



Mrs. Lina Defilippis
Teacher Witness - Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School

Being a “witness” to the Catholic faith is more about what ways I see our faith alive in the world than anything I personally do. In my home and my work I see faith alive in the actions of others. I like to watch for those kind words or gestures that are simple and understated and so subtle you might not notice them at first, but upon reflection you sense their presence. We affect each other by everything we do and say. I like to be a witness to the faith by experiencing the faith of others and by never giving up an opportunity to be kind and caring.

Jesus was surely the greatest teacher. He had a presence and a message based on faith, hope and charity. As teachers, we are always looked upon for support and guidance and to be the caring adult who listens and is aware of students’ needs. I want to give my students faith by being a good role model and not being afraid to show myself as a Catholic, first and foremost. I want to give them hope by letting them know that they are special and important. I want them always to feel charity, by making them feel accepted and included in our learning environment, despite their learning exceptionalities. I want my classroom to be a respite from the everyday tasks of education and create for them a special place where they can be and learn at their own pace. Their needs become my needs. .

One of my greatest fears is that my students will go through life thinking they only have to pray if they are in a religion class or at Mass. At the beginning of class, I ask my students to prepare themselves for prayer so that their minds are ready to hear the word of God, their hearts are ready to receive His message and their lips are ready to say His name so that no other bad thoughts or words enter this classroom. We ask Mary Ward, foundress of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary and patron of our school and education for young women everywhere to pray for us. This sets a framework for all learning. I want my students to know that whatever we learn in the history classroom should be for their life-long learning, not just for those 75 minute. THEY need to learn how to make the world a better place!

Some young Catholics today are afraid of being a witness and of showing that they believe. I am always most concerned when my students are embarrassed by the fact that they go to mass on a regular basis. This is something of which to be proud! Celebrating the Eucharist is the greatest “social networking” that was ever created! Jesus becomes your friend, your food, your music, your life and you get to share the experience with all your community!

