

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## YOU HAVE REVEALED THEM TO THE CHILDLIKE

*This week, I asked Seminarian Nick to share with us about some of his experiences at St. Brigid's.*

*Father Nick*

It's hard to believe that it's been almost two months since I began my pastoral internship here at Saint Brigid's. Many thanks to you all for the incredible ways in which you've welcomed me into your ministries, homes, and lives.

Without a doubt, one of the greatest blessings I've encountered at this parish has been our Catholic school. The first Catholic school I ever set foot in was the seminary when I began priestly formation in 2016. Before then, I was a public-school boy the entire way. To say I have had very little experience in Catholic education is quite an understatement! In fact, many of the pastoral assignments and projects I've been given during my time in formation have also been outside of Catholic schools. Put simply, I'm a greenhorn in Catholic education.

In my first days here, Fr. John told me that I'd be involved in teaching the second-grade class throughout the year as well as other grade levels at St. Brigid's Our Lady of Hope Regional School. I'm not certain, but I probably responded with a blank stare, thinking about just how much I didn't know about teaching second graders. A nervous swallow followed too for sure. Between myself and my sister, I was not the one who received the "schoolteacher gene." She does it every day!

My first day teaching the 2nd graders was one of those "throw yourself in" kind of days. I felt unprepared. But wow do children surprise you! I met a second-grade class that was warm, energetic, and most of all, bright! Every time I work with the students, I am surprised more and more by how eager they are to learn about Jesus and how much He wants to be involved in their lives.

Moving from lecture halls in Roman universities to an elementary school classroom was a surprising challenge to what I thought I knew about theology, and how grateful I am for it. In the past two months I've heard some second graders speak more beautifully about the book of

Genesis than some of my professors. And don't tell either of them I said that! It's not an insult to my professors, but a true praise of the innocence and reflection of God's grace that these children have shown me.

Sometimes you just need to hear a child's voice telling you that God loves you. There's an authority with which a child speaks that adults simply cannot match. This is an authority that comes from innocence and receptivity, not power and position.

I don't want to seem like a cynic, but we adults are so often distracted and buried by tasks, procurement, and doubts. I'll be the first to say that I'm guilty of it! There's lots in this world to distract us from the childlike docility buried in each of us. In Matthew 11, Jesus says, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike."

To put it all in one word, children possess an incredible docility that allows them to see God in such a beautiful way. It's this docility that allows children to seldom be bored and often be amazed by the world. Wouldn't it be something if we could regain some of this as adults! Whether our childhood was a fond memory or far from perfect, there was a point in our lives when we looked at God's world with childlike amazement. At some point in our lives, we start to lose this perspective.

There have been plenty of moments in my life where I've been told to "grow up," and rightly so! But maybe there's some points in our lives where we could "young up," and see the world like a kid again, like a child of God! Because at the end of the day, whether we like to admit it or not, we're all still children. How lucky we are to be children of such a loving and tender Father!