

31 Days of the Little Way: Attending Parent-Teacher Conferences

It was parent-teacher conference day, and—don't ask me why—but I signed up for conferences early in the morning.

So, on a day off from school, the boys and I gulped down breakfast and dashed out the door to get to our meetings.

Remind me to do that differently next time.

Still, we made it, and my children sat (or stood or did jumping jacks or engaged in virtual battles in Pokégym) while I met with their teachers, first one and then another.

Even though I go in with the mental list of questions I want to ask and information I want to share, I am never sure what to expect from these meetings.



Although I care about our children's academic success, I can usually figure out what's going on there without a conference. So I tend to skip "How soon will you be teaching long division?" and ask questions like "Who are my child's playmates at recess?". I imagine that's true of most parents.

I want to know how our children are doing socially. They don't need to be the most popular or get an invitation to every party or set new trends among their classmates. But I don't want them to feel left out or picked on or bullied. I want them to have friends. I want them to feel welcome and included.

John and I can send our children anywhere for an education. We send them to a Catholic school for the faith and the values. We want them to learn kindness and experience it.

As our children get older, the social dynamics are not as simple as they were when they were just starting school. And it's a little harder for me to understand or to navigate this season as a parent. I'm still not sure I'm ready.

But during the conferences, I was struck—as I so often am—by the genuine concern their teachers have for the children. They don't see them just as students, but as individuals. They want to shape the school experience in ways that will make this a great school year—and a great foundation for the next one, and the one after that.

Teaching, I am sure, is not easy. Students don't make it easy, and parents like me, with my questions and worries and failure to visit the teacher websites, may make it even more difficult.

But, during the conferences, as the teachers shared stories of times when they have

noticed something special in our children, I saw the light in the teachers' eyes. And I thought, there it is: holiness. God is with these teachers every day as they embrace this vocation.

I'm so very grateful we have them in our lives.

