



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas K-9 School Newsletter

September 19th, 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 19th

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

Friday, September 30th

Jeans Day/Last day for shorts until May

Sunday, October 2nd

**Bake Sale for Library Improvements (organized by the Parent Association)
after the 9:30 and 11:30 Masses – more info to come!**

Friday, October 7th

**All-school Eucharistic procession and rosary: After 8:00 Mass, parents
welcome!**

Friday, October 14th

Fall Festival (organized by Parent Association): 12:00-4:00

Friday, October 28th

End of Margaret Mary Term

Thursday, November 3rd

Half Day (11:40 Dismissal) – Parent-teacher Conferences

Friday, November 4th

No School

From the Headmaster

Definitions Series – Week 2

Last week, I went over the meaning of “classical” as we are using it at St. Thomas, namely “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 week, we are going to work on the terms “liberal arts” and “integrated.”

The 7 liberal arts are composed of a “trivium” (the “three ways”) – Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric – and a “quadrivium” (the “four ways”) – Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, and Music. These are not lists of “subjects,” nor do they comprise the entirety of what constitutes an educated person in the Western tradition. The list itself evolved from various Greek and Roman sources and thinkers, becoming more fixed by the time of Charlemagne (ca. 800). They are called “liberal” because they were the foundation of training a free man in Greek and Roman societies, as opposed to someone in a servile status. A free man engages in work befitting him, i.e., the work of the mind. An “art” involves productive work, and the product of a liberal art is not a physical thing, but the formation of the mind.

The term “liberal” has been retained, though usually without its elitist connotations, and it is still relevant to understand these arts in connection with freedom. The liberal arts are essentially a training of the mind to pursue wisdom. The trivium is a training in the art of language, and the quadrivium is a training in the art of grasping mathematical quantity and harmony. By traveling these intersecting “ways,” a student is prepared to pursue *scientia*, knowledge by way of causes, and to obtain a vision of the deeper meaning and beauty of reality. The pursuit of wisdom is one that demands a way of life freed from enslavement to sin and the allure of the world, the flesh, and the devil. The training of the mind thus must be matched by an emotional and moral training, a training of the heart.

It is important to emphasize that a classical education is a liberal arts education, not because the liberal arts are the only 7 subjects of a classical curriculum (though many of them do comprise discrete subjects), but because they are the foundations of the subjects and the way in which they are pursued. A 5th grader studies history in order to be immersed in history’s grammar, its basic way of pursuing truth, which is through re-creating the past to tell a story. A 3rd grader studies the matter of natural phenomena to become familiar with the grammar of the natural sciences, which is patient and repeated observation and experimenting.

Though there are various ways of pursuing truth and various subject matters in that pursuit, these all can be “integrated” when the curriculum as a whole contains the principle of its own unity. Thus, the source of an integrated education is something internal to it rather than something imposed from outside. By analogy, a human body is integrated by the soul, an internal principle of life, unity, and action, and not merely by the various connections among its limbs or by a scientist creating a Frankenstein. An integrated education achieves unity when its various pursuits cohere in the formation of the mind and heart in wisdom, which is not merely the sum of things learned or even of habits of thinking, but a vision of life and reality rooted in Truth, Goodness, and Beauty Himself.

Next week, we will define “teacher” and “education” in relation to what we’ve laid out so far.

NWEA MAP Testing

Beginning this week, K-8 students will be taking the Northwest Evaluation Association’s Measures of Academic Progress tests in Reading, Grammar, 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.

Prayer and Fasting this Week – Ember Days

During the morning assembly today, I encouraged students to make some small sacrifices this week to join the bishop in his call for us to pray, fast, and give alms to combat the pro-abortion amendment on the November ballot. This week is particularly relevant for this effort, since this Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday are Ember Days, days of fasting and abstinence that occur (always as a set of 3) 4 times a year around the change of each of the seasons. The Church has observed these days at least since the Patristic era. They are not obligatory, but they are a great way to mark liturgically the natural cycle of the year. See [here](#) for a fuller explanation of Ember Days, if interested.

October 7th Eucharistic Procession

Fr. Bill will process with the monstrance immediately after Mass on Friday, October 7th. He will walk through the entire school, blessing the classrooms. The whole school will process behind him while praying the rosary together. Parents are most welcome to join us! The feast for that day, Our Lady of the Rosary, marks the anniversary of the great Christian victory at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571.

Upcoming Events – From the Parent Association

Bake Sale for the Library – Sunday, Oct. 2nd after the 9:30 and 11:30 Masses

The St. Thomas Parent Association plans to update our library to create a fresh space that is orderly, inviting, and cozy to read in. We are kicking off the fundraising for this effort by hosting a Bake Sale. The funds raised will be used for fresh paint, seating and area rugs, and new educational decor. We would love your help in making this happen. There are many ways to get involved, the most important being baking & donating something delicious! Please stay tuned for a sign-up genius.

Fall Festival – Friday, Oct. 14th from 12-4

The plan for this year is to have a petting zoo and balloon twister, both in the parking lot. Students will participate with their classes during the school day.

School Reminders/Updates

Lunch Ordering

Hot lunch ordering will begin for the month of October. The order form is attached, including the due date and payment instructions.

School Improvements

New preschool equipment has arrived for the play area (see pictures below!). These items were purchased with our grant money, and they look to be high-quality and long-lasting. The steps from the street to the parking lot are being redone this week. We are still looking into quotes for redoing the retaining wall around the playground, something we'd really like to take care of before the new playground is installed next spring.

