Reading and Writing and Listening and Speaking...Oh My!

Welcome to The Faithful Reader! This newsletter shares tips and ideas for reading instruction in the Catholic classroom.

All teachers want the best instruction for their students. Here are some **essential practices in reading instruction**:

- Students spend 75% of class time reading, writing, thinking, and speaking
- The teacher provides instruction in 7-10 minute mini-lessons and in 10-15 minute small group instruction (guided reading)
- Students have time to read books independently that they choose themselves
- Worksheets are kept to a minimum: student work is meaningful and necessary
- Vocabulary is connected to what students are reading and taught in context
- Teach, don’t just assign
- Reading and writing don’t just occur during “reading and writing” class, they occur in all areas

**FAQs**

**My students struggle to read independently for very long. What can I do?**

If they are reading independently, that is a great start! Be sure to model, show, and tell what independent reading looks like. Share your expectations: sit in the same place, read the whole time, etc. This is a great opportunity to create an anchor chart that shares your expectations (3-5 expectations is plenty). Also, use part of your board or a bulletin board to post a graph. Each time students independently read, time how long they can do it the way you want them to do it. Each day, the graph should grow - and then you can celebrate!
**Where the Mountain Meets the Moon by Grace Lin**

This lovely book tells the story of Minli who lives with her parents in the valley of Fruitless Mountain. Minli and her father are happy, but her mother is unhappy because of the hard work from morning to night and always being hungry. Minli seeks to change the family’s situation, and in the process meets friends and comes to realizations about gratitude and family.

**Read Aloud** for 3rd, 4th, or 5th graders  
**Independent Reading Level** 4th  
**Lexile** 810  
**Genre** Fantasy