



**Callie Bike**



**Margaret Alvarez**

# Inspiring Learning

## Cathy Partney,

**3rd Grade Teacher**

I learned many new skills personally and professionally from Distance Learning. However, two thoughts stand out to me. First, how blessed we are to be part of a community that can adapt as easily as we did in such a short period of time. Well done, St. Mark's families and staff! Second, I was so impressed with our students' ability and willingness to adapt to learning online. Their depth of knowledge and their thoughtfulness to help each other, whether it is a quick yes or no question or how to question, is so inspiring. Our school is a place where you feel supported and can rely on each other professionally and personally. During our Distance Learning experience, we continued to see our school's mission at work. Through Rev. Sullivan's online services and our class Monday's Devotional we are still able to grow in our faith especially at a time we felt the most need. Our families and teachers worked extremely hard to continue our student's passion for learning through our Google Meets and online video lessons.

## Callie Bike, '10,

**5th Grade Humanities Teacher**

Throughout Distance Learning, I learned that I rely on the students just as much as they rely on me! It was really hard some days to stay motivated when I didn't get to see the smiles and hear the funny stories that are usually a part of my daily routine. As a student, I spent 9 years of my education at St. Mark's and can confidently say that the community has shaped me to be the person and teacher I am today. When trying to find a teaching job in Houston, I knew it was time to return home. There's truly not a better community than St. Mark's! I see our mission in action in many different forms. Whether it be a student helping a peer in the classroom, or a teacher helping another teacher, the community at St. Mark's is unlike any other, and there is always someone there to help you. I love teaching because I love watching a student learn and make connections. The feeling of having a positive impact on a child's life is unlike any other reward.

## Margaret Alvarez,

**Art Teacher**

During Distance Learning I found myself doing things that I never thought I could do. I had to get really creative when picking projects for my students to do at home. Although it was a challenge, I really enjoyed some of the one-on-one conversations I got to have with my students via portal messages. Through this entire pandemic, I have learned to really appreciate what I do and who I teach! I am super grateful; St. Mark's is my family! I love that when anything life-changing happens to me personally or to the community as a whole, it is reciprocated with so much love and support. Our students are engaged and loving what they are doing. They have a sense of pride that I feel really reflects who we are as a school. Sharing what I love is such a gift. Art has been my passion since I was a kid. Teaching art and watching my students grow as artists brings me so much joy. This is why I teach.