

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD: The Value of Friendship

(And End of Year Exercise for Catholic Elementary School Students)

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Virtue Link: Faith, Hope, Love, Justice, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude

Catholic Character Themes: Community, Compassion, Discipleship, Reverence, Solidarity, Stewardship

Friendship is a gift from God. The friends we make in school can be friends we keep forever. Let's look at a reading from the Book of Proverbs. Here a parent talks to their child about *kindness* and *faithfulness*, two important parts of friendship:

My child, do not forget my teaching,
Keep my commands in mind;
For they will bring you many days and years of life and peace.
Do not let kindness and faithfulness leave you.
Wear them like a chain around your neck;
They will bring you respect before God and people.
Proverbs 3, 1-4.

What have you learned this year

- about kindness?
- about being faithful to your friends?

What do you think the writer means in calling us to wear kindness and faithfulness these "like a chain around our neck"?

What Jesus says about friendship:

Jesus said to his apostles: "I call you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."
(John 15, 15-17).

What is the one thing Jesus asks commands us to do as a sign of his friendship for us?

Jesus chose us to "bear fruit that will last." What are the lasting fruits of a true friendship?

Questions for Reflection

1. Think of one thing you learned about friendship this year and write it down:

2. If there is one thing you can do to be a good friend to others, what will that be?

3. Write a prayer that asks God for the gifts you need to be a good friend over the summer and into next year.

Take the prayer you have written and look at it once-in-a-while over the summer. Remember the words of Jesus on the other side of this page: "Whatever you ask the Father in my name, He (will) give you."

God hears our prayers and answers them. He may not always give us what we want right away, but He will give us what we need. We can trust God with everything, and put our lives in God's hands. Before Jesus died on the cross, he said: "Father, I put my life into your hands." God the Father was listening, and raised Jesus from the dead. When we pray in Jesus' name, we can be sure that God the Father will hear us and help us.