



Father Duenas Memorial School

September 16, 2009

Dear parents and students,

As you know, we will be wrapping up the first quarter with examinations on October 7 and 8. After the scheduled **Progress Reports** were done, you all should have had an idea about what potential achievements or potential deficiencies students have in the offing, unless of course some students refused to show such reports to their parents.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed! Here's wishing that ALL would take to heart the time and the opportunity that are in their hands to learn, not for the exams, but for life. I congratulate those who do well thus far. I challenge those who are, at best, mediocre, and at worst, lagging behind the mainstream. Students still have two weeks to shape up and gear up for the challenges up ahead, even as the school year goes into full steam with the onset of the second quarter come October 10.

Please be informed of the following dates and events:

September 23-24	Picture Taking Days
October 13	Deadline for payment for PSAT for Grades 9-11 (\$20.00)
October 14	PSAT (Seniors will be OFF for the day)

And now for the juicy part ... You all know as well as I how high expectations are for students of FD ... and these come from all quarters, near and far! The Church community of the Archdiocese of Guam expects us all to integrate fully with the life of the local Church, and put our best foot forward, accepting our identity and mission as Christian Catholics.

I would like you to know that as a priest, I fully support that thrust. In connection with this, I would like to invite ALL to take part, where possible, in the **March for Life** slated for **October 4, 2009**, at **Plaza de Espana**, beginning at 1:30 PM.

Second, just about everybody from within and without FD, expects changes to happen at the school. But we all know how hard it is to swallow any form of change. Resistance is always more than just a possibility, but a glaring reality. Change is welcome for as long as it does not come too close for comfort to one's home base. We hear people clamoring for greater discipline in the school, but we hear people on the other side of the fence deploring the very changes they want us to put in place.

One clear example of this is the area of student discipline. I will be honest with you. We do have a problem with a small number of them, which I consider as "holdovers" from a certain misguided tradition, like the tradition of cheating and plagiarizing, along with the "tradition" of "stealing" books from one another, or cutting the line at the cafeteria, to name just a few.

This leads me then, to the most important issue of this letter. We are instituting amendments to the **Parents/Students' Handbook** with special focus on **STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**. As you all know, every **RIGHT** has a corresponding **RESPONSIBILITY**. And such responsibilities are all motivated by the desire and active search for the **COMMON GOOD**. Basically, I am sure you will not count it against us if we put a little more teeth on rules of discipline, conduct, and deportment. For us to do this, we need to amend the current handbook, as was indeed, decided on unanimously by the **ADMINISTRATIVE, TEACHING, AND NON-TEACHING STAFF** of FDMS at a meeting held last September 11, 2009.

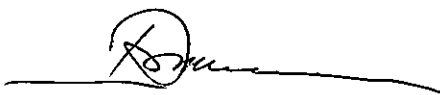
Please expect to receive a copy of those changes in the near future. Like before, parents are expected to: (1) read it carefully; and (2) sign the **CONTRACT** or **ACKNOWLEDGMENT** form.

On the positive side, I would like you all to know that positive signs are afoot that show us that our drive for greater discipline is working. One, the number of those who consistently cut the line at the cafeteria has diminished. Second, that we are pretty much on top of the situation as far as habitual late-comers are concerned.

But there is a lot of room for improvement. Mere conformity to rules does not automatically translate to students owning up to them, and it does not necessarily mean they have internalized the rules. One thing we know for certain is this ... A mere slap on the wrist definitely does not help any in the gradual process of them owning up to the values behind the very rules that seem drastic and difficult at first blush, but which would prove to be the very stepping stones towards becoming what every student at FD declares in the Alma Mater song: *"We shall conquer in God's holy name."*

It is my fervent hope and prayer that with God's help, (and a lot of support from the great majority of parents) we can complete what we have set out to do. Together, I am sure, we will get there!

Sincerely yours,


Fr. Vitaliano "Chito" Dimaranan, SDB
Principal