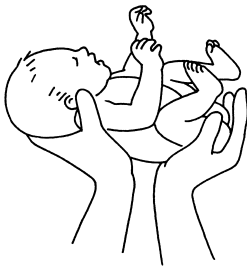


WE ARE ALL
"NAMED, CALLED,
CHOSEN".

From the Saints:

"In the evening
of life, we will be
judged on love
alone."

-St. John of the
Cross



IMPORTANT
DATES IN
DECEMBER

Memorial of St. 4
Francis Xavier

Solemnity of the 8
Immaculate
Conception of
the Blessed
Virgin Mary

Memorial of St. 13
Lucy

Memorial of St. 14
John of the
Cross

Solemnity of the 25
Nativity of the
Lord

Feast of the 26
Holy Family of
Jesus, Mary, and
Joseph

From the Chaplain's Office

A Supplementary for the Catholic Educator at St. Edmund Campion Secondary School

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Christmas: Turning Despair Into Hope

Psychologists and other mental health experts will tell us that it is at this time of the year that depression will hit the hardest, affecting especially the lonely and marginalized amongst us.

It is at this time of season that we have to be especially vigilant, both in anticipation of the birth of the Christ child, but also to the most needy and vulnerable students in our midst. The noise and colour and lights that come along with the season easily mask or cover-up the despair, the anxiety, and the loneliness that afflicts many of our kids.

We know as Catholic educators that materialism and the promise of something shiny and expensive under the tree is not a remedy for that which affects us on our



most deepest and profound level: the level of the soul.

In a time of despair, whether brought on economically, socially, emotionally, or spiritually, students want to experience hope. And that objective

is especially significant for Catholic educators.

When we walk our halls here at school or stand up in front of the classroom, we will be the most "church" that a great number of our students will ever see. We will be that beacon of hope that tells our kids that better days lie ahead.

The birth of Jesus is the ultimate sign of that hope: that God loves us so much that He came down to earth in the form of His own Son. God becomes human flesh! When we are on holidays next week and we beginning ticking off the days till Christmas morning, let us consider how we can embody this hope that the 25th of December celebrates. May we all come back to school in the new year ready to be visible, active messengers of the Good News, for all our kids and our community. Amen.

A Building Full of Christmas Stars

The Gospel of Matthew states that the star that the wise men followed "stopped over the place where the child was" (Matthew 2:9). It was this star that led them to Jesus. In another way of looking at it, the wise men needed to lift their heads up and look at *higher things* in order to understand where they might find God. This type of search is easily adaptable to our mission in

our own school. We are called



to stand above the offerings and temptations of secular society and point to what God has to offer to our students in their everyday lives. The virtue and the holiness that comes from living a life pleasing to God is what we as Catholic educators need to lead our kids towards. Think of yourself as a "Christmas star" and always be conscious of your role as a guide for our kids to get to Jesus!