



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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

St. Thomas K-9 School Newsletter

October 10th, 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](#).

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

Friday, November 11th
Turkey Trot

From the Headmaster

Definitions Series – Week 5 (final week)

We have thus far looked at the meaning of “classical,” of the “liberal arts” and “integrated,” of “education” and “teaching,” and, finally, of “Catholic education.” I have often referred to the sources of the Western tradition, or to a culture or tradition that we want to pass on at this school. “Western Civilization,” “Western Culture,” the “Western tradition,” “Catholic culture,” etc. are all terms variously used to try to express a historical reality. We need to precisely define what we mean at St. Thomas by saying that we are drawing from the sources of this tradition or culture.

As I am using it, “culture” is a way of life of a people adapting to their environment and informed by religion. A “civilization” is like a “superculture,” something that often contains a number of cultures within it. It is a more broadly applicable “way of life” that results from the planning and reflection required to build and maintain cities. A civilization, among other things, requires a formal education to develop its religious teaching, its self-understanding, and its purpose – in a word, to preserve and pass on a self-conscious *heritage*. If the transmission of a heritage is stopped or radically changed, the civilization itself will either cease to exist or be taken up into a different way of life.

By “western,” I mean the civilization, cultures, and traditions that began in the Near East and that gradually came to encompass (through successive empires and ultimately the Greeks and Romans) not only the Near East, but also the entire Mediterranean World. Thus, “western” actually involves three continents: Asia (its westernmost portion), Africa (its northernmost parts), and Europe (originally its southern and southeastern parts). Primarily through the work of the Church and her missionary activity, the rest of Europe (such as the British Isles, northern France, Germany, Poland, etc.) was slowly incorporated into this civilization. Western Civilization was also transmitted to the New World, such that the United States cannot be understood apart from this tradition.

Clearly, Western Civilization predates Christianity. It was something broadly united through two main trends: the development of the city-state and the development of a tradition of thought. The Greeks made some of the most important contributions

to each of these. To the city-state, they added the idea of being a “citizen.” To the tradition of thought, they added a philosophical framework that revealed reality as intelligible and ordered. The Romans, building on this, added a tradition of law. The Christian Religion informed this civilization with a new principle, a new source of unity and purpose, changing its entire course in light of an entirely new and eternal perspective. As Western Civilization’s center moved to Europe, the customs of European peoples were integrated with this tradition even as Europe remained in contact with the Muslim and Byzantine influences within Western Civilization.

We can speak of a “Catholic culture” in a broad sense, meaning any way of life informed by the Catholic Faith, or we can speak of “Catholic cultures” as historical realities, particular ways of life lived at particular times and places. To say that a way of life is informed by the Faith is not in any way to make a statement about the personal holiness of the members of that culture. Rather, it is simply making a statement of objective historical fact, according to the meaning of “informed” that I have used in this and previous weeks.

At this school, want to pass on the ideas of a Catholic culture. These ideas have been integral parts of the various Faith-informed cultures of the Western tradition, that is, the tradition that was transmitted to the New World and that gave our country the fundamental sources of its identity. We are *classical* by being rooted in the sources of this tradition and pursuing a vision through the liberal arts. We are *Catholic* in having the Faith and the way it has been lived as the integral principal of our classical studies. Without an identifiable tradition, we would be disoriented, without reference for having a coherent vision or way forward. We know what to study, how to study, what to love, etc. first and foremost because it has been handed on. We cannot have true development and authentic innovation without a coherent starting point, one that points us both to a *human* formation and to a *deifying* formation. In a time when we are increasingly disoriented and when young people are increasingly without hope and meaningful identity, we hope at this school to offer something of solidity and splendor to the students, so as to say: the answer is not from you; forget about yourself for a brief time and look up!

Mass Intentions

School families will have first dibs on getting in Mass intentions for school Masses. **These should be submitted to the parish office, not the school office.** Beginning in November, intentions at school Masses will be opened up to anyone. Please contact the parish office for further questions.

U-M Psychiatry Residents Observing This and Next Month

The school has an existing contract that has carried over from previous years for residents from the University of Michigan’s School of Psychiatry to observe St.

Thomas students. This will happen on four Tuesdays beginning tomorrow (10/11). Residents will simply observe; they will not interact with students or teachers. I anticipate very little interruption for the students.

Donate School Clothes

The school is in need of a replenished stock of size 6-10 khaki pants as back-ups for the lower school kids. Please consider donating any you might have. Thanks!

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences this year will run from 1:00-8:00 on November 3rd, which is a half day (11:40 dismissal). A sign-up will come out later this month. These conferences are mandatory.

Upcoming Events – From the Parent Association

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

Please see the attached flier. **We are asking for a \$5 donation per student to offset costs for the event.** The plan for this year is to have a petting zoo between 12:00 and 4:00 and a balloon twister between 1:00 and 3:00, both in the parking lot. Students will participate with their classes during the afternoon.

Turkey Trot – Friday, November 11th

Please see the attached flier for the t-shirt design contest (for 5th-8th graders) for this event, which will take place during school.

A Thank-You from the Library

A big THANK YOU, to Pia Gavignon, the PTA, and everyone who contributed to the Bake for Books Sale last weekend. I feel so encouraged and blessed to be part of such a generous school family. With my 6th Grade Junior Librarians, I would like to thank you for the gift of your time and for sharing your baked goods with our community. --Mrs. Davignon

