



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admiratione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas PreK-11 School Newsletter

October 7th, 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 ~

October 8th

Picture Day - Dress-up Day

October 18th

Dress-down Day

End of Margaret Mary Term

October 23rd

Lunch orders due

Report Cards Published

October 24th-25th

No school: Teacher PD with ICLE

October 29th

PSAT (Juniors)

Wine and Poetry Night, school library 6:30-8:00 (details below)

October 30th

School All-Saints' Celebration (details forthcoming)

October 31st

No School – Parent-Teacher Conferences 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

November 1st

No School – All Saints' Day (holy day of obligation)

November 7th

Upper-School Open House, school library 6:30-8:00

November 8th

**School EF Mass – Sung (chant) Requiem
Chili cook-off, parish hall 6:00-9:00 p.m.**

November 11th

Martinmas Celebration (details forthcoming)

Check out Flocknote for Parent Association Info:

<https://sta2school.flocknote.com/dashboard>



5th Graders Visit Our Lady of the Fields

Last Wednesday, Miss Cullen took her 5th graders to Our Lady of the Fields, a Catholic campground in Brighton. Students participated in a series of challenges on a beautiful fall afternoon!







From the Headmaster

Last week, we addressed how a classical Catholic education, in its formation of the person, is also one that addresses the practical demands of living in this world. This exploration led us to use the word “success,” one often used in educational circles but not always clearly thought through. If a Catholic school really is, in some sense, directed to helping to form saints, the question becomes what constitutes *their* “success.” This in turn can help shed more light on how we can properly order the various ends we parents pursue for our children in sending them to school.

First, it is essential to understand the “program” that the saints followed regarding their relationship with the world. This is the one laid out by Christ, who called “blessed” the following people: the poor, the hungry, the weeping, and those hated, excluded, and reviled on account of Christ. By contrast, “woe” is promised to the rich, those who are filled, those who laugh now, and those about whom others speak well (Lk 6:20-26). All of this feels much like the hyperbole employed when Christ told his listeners to chop off their hand if it caused them to sin. It’s easy to provide qualification and to “explain” this passage about the blessed and those promised woe in terms that are comfortable to a lifestyle in step with the world’s expectations.

But the saints, strangely enough, often took these words quite literally. St. John of the Cross prayed that he would suffer and be held in contempt. St. Rose of Lima purposely disfigured her face to ward off attention and suitors. St. Francis stripped himself in public and St. Clare cut off her hair in pursuit of the love of God and poverty. St. Martin of Tours cut his cloak and then abandoned the army to become a monk and bishop. St. Francis de Sales abandoned a lucrative career as a politician and lawyer. Hundreds more examples could be raised of saints who gave up something good for “the one thing needful,” the love of God above all else.

This isn’t to say that saints didn’t have successful careers in the world. St. Thomas More, St. Gianna Molla, St. Thomas Becket, and many others attained impressive success as leaders, organizers, and pioneers. However, their true “success” always came back to Christ’s “program;” all else was subjected to that, even to the point of radical sacrifice. Thomas More was beheaded instead of staying in the King’s good graces, Gianna Molla, a medical doctor, gave her life for her baby against the advice of the medical establishment, Thomas Becket stood against a king, who was once his great patron and friend, and was murdered. There is a kind of “waste” in the actions of a saint, in which things held precious in this world are suddenly thrown away for a higher call. There is something wild and glorious in the career of a saint.

So what does all of this mean for a Catholic education? Shall we counsel our students to abandon their career or cut off their hair or spend their life begging? I would say, provocatively, yes and no. If we really are asking our students to pursue what is true, good, and beautiful, and, in doing so, to develop a profound love of God, the source of all truth, goodness, and beauty, are we not asking them to live a life of radical, even “crazy,” sacrifice? Or what do we mean by “love of God”? Is that not Christ’s love on the cross, the supreme act of love in the history of the world, represented at every Mass? As parents and as educators, we’re not telling our children to go be a hermit in a cave, but surely we should tell them to love God with their whole heart, mind, soul, and strength, and surely that could mean, as it did for St. Francis or St. Anthony, literally giving up everything for God!

That is the wisdom of Christ, which, as St. Paul notes, is foolishness to the world (see 1 Cor. 1: 23, 26-29). As a classical Catholic school, we are, above all else and by the grace of God, pursuing that wisdom. It is demanding, rigorous, formative at all levels, and profoundly life-changing. And so, we commend all our endeavors to Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom, in whose care we can learn the humility and docility to be formed at the feet of Our Lord and to “succeed” – as persons, as participants in the world, and as holy men and women.

Lepanto!

Last week we started off the month of October with an all-school rosary. Today at assembly, on the anniversary of the Battle of Lepanto, I recounted the story of that great victory and read Chesterton’s poem “Lepanto.” As I reminded students, the rosary is our weapon and will help us, as it did for the Christian fleet in 1571, pursue what brings great honor for God, first and foremost!

Reminders

- I look forward to seeing all students looking sharp for dress-up and picture day tomorrow!
- A reminder that lunch orders for November are due on October 23rd.
- Our end of term is coming next Friday! Report cards will be published the following Wednesday, October 23rd. Please check FACTS for updated grades if your child is in the 4th-11th grades. Parent-teacher conferences will be held October 31st. If you are unable to make a time between 8 and 4 that day, please reach out to find a mutually agreeable alternative time with the teacher. Sign-ups for conferences this year will be run through FACTS.
- A reminder that a chili cook-off will be held November 8th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. in the parish hall to support the athletic department (see attached flyer).

Poetry Discussion Night (Oct. 29)

Miss Benz and Miss Schoenle, our upper- and middle-school literature teachers, will be leading a reading and discussion of George Herbert's "Mattens" and "Evensong" the evening of Tuesday, October 29th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the school library. No prior reading or preparation is necessary, though both poems can be readily found online. Come enjoy wine, light refreshments and the beauty of poetry!

November 8th Extraordinary Form School Requiem Mass

Our next EF school Mass will be on November 8th, which falls within the octave of All Saints, a perfect time to offer a Requiem Mass for the faithful departed. This will be a great opportunity for students to focus on a major liturgical theme for the month of November and participate in a spiritual work of mercy.

Upper-School Open House

Our open house for the upper (high) school will be held in the school library at 6:30 p.m. Please help spread the word if you know of anyone who might be interested in joining the upper grades. We are excited to be adding the final grade next year!

Michigan Science Olympiad 2025!

There will be a short informational meeting (15-20 minutes) after school on Monday, October 14th in the school library. Students (and parents) in grades 6-9 are encouraged to attend. If you have a child interested in joining, please contact Emma Sauter or email MSO@sta2.org.