

# Thursday News

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. -KJV Matthew 2:1-2*

Every experienced teacher knows of at least a few exciting moments when they have come up with a razzle dazzle lesson plan that “wowed” their students and brought their enthusiasm to a fever pitch. Great teachers live for those moments and yearn for more of them day by day. Students love it as well whenever learning is coupled with fun and excitement of any kind but especially days that include anything involving a live animal, loud noises, real paint, or a combination of smoke and fire. We educators understand the power of excitement and hands-on discovery and would love to infuse every lesson with fireworks or rabbits popping out of hats. Unfortunately, there is much in education that just does not lend itself to the dramatic. A good teacher can bring a certain amount of drama to any subject, and this administrator will encourage that at every turn. But try as we will, there are always those stretches in the educational journey where progress can only be achieved by a good supply of practice, repetition, and memorization that borders on or camps out in the bland land of the tedious.

Teachers have been made to feel guilty, at times, in today’s high energy world for lapses in the school day where repetitious exercises and drill are relied upon to imprint a concept or idea. Avant-guard teachers are even praised for not requiring any homework whatsoever on the part of their students. Yet we know that there is much to be gained through routine and daily practice that may, indeed, be entirely devoid of dramatics or “fun.” Artists will even tell us that discipline, commitment to practice, routine, and structure are the gateway to creative accomplishment having any lasting and real merit. Bertrand Russell wrote of the necessity to bear with the boredom of structure and discipline and argued that any society “that cannot endure boredom will be a generation of little men...unduly divorced from the slow processes of nature, in which every vital impulse withers.”\*

I looked to the Christmas story this year and saw many instances where the main characters moved slowly to the center stage of world history through days, months, and even years of tedious labor. Shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, a dreadfully dull duty when all others about them were asleep in their beds. Joseph subjected himself to the tediously slow pace of a cumbersome and pregnant young woman with many special needs while blindly following inconvenient orders that were the despised idea of a foreign king. And the wise men were professionals all who had dedicated years of study to their craft, patiently and studiously charting the heavens. They scratched at the puzzle of the ages of how all the stars swam in relationships that kept changing but yet seemed tied together in some ingenious dance. These wise men were products of a lifetime of study dedicated to a line of work that promised no immediate reward. Yet when the star appeared, they were there looking, observing, and alert to see its implications when everyone else saw nothing at all.

May we be found faithful in the dry valleys of duty while others chase after a mirage of shimmering illusion leading nowhere; an illusion that issues the siren call of instantaneous gratification, quick results, and easy execution. May we lead our children by word and example showing them how to persevere through adversity, weariness, and strain to obtain the rewards of both earthly study and eternal preparation. Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not (Gal. 6:9). There are enough little men about us.

Mercy and Truth,

\* As cited in Kathleen Norris, *Acedia & Me* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2008), 41

*Mr. Moe*



### **Christmas Break**

Today is the last day of classes until 2010. Our Christmas break will be from December 21 through January 3. We will return to classes on Monday, January 4.

### **January Invoices**

Invoices for January's tuition are being sent home in the purple folders today. Please either mail in January's tuition or send it in to the office on the first day back to school after the Christmas break (Monday, January 4). Our mailing address is River's Edge CA, P.O. Box 31733, Knoxville, TN, 37930-1733.

### **Name Change**

Some of you have been asking about our name change and how it affects things like written checks for tuition, etc. For the remainder of this school year, we will operate with the ability to use both names as we transition over to the name of River's Edge Christian Academy. So, you do not need to rip up checks if you forget and write "CFC" on them. However, we do ask that you try to remember to use our new name ("River's Edge CA") when writing checks or sending us mail beginning now. We will continue to update you as we move forward with this new name.

### **Rotation Calendars**

The rotation calendar for January is being sent home in purple folders today. Please look through the calendar and write your rotation day(s) on your planner to be ready for the next semester. You should look through each month's rotation calendar carefully. You could be working more than once in a month. Each family has agreed to work 10 shifts of approximately five hours each throughout the school year (since there are 10 months in a school year). In order to get all of these shifts in for the school year, some families end up working two shifts in one month. We need YOU to help the school run smoothly. Thank you for all you do regarding this commitment, and please let us know if you have any questions.



### **Attendance Forms Due**

Thank you to all who have already submitted attendance forms. For the rest of you, please spend a little time completing the attendance forms for the first semester over the Christmas break. These forms were distributed at the beginning of the school year. If you cannot find yours, you can download it from our web site ([www.cfc.school.com](http://www.cfc.school.com)). To locate the form, click on "Umbrella Programs" on the left side of the web site. Scroll to the bottom of that page and click on the link that takes you to the umbrella .pdf forms. You will find links to several forms, including the attendance form for the first semester. One completed form per student (K5 and up) should be turned in to the office no later than January 11, 2010. We will send home the second semester attendance form sometime in January. The second semester attendance form will be due in May.

### **School Coupon Book Incentives**

We received the incentive rewards for selling the school coupon books this week. There were incentives offered based on the number of coupon books sold. We tried to get all incentives sent home with students this week. Some students received them on Wednesday, and the rest should have received them today (Thursday). If you have questions about the incentive your child received, please send us an e-mail over the break ([office@cfc.school.com](mailto:office@cfc.school.com)). We will look into the situation when we return in January.

**Donated Laptops?**

If you have been really, really good this year and end up receiving some sort of updated computer, we have a terrific plan for your old laptop! With the transition to the new computer system (RenWeb), the school is in need of laptops. If you end up having a laptop that is going to sit unused at your house, please consider donating it to River's Edge. We can give you a receipt for your taxes.

**Chili Cook-off**

Make sure you spend some time over the Christmas break getting ready for the big Chili Cook-off and Talent Show, which will be held on January 14. Forms were sent home last week for that event. Please see that form for details and contact the office if you have questions.

**Giving Jar**

Mrs. Johnson's 1<sup>st</sup> grade class just completed a very special activity. After studying Matthew 6:24 ("You cannot serve God and money at the same time."), the students decided to start a giving jar. They earned money for helping around the house, helping grandparents, and putting on plays. They gave up their money to help others, even tooth fairy money! They raised over \$130.00! It was a great math lesson because they counted the money as it came in and grouped it. They worked in teams to go shopping at Target and shopped for five children. Each child got at least two toys and some pajamas. There is no doubt these students understand the meaning of giving. Way to go!!

# MERRY CHRISTMAS