



# THE VALUE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

## By Bridget Concepcion

### 2019 Open House

Good morning. My name is Bridget Concepcion, and I have the honor of being the first grade teacher here at St. Agnes. I'm here today to talk to you about the value of a Catholic education and how it can benefit your child, spiritually and academically. I've had the unique opportunity of being a parent of children in Catholic schools, as well as being an educator at one.

As many of you here today are parents of children at St. Agnes, I'd like to first speak to you of my own experience as a parent of children attending Catholic schools. I grew up in a very large Catholic family. My parents were very devout and active in the way they lived their faith. As parents they understood that they were the primary teachers and stewards of our faith formation. My parents had a great influence on my life. So naturally, when it came time to choose a school for my children I looked for a school that would prepare them to live lives full of hope, joy and peace, no matter what challenges they met

I am a mother of three amazing daughters. My husband and I realized early on we wanted our girls to be a part of not just a school, but a school community. We understood that in order for our daughters to grow in faith, they needed to be surrounded by people who also shared that faith. They needed to be in an environment where that faith was supported by their teachers and their peers; an environment in which they were taught the Word of God and were encouraged to live the Gospel and its values. We also wanted an environment that mirrored what we were teaching at home; hard work and responsibility.

My daughters attended St. Agnes and throughout their years here they were encouraged to strive for excellence in all that they did, to challenge their perceptions of their limitations and to exceed them. They were taught to hold themselves to a higher standard in their learning and in their interactions with others. This education led us on a path to Catholic high school and now Catholic college.

As parents we all want what is best for our children. We want our children to be confident, joyful, disciplined, motivated, kind, responsible, academically prepared. A Catholic education provides this and so much more.

I know that I speak for all of our teachers when I say being a Catholic school teacher is a vocation; it's a calling to be an active part of the Church's mission. Teachers in Catholic schools are dedicated to this calling. We have the opportunity to share the life and teachings of Jesus with our students. It's a chance to light the fire of their faith at a critical time in their lives; a fire that we hope will burn bright throughout their lives.

Catholic school is a place where teachers can share their faith, and challenge the minds of all students. It's a safe place where students can feel loved, accepted, and cherished. In a world where so often the focus on "Me" and "what do I get?", we get to teach them things like "How can I help others?" and "How can I make a difference in the world?".

Each day our school presents opportunities for students to put their values to use, in the classroom, at recess, and in school wide activities. Values and character are at the center of a Catholic education. This prepares students to have the courage to live out the gospel values in their everyday lives.

This quote from Cardinal DiNardo, the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston expresses the importance of a Catholic education. "The legacy of a Catholic education is more than knowledge imparted to our students; it is the development of a deep and abiding sense of faith, the realization of the value of moral character, and the inspiration of a lifelong journey of learning"

Thank you for entrusting your children to us. We are privileged to be on this journey with you and your child.