

“Remember the past with **gratitude**. Live the present with **enthusiasm**. Look forward to the future with **confidence**.” – **St. John Paul II**

Lessons on Discipleship from the World Series

~ Elias J. Moo, Superintendent

I’m still recovering from the smashing the Los Angeles Dodgers received at the hands of the Boston Red Sox. Growing up just north of Los Angeles, in my home we lived and breathed the Dodgers. When my dad came to the US from Mexico when he was 17, his immediate connection with American culture was his love for baseball—and the Dodgers. Contrary to many who believe Los Angeles sports fans are only fair-weather fans, we stuck with the Dodgers through ugly and more ugly for the better part of 20 years, or at least for as long as I can remember. When the Dodgers lost the World Series against the Houston Astros last year, even a bitter Game 7 loss, there was still hope for the future. “There’s always next year,” was more than a hopeful statement of a heartbroken fan, it was a real possibility. A year later, here we are again—Dodgers in the World Series and against the Red Sox. Surely this was the year! Losing two World Series in a row would be impossible, right? Sure, the Red Sox were pretty solid, but the stars had aligned this time and we would overcome.

Fast forward to Sunday, October 28, 2018. The champagne bottles were popping at Dodger Stadium, only it was happening in the visitors’ locker room. Losing absolutely stinks. My Dodger gear is out of sight. Two wasted opportunities. “There’s always next year,” seems like an impossibility.

Perhaps it’s my post-World Series melancholy, but it sure feels like these days there’s a lot of losing happening, especially with the Church and our work in our schools. As soon as it feels we’re over a hump and the worst is behind us, something else sneaks up again (like a late Game 4 Red Sox rally just when it seems the Dodgers are about to tie the series...I’m not bitter)—another allegation, another scandal. Inevitably, we ask, “Can’t we just win one for once?” In our role as school leaders, as many of you have shared, it also feels like there’s a lot of losing happening these days—student disciplinary issues, parent complaints, personnel difficulties have all ramped up as of late. Just when we think we’ve crossed a threshold, something else

comes up. Inevitably here too we ask, “Can’t we just win one for once?”

If this is your situation, if you feel like you’re losing more than winning, know you’re not alone and know that it is also the mark of faithful discipleship.

If one were to create a win-loss column for the first disciples of Jesus, you would probably see a very large number in the loss column. However, what defines winning and losing by human standards, isn’t the same by the Lord’s. What defines winning? St. John tells us, “If the world has hated you, know that it has hated me first.” (John 15:18). Translating this to winning and losing, we can say that the mark of winning as disciples of Jesus is defined by how often we lose. At the heart of discipleship is that triumph that comes from suffering, new life comes from the cross. In this perspective, our perseverance in moments of tribulation and in moments of ‘losing’ are the opportunity for the Lord to bring forth graces and new life for those around us, especially when our challenges come from standing as witnesses of what is true and good. We may take a hit in the proverbial loss column when dealing with the fallout that comes from doing and saying what is necessary, when necessary. However, this is the cost of leadership and discipleship. It was promised by the Lord, and it is what allows the Lord to make all things new. In many ways then, we are called as leaders to be disciples with hope to bring.

Maintaining hope in suffering for the Lord is what bears the greatest graces and fruits for those we serve. As servant leaders and disciples of Jesus, hope can’t wait until next year. We must cling to hope today. When it comes to the Dodgers though, I guess there is always next year.

Instructional Leadership

~ Abriana Chilelli, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Recently I read *Divini Illius Magistri*—which I recommend to you all—and in that encyclical Pope Pius XI wrote, “Greater stress must be laid on the employment of apt and solid methods of teaching, and, what is still more important, on bringing into full conformity with the Catholic faith, what is taught in literature, in the sciences, and above all in philosophy, on which depends in great part the

right orientation of the other branches of knowledge" (87). Pope Pius XI confirms that quality instruction and properly developed curriculum are a necessary piece of the salvific work that happens in Catholic schools.

Earlier in the document, in paragraph 58, Pope Pius XI wrote, "the subject of Christian education is man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature, with all his faculties natural and supernatural, such as right reason and revelation show him to be." Christian education seeks to form the soul and the body, which includes the intellect. We work to form both soul and intellect, and as Catholics we understand those in unity with one another, unable to be separated, and thus we seek to form children through both faith and reason. We understand, as Catholic educators, that this formation of children in their faith and reason is salvific work, the work of helping students towards holiness. The Incarnation means that Jesus took on our human flesh, so we can share in his divine sonship and become saints through our human flesh, which includes our souls and intellects.

Pope Pius XI reminds us that "solid methods of teaching", and the "right orientation" of subject matters towards the pursuit of Truth Himself, are critical in Christian education. Our work as Lead Learners then becomes that much more elevated in importance: as Lead Learners, we get the opportunity to help teachers in understanding "solid methods of teaching" and to support teachers as they are formed to be able to orient their curriculum toward Truth, to plan units from a Catholic worldview. The importance of quality teaching methods and focus on curriculum is a necessary part of the formation of the students in our schools becoming saints.

The Musings of a Pilgrim

~ Jared Staudt, Director of Formation

I just returned from 10 days in France and Belgium, leading a group of 28 pilgrims. It was an immersion into Catholic culture: the holiness of the saints, the beauty of the great Gothic churches, transcendent chant of the monks, and the exuberance of monastic food and beer. The pilgrimage built upon my recently published book, *The Beer Option*, which looks at how the monks integrated brewing in their life of prayer and work. The book is really about building Catholic culture by rediscovering lost traditions and allowing our faith to guide all that we do, including how we eat and drink.

Although we probably won't have the chance to take our students to Europe, we can still take them on pilgrimage through the great artifacts of the Catholic tradition and initiate them into the living reality of Christian culture. Pope Benedict spoke of "being struck by the arrow of Beauty" especially through the witness of "the saints and the beauty that faith has generated." Fr. Riley, the chaplain of our pilgrimage, spoke about his joy in finally visiting Chartres cathedral after being inspired by learning about its beauty decades ago in his Catholic education.

The Catholic tradition, like Chartres Cathedral itself, can inspire our students and point them upwards to the higher realities of life. Stories, music, visual art, poetry, and the witness of the saints and heroes shape our life with hope and joy. Catholic education should provide a map that guides our students through their life's pilgrimage, giving them signposts of truth, beauty, and goodness to direct them to their heavenly destination.

Superintendent School Visits

Superintendent Elias J. Moo will be visiting the following AoDCS during the month of November 2018.

- November 1-2** – St. Clare of Assisi Catholic School, Edwards
- November 8** – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic School, Denver
- November 8** – Our Lady of Loreto Catholic School, Foxfield
- November 9** – Christ the King Catholic School, Denver
- November 9** – St. John the Baptist Catholic School, Longmont
- November 15** – Good Shepherd Catholic School, Denver
- November 28** – St. Pius X Catholic School, Aurora
- November 28** – St. Therese Catholic School, Aurora
- November 29** – Nativity: Faith and Reason Catholic School, Broomfield
- November 29** – Annunciation Catholic School, Denver



"Your great happiness is based on the warmth of your heart."

~ Unknown

The St. JP II Center will be closed Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.