

## Happy Valentine's Day!



*"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God." (1 John 4:7)*

Happy Valentine's Day! On this day when we recognize the importance of affection and kindness in our lives, I think it's also an appropriate time to reflect on how we teach our youngest students about love of God and each other. While certainly most of our classes partake in some traditional Valentine activities such as card making and special treats, we also use this as a time to further reiterate the love that God has for us and we should have for each other. I so enjoy walking in the hallways of preschool and hearing/seeing all of the ways in which our students are learning this! While this message is carried throughout the year, Valentine's Day offers a good opportunity to practice it in other ways. One such way is in emphasizing our friendships and caring for our peers. Whenever parents express worry about their child starting school and not making friends, I always try to reassure them that preschool is the ideal place to practice

initiating, forming, and sustaining friendships. I know several families who still have connections and friendships with other families that they met here! Preschool is where children begin to look beyond their world of 'me, myself, and I' and out into the world of recognizing the importance and value of those around them. During each day, we reiterate the idea of God's love being for everyone and how we need to extend it in the same way to those around us. God asks us to love and show compassion for all, no matter our differences. We constantly model doing this in the classroom because everyone is considered a friend and member of the class family. Sometimes we are lucky enough to catch extra glimpses of our students expressing their friendship with their classmates. It might be by seeing a student offering unsolicited help to complete a task. It might be by watching one student take another's hand in line. Perhaps it is one

friend working with another to finish a puzzle. And particularly around this time of year, it might be making and sharing Valentines. One of our 3 years olds I think said it the best in response to a question about her artwork: "I am making hearts for the kids so they know I love them!" I can't help but think that the Holy Spirit must have been present in this child to inspire these words! In our daily prayers, let us ask God to help us to continue to show kindness and love to those around us, particularly as we try to model this for the little people in our lives. May our Lord be always present in our hearts!

Registration for the 21-22 school year is happening! To learn how to join our amazing preschool, please visit our website at [preschoolatstfrancis.com](http://preschoolatstfrancis.com) or contact Shelley Freeman at [shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org).