

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Heidi Hobler, Director St. Francis of Assisi Preschool

"....And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...." Luke 1:47

Happy Gaudete Sunday! Hopefully, your family will have a chance to visit the parish 'Revel! Rejoice! Roll!' event that is planned today. Among the things to see will be the Christmas tree representing preschool. Many of our students helped decorate with silver and gold glitter pinecones that were collected from our campus. Nothing says "preschool fun" like glue and glitter! Several others worked on their cutting skills and created a paper chain to wrap around the tree.

While, as Catholic educators, we particularly emphasize, with our students, the birth of our Lord and reflect on all that means in our faith, we also try to acknowledge and celebrate the enthusiasm that the children have for all of the other exciting parts that are in the Christmas season. Some of these, undoubtedly include glitter, ornaments, and gift making. As you might imagine, it also often includes discussions about Santa, his elves, and presents that might arrive. Some of our teachers even go so far as to create a class version of the popular "Elf on a Shelf". The purpose is not only for the children to have fun with some elf antics, but there are also other important lessons that can be created.



When I was teaching, I, like many of our teachers, made sure that the elf in the classroom was often caught misbehaving. An elf in one of the 4-year old classes this year was found painting on the windows and stringing a zip line across the classroom. He also was found outside on the playground in a tree; he apparently left the classroom without permission! Some elves have brought laughs because they've dumped bins of crayons or mixed up chairs. All of these moments can become lessons to teach the students about taking care of the things in their classrooms, helping clean up messes, and even how to stay safe. As naughty as some elves can be, they can help provide lessons of kindness and doing special things for others too. Some elves have been known to carefully

decorate classrooms with holiday decor, make ornaments for all of the students, and leave tasty treats. They can echo the lessons of sharing, doing a good deed, and making someone feel extra special. These teaching moments can then be tied into how we can prepare for Jesus' arrival and ultimately spread His message about love of others.

If you find any mischievous or helpful elves about, see what kind of lessons might present themselves. You never know what these silly activities could teach to our little ones!

Registration for the '21-'22 school year will open early in January. To learn how to join our amazing preschool, please visit our website at: preschoolatstfrancis.com or contact Shelley Freeman at shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org.

