



# ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Nascantur in Admirazione*  
"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

## St. Thomas K-9 School Newsletter September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

### *School Mission Statement*

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School exists to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Educating in the Eucharistic culture and classical intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church, students are led to encounters with the transcendental good, true, and beautiful. In wonder, confidence, and virtue, students are prepared to engage our broken world for the glory of God, the good of others, and for their own sanctification.

### Virtue for the School Year: *Devotio* (Devotion)

- Having the will to give oneself readily in the service of God

### Virtue for Margaret Mary Term: Sacrifice

- Offering something to God by setting it aside out of reverence for Him



## ~ Events Calendar ~

View the complete *St. Thomas School Calendar* [here](#).

Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup>

**Beginning of NWEA Testing (runs through the end of the month)**

Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

**Fall Festival (organized by Parent Association) - more info to come**

Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>

**End of Margaret Mary Term**

Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>  
**Half Day (11:40 Dismissal) – Parent-teacher Conferences**

Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>  
**No School**

## From the Headmaster

### **Definitions Series**

At parent orientation night, I briefly touched on the meanings of “classical,” “liberal arts,” and “integrated,” among other things. These are terms that are often tossed about in certain circles of Catholic education. Since we call ourselves a “classical Catholic school,” it would be good to review these and related terms and ideas. I will be doing this for successive weeks, beginning this week with the term “classical.”

In education, the term “classical” originally designated an education based on the texts, art, culture, and thought of Ancient Greece and Rome, the “Classical Age.” The Italian Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries) was originally, among other things, an attempt to recover this age, with the idea that it had been lost or ignored. However, the tradition of education developed by the Greeks and Romans had in fact survived after the fall in the West of the Roman Empire in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, largely through the work of the Church and, in particular, the monasteries. At the heart of this surviving tradition were the 7 liberal arts, the Trivium (Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric) and the Quadrivium (Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Music). In the High Middle Ages, these arts were the 7 “ways” by which the mind was formed in preparation for higher studies in theology, philosophy, law, and medicine. With the Italian Renaissance, the *content* of these ways began to expand, alongside new studies in the arts and “humanities.”

As it developed through the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, “classical education” became the common form of education in schools across Europe and the New World, both among Catholics and Protestants. It was the Jesuits, however, who were universally (even among Protestants) acknowledged to have the best schools. Still largely centered on Graeco-Roman texts, these schools provided an education in Latin, working primarily with Latin texts and involving a heavy dose of memorization, recitation, reading, writing, and dialogue and debate. Not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century did many schools begin to move away from this model in the name of a more “scientific” and “practical” education.

The current “return” to a classical model of education is in many ways a reaction against over-specialization and disintegration in education, both secular and religious. It is also an attempt to keep the “great books” and discussion surrounding them at the center of education. As we pursue this model here at St. Thomas, we are attempting to do so in an *integrated* way, which means more than just pursuing a certain method or drawing from “great books,” though it indeed includes certain methods and great books.

**With all of this in mind, then, “classical” at this school means that we are rooting ourselves in the sources of the Western tradition, with the goal of pursuing an integrated vision by way of the 7 liberal arts.** This education is preeminently human, and it is one that helps students to develop a coherent identity in continuity with their origins.

Next week we will further explore the meanings of “liberal arts” and “integrated.”

### **Orientation Night Follow-up**

I enjoyed seeing everyone who came to parent orientation night last week. Please be sure to look over the handbook and sign the agreement form, which is due at the end of this month. Thank you again for entrusting your child(ren) to St. Thomas! As I emphasized last Wednesday, the teachers, staff, and I are all dedicated to forming the students in the Catholic Faith as it has been handed on in Christ’s Church. Parents and teachers both have a grave task, entrusted as they are with the formation of young persons. Ultimately, we are in this together, and we will surely fail unless we constantly turn our eyes to God, the Source, Inspiration, and End of all our work here at school.

### **NWEA MAP Testing**

Beginning next week, K-8 students will be taking the Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress tests in Reading and Math. This is the first of three rounds of testing, with the next coming in the winter, and the last coming in the spring. These tests are one indicator among others of how our students are progressing over the course of the school year. Results of this first round will be shared at parent-teacher conferences in November.

### **Right-to-Abortion Amendment**

This morning at the school assembly, I mentioned to the students this evil amendment and the bishop’s request for prayer, about which many of them had heard at their parish over the weekend. Today (September 12<sup>th</sup>) is the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, which falls in the middle of the octave formed by the feasts of the Nativity of Mary (the 8<sup>th</sup>) and Our Lady of Sorrows (the 15<sup>th</sup>). The 15<sup>th</sup> is the day on which the bishop has asked everyone to start praying a 54-day novena, and I

encouraged the students to ask their parents about this prayer effort, as well as to invoke in particular the aid of the Blessed Mother in combatting this pro-abortion effort.

A related effort is being organized by the 40 Days for Life organization. Please see the attached flyer for more details.

## School Policies/Reminders

### Lunch Ordering

Hot lunch ordering will begin for the month of October. **The order form will be sent out with next week's newsletter. Please note that, this year, the school will not place a lunch order for any student whose parent did not submit an accompanying payment with their order.** That will cut down on the confusion and headache surrounding outstanding balances.

## Volunteers Needed!

### Substitute Teachers

Please let me know if you'd be interested in being on the substitute teaching list. This is a major service to the school and any help would be greatly appreciated. The school pays subs \$12 an hour.

## Rescue Project

St Thomas Church is excited to offer three opportunities for school families to participate in Fr John Riccardo's new program called The Rescue Project. We will be offering a weekly evening format for parents, a home-based monthly format for the whole family, and a weekday format for school moms with young children. The Rescue project focuses on how the Gospel message is explosive, extraordinary, and the life-changing news of Jesus' defeat of the power of Sin and Death. The Rescue Project is an 8-week program that consists of a community meal, video and discussion groups. This is such a wonderful opportunity to get to know other St Thomas families! To register go to <https://www.mission-suite.com/forms/78880665-a69f-4c5e-b270-b07683875b21/submit>. For more information please contact Caroline Gambale Dirkes, Director of Evangelization: 734.761.8606 X 2904; [cdirkes@sta2.org](mailto:cdirkes@sta2.org)

### The Rescue Project for School Moms

**\*\* Young Children Welcome**

**Dates: Thursdays, Sept 29- Nov 17th**

**Place: Room 250**

**Time: 9am-11am**

**Cost: \$20 (light refreshments)**

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**The Rescue Project for Families**

**Dates: 2nd Saturdays (monthly format)**

**Place: Meinhart's House**

**Time: 4:00pm-7:00pm**

**Cost: \$50**

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In Christ,

**Michael Sauter**