



# ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Nascantur in Admirazione*

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

## St. Thomas K-10 School Newsletter October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 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 ~

October 2<sup>nd</sup>

**First day for pants - no shorts**

October 4<sup>th</sup>

**Dress-up/Leadership Day**

October 6<sup>th</sup>

**First Extraordinary Form School Mass**

October 10<sup>th</sup>

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

October 13<sup>th</sup>

**Fall Festival, 12-4 p.m., playground area**

October 17<sup>th</sup>

**School Pictures**

October 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>

**No school: ICLE Training Days for Teachers**

October 25<sup>th</sup>

**Upper (High) School Meeting for Parents, 2:15-3:05, School Library (see below)**

October 27<sup>th</sup>

**Last Day of Margaret Mary Term**

November 1<sup>st</sup>

**All Saints' Day - No school**

November 3<sup>rd</sup>

**No school: Parent-Teacher Conferences, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

November 10<sup>th</sup>

**Turkey Trot**

November 14<sup>th</sup>

**Upper (High) School Open House, 7:00 p.m.**



# Michaelmas Pictures and Donuts

Mass with Fr. Lou



Michael House





Gabriel House



Raphael House





## From the Headmaster

We have now entered the month of the Holy Rosary, and this week in particular is a rich one in the liturgical calendar, with St. Therese of Lisieux, our Guardian Angels, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Maria Faustina all celebrated this week. It is this Saturday, however, that stands out for the month, since October 7<sup>th</sup> marks the anniversary of the great naval battle at Lepanto, a great testament to the power of the holy rosary.

Today at assembly I reminded students that I had talked about praying to the archangels and guardian angels for protection last Friday, a day when, it turned out, we very much needed it! The return of our statue was a “little miracle” showing that protection, and, even more so, the protection of Our Lady, the Queen of the Angels. Jesus speaks about the guardian angels in connection to children (Mt 18:10), but that is really to be applied to all of us, who, as Christians, are called to a childlike trust in God and the helps He sends us.





We also continued to review the meaning of having faith, our virtue for the school year. We focused today on the line from the Act of Faith, “who can neither deceive nor be deceived,” which refers to God, who reveals His truths in Divine Revelation. Faith gives us, through grace, a deep confidence and certainty in the truths to which we assent. The basis for this confidence is a trust in the Revealer, who is not out to trick us and who is Himself Light and Truth. Faith is a gift beyond the capacities of the reason or will to attain, and it requires a childlike cooperation on our part. Of course, our faith is often weak; life in this world is very much seeing “in a mirror dimly,” as St. Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 13. It is natural and normal to struggle with questions related to the Faith. Yet faith is not blind; it is not a mere leap of trust into the dark. Rather, it is a firm abiding in Christ and His teaching, which illumines our minds. Two ways by which we can more strongly cling to Christ’s teaching are through study and through prayer. This week, I asked the student to pray to their guardian angels to grow in faith.

## From the Dean

The Immersive Missions have begun for the Upper School. There are two missions this term: 1) Iconography and 2) Serving a widow of the parish around her house. In Iconography the 9th and 10th graders have begun work on an icon of Gabriel. They are participating in an ancient practice which aims, not simply at the production of artwork, but at bringing the presence of God into the world. The students are challenged to really enter into this mission - to give themselves to it and sacrifice themselves for it - that they might bring something divine into the world that, once blessed by the Church, has power to combat evil spirits and heal souls. This is a work that takes much obedience and humility and which ends up transforming the one who practices it. Secondly, the 9th and 10th graders are continuing to serve at the home of Juliana Ong, who is a widow without much family nearby and who has become our blessed friend. The students (both last Spring and so far this Fall) have cleared trees, bushes, burn-piles and much more around Juliana's house. However, the greatest work of this mission is simply for these students to learn how to love: to try to love one soul well and with all their hearts. Juliana has been very touched by this mission, and I sense that it gives great glory to God.

Another area of formation that I engage in with the upper schoolers is twice/week workouts. This is hopefully in preparation for there someday being a household sport. For now, though, I lead these guys into a physical challenge that tests them. There is such great importance in gaining the capacity to endure, in having the strength of mind, body and soul to be able to persevere through affliction and trial. It is precisely this that we focus on during these workouts: endurance and unity; for endurance is impossible without each other, and endurance together produces the great fruit of unity. The students never want to do these workouts, but afterwards they are filled with joy and goodness!

I have also been leading the upper schoolers in their daily prayer time. For this ultimate drama of learning how to pray and take significant steps in the spiritual life we are following the path of St. Ignatius of Loyola. His way can be summed up in two movements: 1) helping the soul arrive at the place of truly and deeply discovering Jesus Christ, and 2) giving ourselves to Him completely and without reservation. As he begins always with trying to help inculcate the gift of "fear of the Lord", we have been spending much time meditating on the reality of sin, hell, judgement, the eternal consequences of not responding to Jesus, etc. - all with the goal of helping us to see the reality of Jesus more clearly and begin to seriously strive after Him.

I have been helping with the middle school households. Many of you receive communication about this through Mr. Mileski, but they really have been off to a great start. It brings out a whole new dynamic in the students, and it helps form

them in a way that could never have been done before. The households are all beginning to gel well and each of them are beginning to really engage with what it means to be man or woman of God!

Lastly, in coordination with parents who have reached out to me, I have been regularly meeting with many students, trying to help shepherd them towards virtue and a deeper life with God.

It is a real honor, one for which I thank God every day, to be able to work with Michael in serving all of your families. May God's kingdom come ever more deeply here at St. Thomas.

## Baby Announcement

I am excited to announce that Mrs. Jackowski is expecting! She is due March 6<sup>th</sup>. We will keep her and the baby in our prayers. We will be arranging for a long-term substitute to finish out the school year.

## NWEA

This week, students in the 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades will be finishing up their NWEA testing in Math and Reading. This fall session will be followed by two more, one in the winter and one in the spring, allowing us to track student progress. Results from our first round of testing will be available around parent-teacher conferences.

## Building Security Assessment

Sergeant Rush will be sending us his confidential report this week based on his assessment last week. Using that report, we will be updating our emergency plans and reviewing our building security apparatus, keeping parents informed about the approaches we plan to take to various situations and threats.

## Moms' Social Night

Come meet with other St. Thomas moms on Friday October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm at the St. Thomas Parish Hall for a social night and recipe exchange! Our theme will be "School Survival Meals." Please email Emma Sauter ([sauterrn@gmail.com](mailto:sauterrn@gmail.com)) or Megan Dimattia ([megandimattia@icloud.com](mailto:megandimattia@icloud.com)) with one of your go-to weeknight meals, or lunchbox ideas (a link to the recipe would be great). We will compile into a packet to share. Please also consider bringing an appetizer or dessert to share! Don't have a recipe to share? Come anyway!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0F4AA8A92BA5F94-44785992-stthomas>



## Upper (High) School Parent Meeting – Wednesday, Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>

All parents are invited to attend a meeting specifically focused on updates and information about our upper school. The meeting will begin at 2:15 p.m. with a Divine Mercy Chaplet in the school chapel and proceed to an overview and discussion session in the school library. The purpose of this meeting is as follows:

- To join in prayer for the upper school
- To hear about specific highlights, trends, and stories among the 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders
- To see the latest overview of thoughts for next year and the “bigger picture,” including our place in the broader diocesan picture
- To hear about our upper school November open house and plans for promotion
- To propose thoughts, feedback, or questions

Your support and input are of great importance to the continued development of a full PreK-12 school. Thank you for making an effort to attend!