



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas K-10 School Newsletter September 11th, 2023

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: Faith

- Assenting, through grace, to God's revealed truth

Virtue for Margaret Mary Term: Truthfulness

- Telling the truth when one ought, as one ought



~ Upcoming Events ~

September 13th

Parent Association Meeting, 2:30 p.m. in the parish hall

September 29th

Michaelmas celebration (details to come); Signatory pages at the back of handbook due

October 6th

First Extraordinary Form School Mass

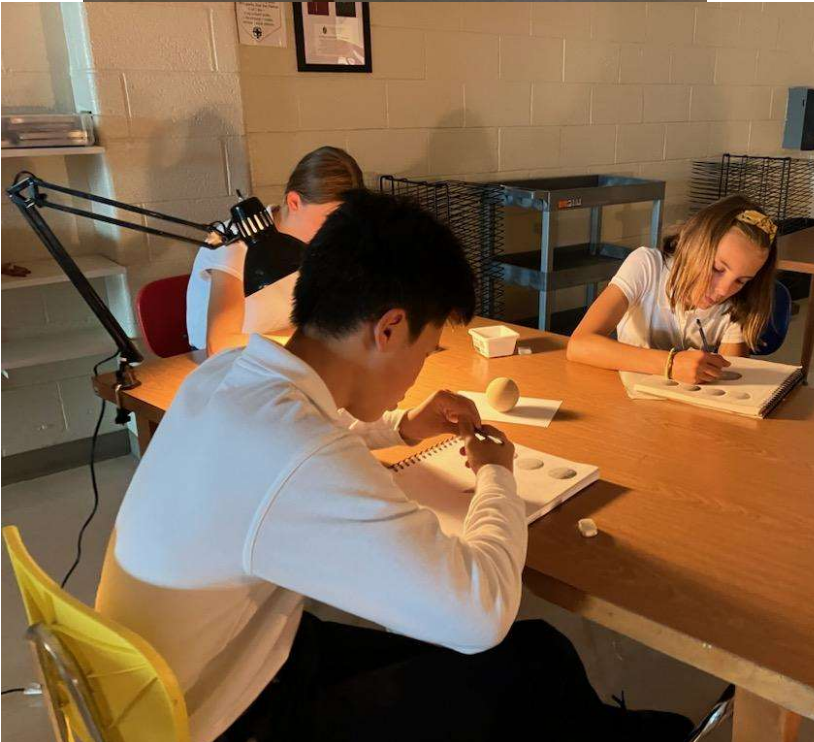
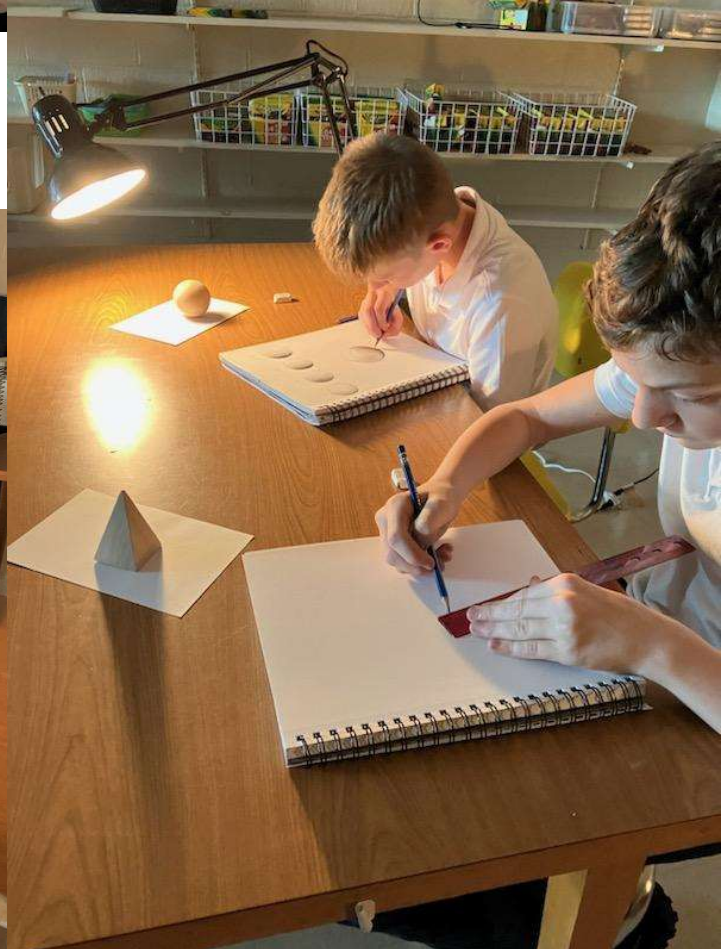
October 10th

Technology at Home - Presentation and Discussion, 7:00 p.m. (see below)

October 13th
Fall Festival



7th and 8th Grade Nature Studies – Hard at Work!



Eucharistic Procession



From the Headmaster

Thank you to all who were able to make it to parent night last Thursday. It was a wonderful opportunity to launch the school year, coupled with our Eucharistic procession the next day! Thank you again for entrusting your children to St. Thomas. Your support and formation at home are a great blessing for the school.

As I made clear last Thursday evening, we are a school completely dedicated to Christ and His teaching. All of the teachers and staff understand that we have taken on a great burden in being entrusted with the formation of these young minds and hearts. We are here not to put our own clever spin on truth, or to play games with the Faith as it has been handed on, but to pass on what Christ Himself has given with fidelity and love. Indeed, as a classical school, we are trying to pass on, more broadly, a tradition of western culture, one historically informed by the Catholic Faith. It is a great privilege to be part of this endeavor, one that we undertake in partnership with you and in complete dependence on the grace and mercy of God.

Please read over the family handbook that was sent home this week. There are two pages to sign and return by the end of this month – the handbook declaration of agreement and the diocesan family-school agreement. At back-to-school night, I highlighted our section on communication and our updated technology policy. Various other parts have been updated or reorganized in order to reflect current realities and practice – all the more reason to give the handbook a closer look this year!

Our first Extraordinary Form school Mass is now scheduled for October 6th. Because it's a First Friday, Fr. Bill plans to offer a votive Mass to the Sacred Heart. I look forward to hearing all of our students sing the Ordinary in Latin, and to hear our 9th-10th grade schola! Before scheduling further EF school Masses, we will once more elicit feedback and reflect on how the students prayed with the Mass. During assemblies I have been giving and will continue (through September) to give short explanations of the Extraordinary Form, catechizing the students on the Mass generally and on some of the distinctive features and prayers of the EF Mass.

From the Dean

My name is Joey McCoy and I am the Dean of Student Formation here at St. Thomas Catholic School. Because my role is a little more nebulous than that of the other faculty here, Michael thought it would be a good idea for me to articulate how I serve the school. I will break it up according to what I do in the Upper, Middle and Lower schools.

Upper (9-10)

Most of my work revolves around the development of the upper school. Together with Michael, I work on many "macro-level" things such as the overall vision of the upper school, recruitment, an endowment we have started for the upper school, and interfacing with parents on various levels. I spend most of my days engaging with the upper school students in many "micro-level" ways too: teaching the 10th grade Scripture class, leading the upper schoolers in their daily prayer time, leading them on their ongoing weekly missions, and leading them in their weekly workouts. Another important facet of my job is meeting one-on-one with the upper schoolers to give them individual support academically, relationally, spiritually, etc. This is not counseling or spiritual direction, per se; it is a way to simply invest in them and care for them as an individual member of the school. I do this in collaboration with the parents, always communicating with parents before and after talking with their child. In general, I serve as a kind of glue: someone who can integrate all the facets of the upper school into a unified formation.

Middle (6-8)

In the middle school, I do mainly two things: 1) assist in shepherding the new households, and 2) meeting one-on-one with students. My meetings with middle schoolers generally happened only at the request of the parents who have an interest in someone from the school helping support their son or daughter in this kind of way. As many middle schoolers often need someone to talk to, many parents have approached me to regular check-in with their child. Again, in doing this I also keep an open line of communication with the parents. Additionally, I also handle behavioral and discipline issues, including detentions.

Lower (K-5)

My work in the lower school is also on more of an "as needed" basis. Occasionally there are times when a certain student is struggling behaviorally and could benefit from talking with someone who is a listening ear and a pastoral presence in the school. In this instance, a teacher will usually consult with me and we will set up a regular time for me to meet with a student. There are also other ways I can support the teachers with certain class dynamics and help form the character of the lower school students.

To sum it up: my favorite thing in the whole world is to collaborate with parents in the formation of their kids. My great desire is to see every one of these kids come to know God, begin to live in His Kingdom and to grow to full maturity "to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Eph 4:13) So, do consider me a resource, and don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you feel I can be of service in some way.

Presentation and Discussion Night – Technology at Home

I invite all parents to attend an evening presentation and discussion on technology use at home. Mike Hanley, a parent with extensive experience in online security, will

provide parents with resources, strategies, and background on using devices at home. By giving you information and concrete actions that you can use to monitor your children's use of the internet and screens, we hope to support you in having an informed and effective plan, something increasingly needed in a bewildering digital world. I am still working out some of the details for the evening, including the possibility of childcare. Please seriously consider making this night a priority. As I indicated already in the handbook, the school is pursuing a "disciplined and limited" approach to technology use, and having a "match" between this and your approach at home will be of great importance for the continued development of our school culture and academic excellence.

Meal Train Ministry at St. Thomas

If you are interested in being involved with the meal train ministry at the parish, please contact Ruth Atzinger (rcazinger@gmail.com), who can give you further information.

Men's Monday Basketball

Dan Mishler, a St. Thomas parishioner, along with myself, are organizing a casual men's league at the St. Thomas gym. This group has existed for a number of years and recently switched to playing at St. Thomas. It currently consists of a number of St. Thomas parishioners and other Catholics, and we are hoping to broaden its membership to bring on board other St. Thomas folks. Games are on Mondays, beginning at 8:30 p.m. and ending at 10:30 p.m. St. Thomas dads are welcome to come out to play! Please let me know or Dan (dpmishler90@gmail.com) if you would like to come. We will begin with an open gym/pick-up format over the next couple of weeks, after which point we will organize committed players into set teams of around 7 players. We'll then get a set schedule and game times. This is an invite-only group, so please do not invite other players without checking with us first.