

"THEY SAY TEACHERS TOUCH THE FUTURE... CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS TOUCH ETERNITY."

*by Mrs. Chantelle Luarca
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I am truly blessed to have had Catholic Education through all of my school years. I attended Our Lady of Good Counsel School from preschool to eighth grade, Saint Francis School in Manoa, Chaminade University, and University of Scranton. I am currently the second grade teacher and interim principal of Our Lady of Good Counsel School (OLGCS). Miss Donna Daligcon, Miss Esther Amano, and Mrs. Theresa Nicolas are some of my former teachers and I am honored to now work alongside these wonderful people. Sister Davilyn Ah Chick and Mrs. Cindy Olasso were my principals while I attended OLGCS and I am sincerely grateful they continue to reach out to me as my supporters.

I grew up with a deep trust in God, prayer, and faith. All throughout my school years, faith was something I could share and speak about freely and confidently. I was always surrounded by people who shared the same values, purpose, and views. As a young adult, learning more about the world's reality was certainly eye opening. It was during those years, that I really began to see the importance of everything that was taught to me in my early years at Our Lady of Good Counsel School.

Thinking back, there were many moments when my teachers said or did something that helped strengthen my faith in God. But the most profound moment happened during my sophomore year in high school. It was September 11, 2001. It was early in the morning when I heard about the World Trade Center tragedy. As my classmates and I continued to talk about the news at school, our homeroom teacher settled us down and asked that we begin to pray for the victims, their families, and the people responsible for the day's events. I will never forget the feeling I had when he announced we would be including terrorists in our prayers. Initially, I was surprised by his request, but it wasn't completely something I disagreed with. It made

sense to me and I felt so mature because I understood why we would seek God to help these people. God is compassionate and his love is unconditional. This is a message I heard all through elementary school.

As I continued to grow into adulthood, more and more of what was once taught to me as a child, became a reality. Even though a bible scripture or an exact parable isn't something I quickly turn to in explaining life and how I should react, I do believe all that I've been taught does influence my choices today. This is why I choose to teach and lead in a Catholic School. Teaching is my calling. For me and all of my colleagues, teaching does not stop at academics. It means teaching our students how to live a good, moral life. My calling to be a Catholic school teacher is a direct request from God to spread His message of love to His children. I believe He's blessed me with so many years of Catholic education so I, in turn, can touch the lives of children in the same way that my teachers touched me.

Our superintendent, Dr. Rockers, once shared a quote that resonates when I think about the responsibilities Catholic school teachers have. And it's this: "They say teachers touch the future... Catholic school teachers touch eternity." What a great feeling it is to know I have that power. Yes, I teach my students how to read, write, add, multiply, and experiment. Yes, I do touch their futures because I help them to build their knowledge to become professionals and fulfill their dreams, but I also have the greatest responsibility of teaching children about the meaning of life and how we were made to love and serve others so they can grow to be honest, honorable, grateful people.

My husband and I are expecting our first child and we're looking forward to the day we will send our children to OLGCS. It is my prayer that this school and its people remain as guides for students in finding their God-given talents to become active Christians.