Wishing you and each one in your family a Blessed Christmas and may the Holy Family remain in your hearts for the New Year!
ADVENT DECORS

By this time in December, and even a month before that, we Filipinos would have already decked the halls, walls and doors with golden wreathes, snowmen, Santas, reindeers and stockings. In other countries, Christmas decors would only come up a few days before Christmas. Before that, they would have what I could call Advent decorations.

Advent is the time of preparing or ‘waiting’ for our Lord’s birth which we call –in case you already forgot– Christmas! But Advent cannot be converted into either a cold indifferent state of simply putting up with dusty still-hanging permanent ornaments or into a shopping blizzard spree striving to outdo last year’s Yuletide motif.

Advent begins with each of us: our ‘conversion’, our change of heart, and our receiving Jesus. Despite this, we have to admit that the season’s materialistic momentum is still unavoidable. We cannot help but prepare for the parties, gifts, and reunions that this time of the year naturally brings with it in work and family. Thus, we might as well positively and spiritually internalize everything, even that which may be materially distracting, to deepen our preparation for Christmas.

The sheer material preparations for Christmas can often be the following: taking out, cleaning and re-using the family’s traditional decors, decorating the house, shopping for Christmas provisions such as food and additional decors, and buying or making gifts. Now let’s begin interiorizing each of these elements!

The soul is gifted by God with ‘interior decorations’. These come in the form of inner potencies such as intelligence, will, memory, imagination, etc. With these gifts also come the virtues: moral and theological. Advent is a good time to examine how we have used these gifts to give glory to God and serve our neighbor.

As we bring them ‘out’ to our prayer and a sincere examination before God, we could ask ourselves: ‘How have I grown in this virtue or that one?’ ‘How can I purify my intelligence, will and imagination more in order to work better, serenely and cheerfully?’ These and many other personal considerations are like taking out ‘old decors’, re-polishing them and preparing to hang them before God.
We are more interested in a harmonious unfolding of our gifts before God. We first focus on the more important ones like faith, hope and love and little by little on others like patience, meekness, forgiveness, etc. The real trick here consists in ‘secretly displaying them’ before God but orienting them effectively towards our neighbor (i.e. a prayer, a smile, a sacrifice or a complement). Thus, Jesus told His disciples to pray and fast in secret so that only the Heavenly Father may see these in secret and reward them.

Buying material provisions for Christmas can be translated spiritually when we stock and enrich our spiritual reserves. For example, different topics to meditate upon and a variety of sacrifices to nourish the fire of our love. This is important, otherwise the activism of the season will corrode our ‘spiritual spaces’ and leave us with short-lived inspirations, that go off as soon as the last traces of firework disappear on New Year’s eve.

This is best approached with a concrete plan for oneself and family. For example, praying before the crèche, calmly keeping track of the children’s daily Advent offerings for the Child Jesus, meditating on the Nativity scenes in the Gospels before lighting a candle of the Advent Wreath, and many other traditional family and personal acts of piety. Let’s not allow secondary and frivolous concerns from interfering in these rich Christian practices that allow us to relive Christmas in the present.

Finally, the buying and giving of gifts! Who doesn’t want to receive a gift for Christmas? Every year we try to be original with our gifts to loved ones and friends. Internally, we ought to want to give the ‘new gift of ourselves’ to God through a sincere desire for conversion. Here, nothing beats doing a good and sincere confession. Conversion doesn’t really entail anything new in what we do, but in the effort to carry them out more lovingly. This detail alone can go a long way in authentically giving ourselves to Jesus and others in countless hidden but priceless ways.

So what are we waiting for? Let’s begin decorating ourselves for God and others. - Fr. Francis Ongkingco, School Chaplain
The greatest legacy one can pass on to one's children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of character and faith.

Billy Graham

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR FATHERS

HOLY MASS
- Daily 12 noon Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Family.

RECOLLECTIONS
- 1st and 4th Sunday Recollection for Fathers (Holy Mass for the Families at 11 am)
- 3rd Thursday Recollection at Molave Study Center

THEOLOGY CLASS FOR DADS
- Every Saturday, 10:00–11:00 am at the Business Office Conference Room, 1st Floor of Main Building
- Every 4th Sunday, 8:30-9:00 am (for AS fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 9:00-10:45 am (for AS mothers)

CONFESSION/SPiritual DIRECTION

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

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR MOTHERS

THEOLOGY CLASS - every 1st and 2nd Thurs, 9 to 10 am, Function Room
RECOLLECTION - every 3rd Thursday, 9:15 - 11:00 am & every 4th Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30 p.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)

RETREAT SCHEDULES FOR DADS

Nov. 30-Dec. 2 (Mon-Wed) Tagaytay Conference Center
Dec. 3-6 (Thurs-Sun) Makiling West Wing
Dec. 3-6 (Thurs-Sun) Tagaytay Conference Center
Dec. 10-13 (Thurs-Sun) Tagaytay Conference Center
Dec. 14-16 (Mon-Wed) Makiling Main

Retreat fees (inclusive of meals):
- Makiling Conference Center (West Wing)
  Mon to Wed - Solo Room (P4,050); 3-in-a-room (P2,280)
  Thu to Sun - Solo Room (P4,500); 3-in-a-room (P3,150)
- Makiling (Main) & Tagaytay Conference Center
  Fee is P5,400 (single room)

For reservations and inquiries, please contact Ms. Leila Lerios of The Philippine Foundation at 818-6004 local 201 or 0928-5063688 or email philfoundation@pldtsl.net.