



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas PreK-11 School Newsletter

September 9th, 2024

School Mission Statement

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School exists to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Educated 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: Hope

- Having a firm trust that God will help us be with Him in heaven

Virtue for Margaret Mary Term: Magnanimity

- Pursuing what brings great honor



~ Upcoming Events ~

September 20th

School Votive Mass to the Holy Spirit and Procession/Blessing

September 23rd

October Lunch Orders Due

September 27th

Dress-down Day, Michaelmas Festival (details forthcoming)

Family Handbook Signatory Page Due

Check out Flocknote for Parent Association Info:
<https://sta2school.flocknote.com/dashboard>



Votive Mass to the Holy Spirit and Eucharistic Procession: Friday, September 20th



Please join us for a special votive Mass to the Holy Spirit at 8:00 a.m., followed by a Eucharistic procession through the school building. This is a wonderful opportunity to launch our year as a school community in union with Christ and vivified by the Holy Spirit!

From the Headmaster

It was a wonderful blessing to be with you last Thursday for Back-to-School Night! Please take time to review the handbook, and let me know if you have any questions. Please sign, detach, and return the last page of the handbook

acknowledging its contents and your general agreement with them. This should be returned to the school office by Friday, September 27th.

Today at assembly I talked about how both the virtues of hope and magnanimity have to do with overcoming difficulty in pursuit of a future good. It is only when we see the future good as possible to attain that we can really commit to pursuing it with trust and confidence. The virtue of hope falls between the extremes of despair, by which we become convinced that the difficult good is impossible to attain, and of presumption, by which we think the good being pursued is not ultimately difficult or able to be lost. As we continue to unpack these virtues, we will be looking at what is meant by “great honor” in the definition for magnanimity.

I also reviewed with the students some of the important bodily postures – how to kneel and stand, what to do with your hands, where to look, etc. – that we need to have at Mass. Teachers have been doing a great job already of reminding students of these. I explained how these seemingly little things are important details. After all, when we seek to show our love to another, details matter, especially in courtship. These little things are so many ways by which God is asking us to love Him; He is condescending to our human level to make our entry into a relationship with Him – something truly awe-inspiring! – gentle and not overwhelming. Through His Church, our mother, God is teaching us how to love Him, even as He loves us first, as shown in His concern for all the details of our lives.

Both our upper-school boys and girls had great retreats last week, which served as opportunities for them to dedicate the year to Christ and to form deeper bonds with each other. Each of the retreats was an overnight at the Tar Paper Shack, which is a hunting cabin in Ann Arbor designed by Tom Monaghan and used for getaways and various retreats.

From the Dean

Hello St. Thomas Parents!

My name is Joey McCoy and I am the Dean of Student Formation here at St. Thomas Catholic School. I was unable to be at the Back to School night because I was leading an Upper School retreat. Nevertheless, I still want to introduce myself and tell you about my role here in the school. As the Upper School is growing, my work is mostly revolving around the Upper School, and also somewhat in the Middle School.

Upper

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, hiring, an endowment we have started for the upper school, interfacing with parents on various levels, and getting various new initiatives off the ground. However, 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 Drama in the upper school; working with the girls and guys Scholae (in a supportive role); overseeing the upper school daily prayer time (guys and girls) and specifically leading the guys prayer time, while Ms. Benz leads the girls prayer time; overseeing and leading the Immersive Missions; playing music with the guys; overseeing the physical formation component that we have in the upper school for the guys and girls (I lead the guys workout, while Ms. Schoenle and Ms. Wood lead the girls workout). Another important facet of my job is meeting one-on-one with the upper school guys to give them individual support academically, relationally, spiritually, etc. Ms. Benz and Ms. Jackowski will serve a similar kind of role with the girls. This is not counseling or spiritual direction, per se; but it is a way to simply invest in them and care for them as individual members of the school. We do this in collaboration with the parents, always communicating with parents after talking with their child. Thus, in general, in the Upper School I serve as a kind of glue: someone who can integrate all the facets of this part of the school into a unified formation.

Middle

In the middle school, I do mainly two things: 1) overseeing the middle school households, and 2) meeting one-on-one with students. For the households, I help create the vision and strategy for how we are developing those entities within the school, and I am present for most of the household formation times. Mr. Votel, Mr. Snyder, Ms. Schoenle, and Ms. Jackowski are the "Household Heads" who lead each household. My meetings with middle schoolers generally happen 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.

Last but not least, I also handle behavioral and discipline issues for the Upper and Middle School, which I always try to treat as an arena for helping a young person grow, correct themselves, and more toward the good!

I look forward to what this school year holds, and for all of the things that God might do in the minds and hearts of our young people.

Flocknote

This school year, I will be using Flocknote to send out texts for school closings and other pressing announcements. Your information on Flocknote is only visible to group- or super-administrators in Flocknote. Please let the school office know if you want to opt out of Flocknote texts and only rely on email to receive these messages.

NWEA

Beginning in the next week or two, students in the 2nd-8th grades will be taking the first round of NWEA testing, as required by the diocese. Each student will be taking a test in reading and math using a Chromebook under teacher supervision. A second and third session will be held in the winter and spring, and student scores and progress reports from these tests will be sent home at the end of the school year. The idea behind the multiple test sessions is to provide feedback on student progress over the course of the school year.