

Weekly Eagle News – Middle School

Hello Middle School Community,

I hope you had a wonderful Spring Break and were able to dedicate some significant time during Holy Week to reflect as a family on Christ's death and resurrection.

I spent most of last week camping with family and friends at Leo Carrillo State Park near Malibu. I firmly believe that camping is very much a character revealing experience and for me, often a humbling one. Unfortunately, I have a reputation of not being the best version of myself whenever we are preparing and packing for a camping trip. One family member remarked to me last week, "Remember Dad, we aren't going to be grumpy when we are packing!" Wow, the truth hurts sometimes, but that reminder did help me keep things in proper perspective as we prepared to hit the road. All in all, it was an awesome week of beautiful weather and a wonderful time connecting with friends.

Here are a few other highlights/observations/lessons from my week of camping:

- It is a beautiful thing falling asleep each night to a chorus of frogs croaking and waking to the singing and chirping of birds.
- Hike with someone who loves wildflowers. They will stop and take lots of pictures (which gives the more out-of-shape hikers a chance to take a breather) and it will force everyone to pause and appreciate these little gifts of God's creation.
- Disconnect from your phone. Leo Carrillo is nestled in a little canyon which prevents any reliable cell service in most of the campground. It was a blessing to not be tied to my phone checking emails and text messages.
- When kids are together, they will figure out things to do for fun. The group we camped with had kids aged from preschool to high school. It was awesome to see them hanging out, playing games, and riding bikes. Shockingly, none of the kids ever uttered the words "I'm bored". I believe a big reason for that is they did not have cell phones, tablets, or video games to resort to.
- Slow down. I need to heed this advice more than anyone. A week of camping with no set schedules, appointments, or agendas led to great conversations and lots of laughter. No one worried too much about what time we were headed to the beach or what time dinner would be. It was a wonderful reprieve from the hustle and bustle of "regular" life.
- Campgrounds are places where people can just be themselves. Campers are usually not too worried about their outfits, their hair, their makeup, they just want to be comfortable. We could all probably take a cue from campground life and not stress so much about our personal appearance.
- Tell stories around a campfire. Whether true or made up, some of the best memories of camping take place around the fire.
- Pack an extra jacket or sweatshirt. It was chilly last week, and I found myself regretting not following the advice my mom would often give me as a kid, "better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it!"

By the end of the week, I was glad to be back home and sleeping in my own bed. However, I hope to take some of my camping experiences and lessons and apply them to my day-to-day life (especially to not be grumpy when packing the car!)

News and notes:

- This week is the last week to buy dance tickets! The dance will be on April 12 from 6-9 PM on our MS Basketball court. There will be a taco truck, drinks, and dessert. We will also have some interactive games and inflatables. All are free with the price of admission.
- Our 8th graders, parents, and faculty had a wonderful time in Washington DC. We thank God for his traveling mercies and healing hand as the group navigated some delays and illness the last day of the trip. However, the trip went very smoothly, and amazing memories were made! 7th grade parents, look for an email this week with details about the 2025 Washington DC trip as well as the registration process.

- Sibling Pickup at Lower School – Middle school students are **not** allowed to check out their siblings at the lower school gate and may not walk down Kansas street to meet their cars waiting in the line. MS students must stay on the east side of Kansas Street with the middle school teachers on duty and wait for their car to pull up on that side of the street.
- One of my favorite days of the year is fast approaching! Mark your calendar for the 71st Annual Holland Festival on Saturday, May 4th. Visit the [event website](#) for band and choir performance times, festival information, and opportunities to help support this beloved tradition and school fundraiser.
- Please continue to be in prayer for 8th Grader David Stan. Praise the Lord! David's most recent test results were extremely promising, and the family is hopeful he will be able to proceed with a bone marrow transplant. Please continue to pray for David and his family and if you feel so led, you can support them financially [here](#).

Key Dates:

- April 12: Friendship Games (minimum day for LS/MS only, MS dismissal 12 PM)
- April 12: Middle School Spring Dance 6-9 PM
- April 15: Parent Society Meeting – Hear updates from all principals and meet new Lower school principal Chris Winters
- April 26: Forum Festival/Knott's Berry Farm (7th-8th Band and Choir, MS Jazz Band)
- May 4 – Holland Festival
- May 22: 8th Grade Promotion – 4 PM at the University of Redlands Chapel

Have a fantastic week,

Matt Wiers
MS Principal