

A Time to Remember...

A REFLECTION BY EILEEN MCGUIRE, DEAN OF LCA'S INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM

It is likely that the week of March 7-14, 2020, will go down in history as one of the craziest. I began that Saturday morning at Holy Name High School as 12 of our junior high students competed in the Greater Cleveland Council of Teachers of Mathematics Problem Solving Tournament. While I vaguely remember planning to provide clean calculators and pencils to each of our students, I have no recollection of worrying about social distancing or constant hand washing. And I definitely did not think that would be the final academic competition of the year.



As I look at the pictures from that day and the smiles on the faces of the kids, I am haunted by the eerie feeling that they had no idea what was to soon come. But I am equally inspired by the fortitude with which those same students would face the unsteady days ahead.

As the week progressed, it became clear that our spring plans would radically change. Culminating experiences for our graduates would be cancelled, one after the other. And like the champions we always knew they were, they adapted.

Hanging in our classrooms are the IB Learner Profile attributes. We aspire to grow as inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective learners. In so many unforeseen ways, our saints grew in these attributes. Teachers, administrators and parents grew as well.

We have much for which to be proud and much to celebrate. Our school year was rich with experiences, both before closure as well as after. In so many ways, inside school and at home, saints young and old stepped up, dug deep, and met each challenge with creativity and optimism. Never in my life have I learned so much in such a short period of time. May we all take a minute to humbly and gratefully pat ourselves on the back. We met the moment. Imperfectly, certainly, but we showed up. We look forward to the day when, as wiser versions of our past selves, we will once again look each other in the eye and say, "Good morning, LCA."



Good Morning, LCA

As we gathered around Mr. Sinchak's dining room table, emotions were mixed. That Sunday evening, just after schools closed, we weren't sure what the next moment would bring. We knew that we had to find a way to keep the community connected for as long as we were asked to be physically apart. A self-proclaimed theater geek and avid viewer of "CBS Sunday Morning," Mr. Sinchak presented his idea of an LCA morning show. Complete with intakes and outtakes, themed segments and special guests, the show would serve to connect and bring joy. Most of us sat dumbfounded, confused, but totally in. We would do whatever we could to help this genius idea grow into a reality.



Because we weren't sure whether we would soon be forced to stay at home, we began filming that very night. What was born was none other than "SaintsTV." Over the next two months, families were invited to learn to make the perfect Mrs. Burke sandwich, create a lava lamp, and relax with Yoga. Guests would share deep dark secrets about preferred morning drinks, greatest fears, and favorite sounds. The guest segments offered our community an opportunity to meet LCA staff members in a new way – who knew Mr. Kroeger had dyed his hair blonde? Or that Mrs. Nagy had an exciting Segway adventure in Washington D.C.?



Back by popular demand, SaintsTV Season II turned the tables on our viewers and made students the guests. Saints on the Sidewalk, a socially-distanced outdoor interview format, brought Mr. Sinchak all over town to greet saints of all ages. Living out the IB Learner Profile attributes of communicators and risk takers, these brave saints intrigued and entertained the folks at home.



The dynamic duo of Mr. Sinchak and Mr. Straffen made the show come to life. Their creativity and expertise were great reminders that God gives us gifts for a reason. We must develop them and be grateful for them, for we never know when we will be called upon to do magical things in trying times.

If there's a theme song for the small blessings we found during this past spring, it has to be **Sam Warzocha's ('20)** rendition of "Good Morning, LCA!" Come on, you know you're still singing it...

During Phase II of our Saints At-Home Learning Program, students in grades 5 through 8 worked on cross-curricular units that featured 10 heroes: Wilma Rudolph, Roberto Clemente, Gene Kranz, Katherine Johnson, Maya Angelou, Langston Hughes, Steve Irwin, Jane Goodall, Mother Teresa, and Mahatma Gandhi. While their accomplishments were inspiring, their lives also offered rich opportunities for learning in a wide variety of domains. Weekly assignments called on students to think critically and creatively.

Our heroes

While studying Katherine Johnson, whose NASA career was featured in the movie *Hidden Figures*, students read her life lessons. Her lessons included: Love learning; Follow your passion; Pay it forward, and others. Students were invited to share their own life lessons. What resulted were profound reflections.

LESSONS OF MARIE ARMSWORTHY ('20)

Lesson 1: Don't take yourself too seriously

In life, it is great to work hard and take things seriously, but it is also important to remember to never take yourself too seriously. Learn to laugh at yourself. Sometimes it's better to let things go and laugh it off rather than be stubborn and arrogant. Life is short and we are all just human beings together in this journey of life, no one is better than anyone else and we all have to appreciate that.

Lesson 2: Savor every moment with the people you love

Savor every second, you never know when a global pandemic is going to hit and you all have to go into quarantine for months on end. Life is short and unpredictable, never take those times for granted and always use them to the fullest.

Lesson 3: Try something new

Life is too short to stay inside your comfort zone. Try something new. Wear a cool hat, try snails, dance in the rain, take a hike, learn a new skill. Life is as full as you're going to make it so why not make it overflowing with stories and fantastic memories of "that one time".

LESSONS OF JAMES TUMNEY ('21)

Lesson 1: Cherish Things While They Last

I always miss things from the past and wish I could go back and enjoy them again or do something different because I really didn't know it, but I loved those things so much and took them for granted. I've learned at this point to try and make the best of all moments in your life because you never know when in the future you will regret or miss the past. To be in the mindset makes life so much better for you and those around you especially since you know that you made the best out of each moment of your life.

Lesson 2: Family is #1

At the beginning of your life you would not be able to survive without your family. They provide you with everything you need including shelter, food, and water. Family loves each other so much and helps each other push through almost anything. They support you, encourage you, and challenge you to become the best version of yourself for your life ahead. And even then all they do is support and love you and you need to respond with the same.

Lesson 3: Be Happy

Happiness I think is the most important thing in all of life. If you are happy nothing can stop you. You can push through any obstacle and live your life to the fullest. True happiness just makes the world a better place because when you are truly happy you will share those same vibrations with others in a never ending cycle. When you are happy it is just the best thing ever and I've learned this from my sister who was just born as one of the happiest people in the world.

During another week, while studying Maya Angelou and Langston Hughes, students had the opportunity to read and reflect upon each author's writing and its influences. Students were invited to share their own writing or artwork and its connection to music. The original and thoughtful work of the students was remarkable.

AN ORIGINAL POEM BY CAROLINE FAVETTI ('21)***Are We Really Equal?***

*They stole us, they stripped us, they took us away.
We were sold as slaves, working day after day.
Many years later, after a lot of bloodshed,
The president of the U.S. stood up and said,
"You are now free,
With no need to flee,
We are all equal."*

*Yet,
There is a sequel.
About a century passed,
And we were still being harassed,
They caused much chagrin,
Just for the color of our skin.
And even though we were deprived of our rights,
We would march through these dark nights,
Protesting injustice and inequality,
We showed them the important qualities.
Not our skin or our race,
But our determination and grace.*

*In the end Jim Crow relented,
And at long last we were presented
With the rights we were denied long ago.
We will keep marching, continuing to grow,
Till at last we are equals, all without shame,
Not only in name,
But truly the same.*



AN ARTISTIC WORK & STATEMENT BY BRENDAN FRIEL ('22)

I chose the song, "We Shall Overcome." My artwork is a painting of an African American and a White person holding hands. I think the song meant that African Americans will overcome the problem of segregation and be equal to White people. My painting represents the song because it shows that African Americans and White people are equal and get along. I also included a bracelet in my painting that says peace. I included this because it symbolizes that there is no longer so much hate shown towards African Americans.



AN ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION & STATEMENT BY HARPER COFFEY ('23)

Song: "We Shall Overcome" by Joan Baez

My artwork represents people coming together to help each other. I think that this represents the song well because the song talks about overcoming challenges as a community. To show that the people in my artwork are coming together I drew them holding hands. I want the viewer to understand that we are all one big family and that we need to help each other. I want this drawing to remind everyone that we need each other in this world.



HEROES IN OUR STUDENTS' OWN LIVES

Artwork by Lily Porter ('23)

Middle school students had the opportunity to nominate a person from their own lives to the Saints At-Home Hero Hall of Fame by explaining the person's heroic actions and characteristics.

[Click here to see who our students nominated.](#)

I AM

As an IB school, we regularly explore the global context of *identities and relationships*. That includes periodically exploring “Who am I?” At the conclusion of our Saints At-Home learning journey, our sixth graders were called upon to author a portrait poem about themselves. Students were encouraged to reflect on their interests, hobbies, hopes, dreams, fears, worries, and future plans. The sixth graders were challenged to be

sincere, thoughtful, and unafraid of sharing personal thoughts and ideas. The collective work of the sixth grade class was wonderful.

I AM POEM BY CAMERON CROCE ('22)

*I am change for the better.
I wonder if I can make a difference.
I hear the calls for help.
I see a world that is beautiful.
I want to help all that I can.
I am change for the better.*

*I pretend that I can travel around the world.
I feel a tie to the less fortunate.
I touch many hearts through service.
I worry that I am not good enough.
I cry when people are wrongly hurt.
I am change for the better.*

*I understand that the world isn't all that good.
I say always stay humble and kind.
I dream that the power of love will overturn the love for power.
I try to make people feel better.
I hope that I will touch the hearts of millions.
I am change for the better.*

I AM POEM BY ANGIE KRNCVIC ('22)

*I am an ambitious girl who loves God and her family.
I wonder what incredible things I will accomplish when I am an adult.
I hear my family encouraging me to pursue my hopes and dreams.
I see the joy on my friends' faces when I make them happy.
I want to live every moment of my life to the fullest.
I am an ambitious girl who loves God and her family.*

*I pretend that I achieve every goal that I have ever had in life.
I feel God calling me to use the gifts that he gave me to change the world.
I touch the hearts of others when I inspire them to do something great.
I worry that I will not live up to my full potential and disappoint my family.
I cry when I feel like I failed my friends, family, or God.
I am an ambitious girl who loves God and her family.*

*I understand that sometimes in life I will fail but the important thing is how I deal with the failure.
I say to myself that I can accomplish anything that I set my mind to.
I dream that I will change the world during my lifetime.
I try to put my best effort into everything I do.
I hope that one day I will make it into the Kingdom Of God and see all of my relatives there.
I am an ambitious girl who loves God and her family.*

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

Facing adversity with strength, resilience, and heroism

In English, the saying is, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." In French, however, the expression goes, "Faute de grives, on mange des merles," or, "If you don't have a thrush, eat a blackbird." LCA's French students followed that advice when they had to press the pause button in March on in-class instruction for the remainder of the school year. They continued to learn grammar via Zoom, but they also used the time to read two historical fiction books about World War II and the events that took place on French soil during that time period.

The first book, *For Freedom, The Story of a French Spy*, is based on the real-life story of a young French girl who served as a spy for the French Resistance. Using the overarching theme of heroism during a Zoom session, the students discussed the book with a particular emphasis on how they might have reacted had they lived during that time period.

The second book, *Allies*, told the story of D-Day from the perspective of an American soldier, a medic, a French resistance fighter, and several other characters who were on the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944. The students gathered for a summer French pique-nique to discuss the themes of the book and, in particular, the characters with whom they felt they had the most in common.

Although "blackbird" was not on the menu at the pique-nique, the students used their time away from the classroom well and continued to grow in their knowledge and love of the French language, its people, and its culture.

As IB Learners, we are called upon to be creative thinkers. As we identify problems, design solutions, test outcomes, and analyze and modify results, we must also grow into strong communicators who can share our creations with the world.

7th Grade Entrepreneurs Have an Award-Winning Year

As our seventh grade students create a business in Design class, they have the opportunity to showcase their talents and participate in several competitions. We had a large number of students elect to participate in these optional competitions; the experience made them all winners. We were fortunate enough for some to be recognized and awarded as well!

MAKING A PITCH

When students first develop their business idea, they work on a pitch that they videotape for themselves to analyse. In addition, they present in-person to the class. They can choose to record their pitch for a contest held by the Young Entrepreneurs Institute, and most took the time to do so. Out of the nearly 2,000 entrants in NE Ohio, **Owen Gillespie ('21)** was chosen as one of the 15 finalists and received some fun prizes.



CATAPULT TO SUCCESS

During the seventh grade Design semester, students design a marketing plan and materials, print advertisements, a website, a video commercial, an app, a 3D model in Sketchup, etc., while also developing a Company Social Initiative involving philanthropy, environmental sustainability and accessibility policies. At the end of the semester, "shark tank" presentations are made by all students in the class. The top six businesses were given the opportunity to present to a panel of judges consisting of community business leaders and a school administrator. Our school winner then was invited to compete in the regional Catapult competition at Saint Ignatius High School. **Caroline Favetti ('21)** represented LCA with poise and enthusiasm. She presented her very detailed online crafting program, *Kitty's Crafts*, for young people with social-emotional needs. It was an unforgettable experience!



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

A separate but related offshoot of our business project is our 100K Club. Club members discuss personal finance and the stock market, how it works and how events can affect it. Members get \$100,000 (virtual) to invest in the stock market and compete to see who can build the best portfolio that gains the most value. They certainly experienced a historic period in this year's economy! While most of the country was losing money in the market, LCA had students who were able to understand and read the market well enough to make incredible gains. Out of hundreds of students in schools throughout the area, **Vinh Lai ('21)** earned first place and **James O'Malley ('21)** was second place. Both won cash awards and learned so much!



A "Trip" to the Zoo!

Learning from Experts About Habitats

During our Saints At-Home Learning Program, students in kindergarten through fourth grade completed an interdisciplinary inquiry project that was centered on animals. Students learned elements of research, then they researched an animal of their choosing. After collecting facts about their animal, students presented their final project in their own unique way. As a culmination of the inquiry lesson, all students in kindergarten through fourth grade participated in a virtual field trip to the Toledo Zoo!

Students learned about various habitats and the animals that live there. After they learned about each habitat, they were able to see the animals in the exhibits at the zoo. It was a wonderful way to learn about and see animals first-hand, and a new and exciting way to hold a field trip!



UNDER CONSTRUCTION • UNDER CONSTRUCTION**WORKING AS INQUISITIVE THINKERS:***On the Job at the Compare and Contrast Construction Site*

LCA's second grade "Compare and Contrast Construction Site" was a huge success for both students and teachers. They completed a unit through guided reading mini lessons that focused on comparing and contrasting different texts. Students shared many read-alouds as they built on these skills. Instead of a typical summative assessment, the students were given the assignment to "run a construction site," where they transformed the school's dining hall into a construction site. Students became the construction workers that were taking on different projects at each site.

Room transformations, such as the construction site, are designed to engage learners through interactive, hands-on learning while presenting them with rigorous content. The task of comparing and contrasting two books can be daunting to some students that struggle with reading, but through a fun lesson paired with mixed ability groups, every student was ready to take on this challenge.



At their site, students found two folktales to read and a toolbox for each of them. This toolbox was to be used to help guide their vocabulary throughout their discussions. They had comparing "tools" and contrasting "tools" and needed to use these words to communicate their ideas with each other. This could not be completed without safety helmets and vests, of course. Safety comes first when taking on such a big project!



While reading, students collaborated to fill out a chart with similarities and differences throughout their assigned readings. These charts corresponded with their tools to help guide their vocabulary. After they read both books, they used their charts to piece together their thoughts and write them in a Venn Diagram-like format that was used as an assessment of their knowledge. Every student found success through this project and had a fun time doing so!



LAKEWOOD CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Caring Saints

The Saints of Lakewood Catholic Academy took on the role of being caring right from the beginning of quarantine. Recognizing that many of our elderly friends were unable to see family and friends during this time, the LCA community created positive messages of hope and happiness that were sent to local nursing homes. Over 1,500 messages were made with love and brought hope to both the residents and employees in each of these facilities. The LCA community chose to bring cheer during times of fear!



together, LCA Students and Families are IB Strong...Remotely

Amidst the social isolation and the uncertainty of Spring 2020 at Lakewood Catholic Academy, LCA families provided a bright light in the face of adversity. While the world was talking about COVID-19, our amazing LCA families were a source of light as they shared their faith, hope and love each day.

In the spirit of a true IB school, LCA families showed their ability to be resilient while supporting their children's learning from home and promoting IB Learner Profiles along the way. Specifically, the at-home inquiry projects on animals and heroes provided a perfect platform for students to continue to develop the IB Learner Profiles: *inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective*.



RISK-TAKERS

Our students and their families were risk-takers as learning shifted from school to home. They worked hard and did their best as they embarked on the journey of learning at home, something that had not been done before!



INQUIRERS

Our students and their families were inquirers as they posed questions about their selected animals or heroes. These questions helped to guide their learning and research.



KNOWLEDGEABLE

Our students and their families used a variety of resources to find information about animals and heroes. They became "experts" on their topics!



THINKERS

Our students and their families used their creative thinking skills as they were putting together their research information.



COMMUNICATORS

Our students and their families were creative communicators throughout the span of remote learning. Whether it was through Zoom, emails, videos, photographs, posters, drawings or apps like ChatterPix, they strengthened their communication skills.



BALANCED

Our students and their families were challenged daily to find balance between working from home, supporting education and honoring learning in a way that made sense to each individual child. Providing creative experiences that incorporated technology, art, music, or dance was key to their success!



FAITH *in* ACTION: THE IB COMMUNITY PROJECT

Each year, International Baccalaureate students around the world execute their own personal IB Community Project. This project calls on students to investigate, research, analyze, plan and act. It provides a wonderful opportunity for young people to tie their gifts, talents, and interests to helping those in need.

At Lakewood Catholic Academy, our faith informs our works. The IB Community Project is the focus of our eighth grade theology course. Each project is viewed in light of the seven pillars of Catholic Social Teaching. Students ultimately recognize their small but mighty role in building God's Kingdom on Earth.

With research and planning completed, projects were in their action phase when LCA closed due to COVID-19. However, thanks to the leadership of Mrs. Arrighi, Mrs. Crabb, and a variety of adult project supervisors, most Community Projects met several goals and were prepared for an impressive digital exhibition. Congratulations to all of our newest alumni. Your faith in action is an inspiration to us all!

