

The importance of working together

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Let us go back to February 28, 2020, last day of teaching that happened in our school classes. After that day, schools were closed in Lebanon to reduce the risk of spreading the Corona virus. First week of closure seemed like a misplaced vacation; however, with the increasing number of infected individuals and deaths, with the serious precautions of staying home and with the lack of an imminent date to reopen schools, we were challenged to plan and start distant learning.



Implementing e-learning in Lebanon is quite hard due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure that allows learning from home. Moreover, many of our students do not have access to internet; many do not have computers or laptops. Teachers, on the other hand, need to be trained on the usage of e-learning software, adapt their teaching methodologies to be able to continue educating students during these difficult times. Difficulties have been constant companions of our school and boarding. As an

educational, psychosocial and spiritual entity, we teach our students not to be defined by their difficulties, but try to view them as opportunities...opportunities to learn and grow. Therefore, we are trying to turn this lockdown into an opportunity to learn and prepare ourselves for teaching from far, to have a culture of cooperation without physical proximity.

It is so nice to see teachers helping each other. Young teachers who have more computer literacy than their older colleagues are learning to access and utilize the e-learning platform and then guiding their colleagues gradually. We, as leaders, also had our share of learning of course, as we believe that implementing a change should be modeled and not only expected of others. We learned ways to design an e-learning platform, make tutorials explaining the process of accessing and maintaining e-classrooms and sharing them with the teachers. We are aware that not all students are benefiting from e-learning equally due to connection problems, lack of appropriate computers. Moreover, our students with special needs might need further assistance in acquainting with the new methods; however, we are trying our best to reach out to every student, help parents as much as possible and hopefully we will succeed in establishing a good system of mutual learning and teaching to our big school family.

The world is living a pandemic indeed. If, as human beings, we fall into the dilemma of comparing our urgencies and priorities. Then we would be paralyzed spectators; however, if each one of us, in their own domain, tries to learn, teach and model good behavior, then awareness like a virus starts from home and spreads to the neighbor, to the surrounding, to the world following the gospel according to Matthew 5:14-16 that states "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden, neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven".