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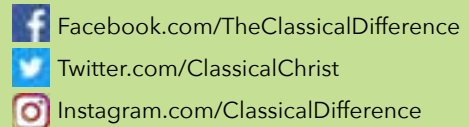
THE CLASSICAL DIFFERENCE: Vol. 3, No. 4, Winter 2017. **EDITOR IN CHIEF:** David Goodwin. **MANAGING EDITOR:** Stormy Goodwin. **ASSISTANT EDITOR:** Leah March. **DESIGN:** Hannah Grieser. **CIRCULATION:** Callie Nyhus. **CONTRIBUTORS:** Dr. George Grant, Jackie Jamison, Dr. Louis Markos, Fr. Robert McTeigue, Karen Moore, Tim Pauls, Dr. Scott Yenor. **ILLUSTRATIONS:** Hannah Grieser unless noted. **COPY EDITORS:** Deb Blakey, Susan Herrick. **INFORMATION:** *The Classical Difference* is a publication of the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS). Views expressed in *The Classical Difference* do not necessarily represent the views of the association or our members. Our goal is to inform and expand the community of supporters of classical Christian education. *The Classical Difference* is published four times a year and is mailed, at the request of member schools, to parents who have enrolled in ACCS member schools. If you do not wish to receive this publication, please contact our offices at the email address below. If you wish this publication to be mailed to a friend or relative, please contact us. Gift subscriptions are available. **ADVERTISING:** information@ClassicalDifference.com. **SUBMISSIONS:** *The Classical Difference* welcomes your submissions. If you have a quote, story, article, photo, letter or other submission, visit www.ClassicalDifference.com/submissions or www.ClassicalDifference.com/letters. Submissions may or may not be published or compensated. Compensation is dependent upon length and placement. **CONTACT:** information@ClassicalDifference.com. **COPYRIGHT:** ©2017 by the Association of Classical and Christian Schools (ACCS). All rights reserved. A publication of the ACCS. **WEBSITE:** www.ClassicalDifference.com.

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Classical Christian Academy, Post Falls, ID



Lunch in the Devil's Triangle

Students rarely know what's best, but they know how to get it.



Coventry Christian School, Pottstown, PA

The rigor of classical Christian education is typically the secret motivator. Tens of thousands of students in ACCS schools grow through the rigor every year. I've never had a single graduate come back and say, "It would have been better if it hadn't been so hard." Nearly all have told me they were well prepared for the rigors of college and life. But, here's the odd thing: of the dozens of meetings I've had with parents in the Devil's Triangle, all the students were academically quite capable, though they may have convinced their parents otherwise.

Typically, it goes something like this:
three points of a triangle form—rigor, friends, and choice.

By about the seventh grade, students understand that "I want to go to an easier school" doesn't sell. This is where the second point of the triangle typically comes in. "Caleb" was a bright student who played sports for the public high school in town, but went to our classical Christian school. He told his parents he "fit in" better with the kids on his sports teams than those at his school. His parents didn't respond, so Caleb began talking about hypocrisy. His friends at school put on a good face, but they're really doing stuff behind their parents' backs. Or, he feels bullied. Or ... Whatever the reason, Caleb slowly lays out a case that has some truth to it, but is really designed to persuade. His parents aren't fully convinced and he knows it. Enter the third point of the triangle.

Caleb does his research. Of course, the local public or Christian school with hundreds of students has many options, including lots of AP and honors classes. He quickly finds that he's more interested in AP Spanish or AP Calculus, and his classical Christian school doesn't offer as many choices. He can even complete a whole year of college while he's in high school!

Rather than aircraft or ships, students occasionally disappear this time of year into the educational

equivalent of the Devil's Triangle. Headmasters are invited to lunch by a parent who says, "I'm not sure this school is the right fit for Caleb. It's a great school, but

now that he's in eighth grade, I think we need to look at our options ..."

One parent came to me and said, "I don't get it. I've put four kids through this school and the high school is the best part. Why would anyone leave now?"

Typically, it goes something like this: three points of a triangle form—rigor, friends, and choice. It begins when a parent listens to the appeals of their teen to switch schools. Once this door is open, it's difficult to stay clear of the vortex.

He is able to position the “choices” as stronger educational options—options that are suited to who he is—to fit him better. He is good at this. After all, his parents customize meals every day to suit his taste, so this “it fits the real me” argument carries weight. But not if his parents still believe that the quality of the two schools is different.

The next step: Persuade the parents that, really, neither school choice is better academically—they’re just different. In a conversation with a dad whose son was pressing to leave, I sent our SAT scores along

Students who leave classical Christian schools change the course of their lives in a significant way.

with many of the other schools his son was considering. “Why don’t you guys publish this!” the dad said. Of course, we do publish statistics like these at ClassicalDifference.com/about/, and your local school probably does, too. But, rarely do students bring this data to their parents.

In the final push, Caleb realizes that he doesn’t need to talk his parents into “buying the car,” just “test driving it.” “Couldn’t we just go take a look at that school?” Soon, mom or dad agrees, and the sales ball is rolling. Caleb starts talking as though it’s a done deal. Once the vortex has opened and all three points have been made, the sucking sound pulls in Caleb’s family, and often other families at the same time.

When one of my son’s friends left his school, my son asked me, “Do I have a choice in where I go to school?” “No,” I said. “Count it a blessing.” I do feel for parents—most don’t actually work at their school. My advice: Don’t even let on to your students that they have a choice. Then, if you do want to consider other school options, you can do so without your teen pressuring you.



Classical Christian Academy, Post Falls, ID

Of course, not every school is right for every child. I’ve called in a few parents to tell them this—but it’s rare. And, a few parents pull their children out of classical Christian schools for the RIGHT reasons. But, these reasons are rarely brought to them by their children. Social reasons and academic rigor, in the long run, are reasons to leave your students in a classical Christian school, not pull them out. The choice of classes or friends isn’t all it’s cracked up to be.

Not too many pilots change course to avoid the mythical Devil’s Triangle anymore. But students who leave classical Christian schools change the course of their lives in a significant way. It’s a wise parent who makes these decisions with the bigger picture in mind. ■■

DAVID GOODWIN is the president of the Association of Classical Christian Schools.

To learn more, visit our website, www.ClassicalChristian.org.

Great & Small

TEN YEARS OF BAKING MEMORIES

The Georgetown Library Gingerbread Competition in Georgetown, TX, takes engineering to new levels.

And leading the show is Grace Academy (GA). For the past decade, the GA Classical League has been rebuilding Rome in gingerbread and has brought home the title four times: twice for the Colosseum, once for the Trojan Horse, and once for the Pantheon.

Each year, they construct an ancient piece of classical architecture entirely of edible materials—per contest rules. The students first created a Roman domus

(townhouse). While their entry didn't win, the students so loved the project that the next year they upped their game, taking on the Colosseum and bringing home their first title. They even received a “colossal” spread in the local newspaper.

Each project is planned and executed with the intention of learning about ancient design and architecture. Lessons in engineering, history, culture, and religion all play a part. Ashton Murphy, a student at NYU law school and former Grace Academy student who worked on the first Colosseum, recalls, “I loved building the Colosseum with the naumachiae (naval battle). It was really awesome imagining the Romans seeing such a spectacle and recreating the little details to make the project come to life.”



The tradition continues to engage the students in learning, connect the school with the community, and best of all provide a unique and creative time for enjoying fellowship while baking memories.

—KAREN MOORE,
Grace Academy, Georgetown, TX



Find more pictures, project details, and the full article at ClassicalDifference.com/BakingMemories.

Through the Looking Glass

WISDOM

7TH GRADER CAMERON HARKLEROAD
IN BIBLE OVERVIEW CLASS:

“If the Holy of Holies represents the Presence of God, then what if the veil represents His garments; and the Father tore the veil because He was grieved that His Son died, just like the Jewish people [rent their garments] when they were mourning?”

—Cedar Tree Classical School, Ridgefield, WA

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

3RD GRADER: Is this our dinner—I mean homework?

TEACHER: I think you want something more filling than a math fact quiz for dinner.

3RD GRADER: Well, it is a piece of cake ...

—Classical School of Wichita, Wichita, KS

WHO KNEW?

4TH GRADER: I colored Beowulf blue and orange because he is a Broncos fan.

—The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID

Submit stories and quotes at ClassicalDifference.com/submissions. Published submissions are worth \$25 in lunch money.



Century Watch

This year in history: 1517



CHRISTMAS (ALMOST) CANCELLED

500 CHRISTMASES SINCE WITTENBERG

Who knew, that fateful day of 1517, how far the reaches of a monk's protest, nailed to the door at Wittenberg, would go? You might be surprised to learn that one of the most notable effects of the Reformation on Christmas was the attempt to stop it.

During the 1600s, as the dust settled on the Reformation, European Puritans eagerly eliminated all remaining traces of Catholicism, including holidays formerly celebrated by the Catholic Church such as Christmas.

The Puritans opposed Christmas on two fronts—principles and results. On principle, they believed it had no biblical basis, was not practiced by early Christians, required too much involvement from the church (masses, ceremonies, etc.), and was rooted in pagan superstitions, most likely the ancient pagan winter solstice feast of Saturnalia. The obvious results of many Christmas celebrations—gluttony, idleness, drunkenness, and other such immoral carousing—didn't help the holiday.

Beginning in 1642, the Puritan-dominated parliament in England passed a battery of laws forbidding any and all observance of Christmas, such as closing shop for the day or performing seasonal plays. The suppression stiffened, with reports of Puritan mobs armed with rocks threatening churches performing Christmas ceremonies. A bill passed on Christ-

[Continues on page 10 ...]

DIY Parenting



IN DEFENSE OF A LITTLE FEAR

A while back, a *World* magazine post* on divorce and its effects got us thinking.

As a former headmaster, I saw too many families in the process of breaking up. Sometimes the resulting emotional tug-of-wars between parents left teens with too much control, and in turn, often led to insecurities that last a lifetime. Why? Teens of divorce effectively step in as their own parents, which rarely turns out well.

Intact families provide more emotional stability, but in our age of “friend-parent” relationships, parents often indulge their children and make them the center of the household. This, too, creates instability and insecurity. How? These children have been told—either through word or action—that they're “great” so often that when they strike out in the real world and someone

“We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.”

—Proverbs 16:9

says they're not, they fall to pieces. And, they never learn to act based solely on an authority telling them, “Do it.” They feel entitled to know why, which usually leads to their own personal assessment of whether the authority is correct or not. This gives young adults a feeling of absolute control when in fact, there is so much in life they cannot control. Oddly, the emotional toll of “complete control” results in fear and self-doubt.

So what's the antidote to this type of destructive fear? Healthy fear. Stable families are the first and most important ingredi-

[Continues on page 11 ...]



LETTERS & NOTES

While big sister Courtney

is at Whitefield Academy, little brother Caleb (almost 2) finds a new use for *The Classical Difference* magazine: letter searching. In this picture he is looking for “N.” Phonograms here we come!

—LYDIA WHITE,
Parent,
Whitefield Academy,
Kansas City, MO



Thanks to the talented and faithful work of our Music Director Christopher Adams, students present a beautiful Christmas choral concert each year. My girl enjoyed learning and singing the pieces throughout rehearsals and the actual performance. Not only does the concert bring much joy to parents and guests, most importantly, it brings glory to our beloved Lord Jesus just as our school motto declares “To God be all Glory!”



—FELICIA FAN, Parent,
Calvary Christian Academy, San Jose, CA

Where the Good Way Is

UNITED WE STAND; DIVIDED WE FALL.

This has been an American mantra since our country’s inception, but the saying actually finds its earliest origin in the works of the fable writer Aesop—who, by the by, lived a long, long time before America was even an idea (circa 600 B.C.). Thinking about this idea of the necessity of unity in light of the Scriptures—as we ought always to do with every idea no matter its source—it becomes clear why this mantra has endured. Paul made much the same point to the

church in Rome: “For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” Thus, it is crucial that we not throw this mantra—united we stand; divided we fall—to the wayside as though it were some kind of empty propaganda.

In this light, I encourage you to read the words of the president of our school’s association (<http://www.classicaldifference.com/where-the-good-way-is/>) on the state of our world and how classical Christian education is a properly circumspect response thereunto. I eagerly look forward to continuing to fight the good fight of faith with you and with all of the other classical Christian schools in this nation this school year as we set our sights and efforts upon the coming of that heavenly city whose foundations can never be shaken.

—CHAD MULLER, Principal,
Pinnacle Classical Academy, Little Rock, AR
Original post at: <https://www.pinnacleclassical.com>

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.”

—Hebrews 12:28-29

Christmas programs are one of the best ways to showcase our love of truth, goodness, and beauty in our communities. We encourage schools to create excellent, thoughtful performances. Best wishes to all our schools on your upcoming Christmas programs!



Schaeffer Academy, Rochester, MN



Don't keep it a secret.

Last year, Highland Rim Academy's survey revealed that an astonishing 97% of the families found the school by word-of-mouth.

The following stories reveal what a chance meeting can mean in the life of a child.

★ LIBERTY CLASSICAL ACADEMY, WHITE BEAR, MN

"It happened when my daughter Sage transitioned into middle school. She was very shy and felt lost in her large class sizes. With 42 kids in each class, and several classes a day, many of her teachers never even learned her name. I felt so defeated and cried out to God for help. He answered.

"A complete stranger approached me at church one day and asked if I had heard of Liberty Classical Academy. I told her I hadn't, and she began to tell me what a wonderful school it was. She explained that it was a nurturing school, where teachers cared about their students. Later that evening, I wondered how I, as a single mom, could afford this high quality school. It sounded great, but I was already living paycheck to paycheck.

"A few days later, I was driving home from work, and I noticed that the car in front of me had a Liberty Classical bumper

If you love your local classical school, **DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET!** Your friends could be one conversation away from finding the best answer for their kids.

Tall Oaks Classical School, Bear, DE

Tell your friends. They'll thank you in 12 years.

sticker on it. The next morning in my usual work parking spot, when I got out of my car I noticed that same car was parked right next to me. I couldn't believe it. So, that day I called Liberty and set up a tour.

"I wanted to sign up immediately. After Sage visited for a day, she begged me to go to Liberty. I started the process of enrollment and, to my amazement, my finances unexpectedly changed that very month. I had exactly what I needed for Sage to attend."

★ MARS HILL ACADEMY, MASON, OH

Amy first heard of Mars Hill at the gym, when another mom, Emily, began working out beside her. The women began to chat, and Emily began telling Amy about her son's successful experience, and appreciation of classical Christian education. Amy enrolled her daughter the next year.

Another mother of Mars Hill Academy, Michaux, found herself disgruntled with the public education system. After confiding

her discontent to a friend, her friend casually mentioned "Mars Hill something, where they sing." Intrigued, Michaux began researching the school. Six years later, Michaux is an employee of the school, and her eldest is a senior.

★ AGAPE CHRISTI, EDEN PRAIRIE, MN

Aleta Johnson struck up a conversation at the park with strangers while their kids played together on the playground. They began discussing classical Christian education. At the time, the Johnsons did not have strong convictions about education and never intended to see that family again. But, a seed was planted, and, seven years later, the Johnsons and that family founded Agape Christi, a classical Christian school in Eden Prairie. The school is in its fifth year. ■■



Know someone ...

... who is looking for a classical Christian school? Send them to the School Finder at ClassicalChristian.org/find-a-school.

Calvary Classical School,
Hampton, VA

Grace Academy, Georgetown, TX

The Oaks, Spokane, WA



[... Continued from page 7]

mas Eve of 1652 crowned the movement's victory: any irregular proceeding by a church or family that might suggest a Christmas remembrance was forbidden.

Meanwhile, on the opposite Atlantic shore in the New World, Christmas met no warmer welcome. William Bradford found a small group of colonists resting on Christmas Day, 1621. He shortly ordered them back to work and dashed New World hopes of an extra day off. In 1659, the Massachusetts General Court enforced a five-shilling fine on anyone who was "found observing any such day as Christmas or the like." Schools in America met on Christmas Day until 1870.

In 1843, *A Christmas Carol* changed everything. Commonly mistaken now for a historical representation of Christmas in Victorian England, the work was actually a treatise by author Charles Dickens to promote Christmas. Dickens' message was well-received, largely because he promoted selflessness and generosity without harkening back to Catholicism, or any religion at all.



By 1850, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert reinstated Christmas as a "family celebration." This royal support demonstrated that Christmas was no longer a church-based effort, but rather a season of selflessness, hospitality, and time with family.

Most of you are probably asking yourselves by now, "Where are the gifts?" While minor gift exchange was a common ritual on St. Nicholas Day (December 6th) or St. Stephen's Day (December 26th), the gift-giving on Christmas prevailed on the winds of industrialization. With the rise of manufactured goods and subsequent rise of advertising, businesses that had previously seen Christmas as an obstacle now saw it as an opportunity. Soon, the twelve days of Christmas—including Childermas, New Year's Eve, the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ, and Twelfth Night (January 5th)—were collapsed into a single day, December 25. The rebirth of Christmas depended more on commerce than

Christianity to secure its cultural position. Today, some studies claim that Americans spend \$200 billion annually on Christmas shopping, accounting for 20% of all retail goods.

Christmas, like everything else, invites idolatry. Like God's people before us, it's up to us to separate the light from the dark, the silver from the dross, the cheap from the worthy. ■■

[... Continued from page 7]

ent for secure, thriving kids. But further, we need to rewind our view of parenting about 100 years. Children are better off when they have a sense of a rightful place. The old adage “children should be seen and not heard” is scoffed at today. But is it possible we simply don’t understand why it was said? We think it disrespects children and we envision the father-dictator villainized in so many movies. Could it be that everyone in the world has a place? Even children? And, we’re under God’s protection when we accept that place?

Could it be that everyone in the world has a place? Even children?

This viewpoint causes our whole world to shift. We realize that all of us are, in one way, smaller. But, at the same time, we’re part of something much bigger—God’s plan for His universe. The Bible so frequently calls us to “fear the Lord.” Broadly speaking, our children should “fear,” but not in the sense that they fear harm, or fear failure (insecurity); rather, in the sense that our Lord commands us to submit to His awesomeness.

I use this overused word deliberately, because it is so often misused these days. “Awe” is impossible without the form of “fear” called reverence. We live in a culture that cheapens awesomeness and denies the value of fearing God or the authorities He puts in our lives. Parents are unique and we have a once-in-our-children’s-lifetime opportunity. We love our children in ways no one else can. If we teach our children to revere adults and authorities, we help them understand God’s economy. They come to find security in participating in something big—even when just cleaning their room or doing their homework. ■■

“As I get older this is something that I find such comfort in. The unknowns and NOT being able to control my plans used to give me fear and anxiety. Now it can’t be more comforting than to know that even if I plan things, my steps are guided by my Father in heaven!”
—Euna Choi, Parent,
The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID

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A CHRISTMAS STORY

THE BROAD OAKEN TABLE in the hall of Wittenberg's modest Black Abbey manse was crowded and clamorous as Master Luther's students waited anxiously.

This was always a highlight of their week: part bluster and part sermon, part tale-telling and part theological disquisition—but it was a particular joy during Yuletide. Herr Doctor relished that “sweet Gospel season” from Advent to Epiphany, so his Thursday evening “Table Talks” were all the more animated and gleeful.

After clearing the trenchers and helping to distribute Katie's renowned schwarzbier, Hans, along with Herr Luther's other children, squeezed themselves between elbows to claim places at the table. The children and students alike snuck pieces of leftovers to the pups lying at their feet.

“It was long ago, but not so very far away,” he began in deep, dramatic tones. The room immediately hushed.

Midwinter in Frisia is oft bleak and frosty, turning earth to iron and water to stone. And so it was the year that Wynfryth of Wessex, known to us as Boniface, established his mission camp not far from Dokkum.

Several of the students nodded to one another, and prepared to be entranced. This was a familiar and favorite story.

In Examchester, as Exeter was known in the century before Alfred, a loving pastor and competent scholar lived in peace

and quiet. He spent the first forty years of his life in quiet service to the church. Such was his dedication to learning, and such was the peace of his day, that he compiled the first Latin grammar written in the English Isles.

But Boniface left the comfort and security of this settled life to become a missionary to the still-savage tribes of Germania. For the next thirty years he not only proclaimed to them the gospel of Light, he portrayed to them the Gospel of Life.

Tales of his courage abound. He often jeopardized his own life for the sake of the young, the weak, the aged, and the poor, fueled by his zeal for the gospel. Indeed, it was during one of his famed rescues that his name was forever linked to our celebrations.

Traveling throughout the Danish and German coasts, wherever he went among the fierce Norsemen, he faced down the awful specter of their brutal pagan practices—which included human mutilations and vestal sacrifices. Boniface was determined to strike at the root of such superstitions.

The sacred Oak of Thor, an ancient object of pagan worship, stood atop the summit of Mount Gudenberg near Fritzlar. The hike to the top was long, and with each step word of the journey spread. Why would a strange man who did not believe in their gods work so hard to reach the top? Without hesitation, he brought his axe to the tree until it fell, for all to see. Enraged at such sacrilege, the pagans called upon their gods for immediate and thorough judgment. Nothing happened. They were forced to acknowledge that their gods appeared powerless to protect their own sanctuaries. By the hundreds, they professed faith in Christ.

Neighboring villages soon heard of a new and rash boldness against their gods that met no retribution. Three evenings later, a young boy rushed into the mission camp. It was almost



twilight on the first Sunday in Advent. Between sobs he told of a young vestal virgin bound and waiting to be brutally sacrificed that very evening—his sister.

Hurrying as quickly as they could through snowy woods and across rough terrain, Boniface and the boy arrived at the dense, sacred grove as the Druid priest raised his knife into the darkened air. But as the blade plunged downward Boniface hurtled toward the horrid scene. He had nothing in his hands save a small wooden cross.

Though they had all heard this story before, Luther paused for dramatic effect, his bright eyes twinkling.

Lunging forward, Boniface thrust the cross onto the girl's chest as the blade of the knife pierced it. He watched for a long second. The cross was pierced, but the girl's flesh was untouched.

The pagan priest toppled back. The huddle of worshippers stared at the scene for a brief moment in complete silence. Boniface seized upon it. He told them how, on a cross just like the one he held, the ultimate sacrifice had already been made by Christ at Golgotha—there was no need for others.

Captivated by the strange story and its illustration lying before them, the small crowd listened intently to the words of Boniface. He explained to them the once and for all provision of the gospel.

He then turned toward the sacred grove, and with the sacrificial knife in hand, began hacking off low-hanging branches. He passed them around the circle, telling each family to take the small fir boughs home as a reminder of the completeness of Christ's work on the tree of Calvary. They were to adorn their hearths with the tokens of His grace. They might even chop

great logs from the grove as fuel for their home fires, he suggested—not so much to herald the destruction of their pagan ways but rather to memorialize the provision of Christ's coming. Upon these things they were to contemplate over the course of the next four weeks, until the great celebration of Christmas.

“And so,” the Herr Doctor exclaimed with a sweep of his hand around the hall, beautifully decorated for the season by his wife Katie and the children, “came our Yuletide traditions.” Pointing to the Advent wreath at the center of the table and the Christmas tree standing regally in the corner, decorated with candles and ribbon, he reminded them:

Likewise are the garlands under the eaves and across the mantles, and the Yule log burning in the hearth, reminders of this season's essential message. And though in the course of time his voice was eventually stilled—as every mortal's must be—the testimony of Boniface only grew louder, surer, and bolder. And thus, to this day, his message lives on—in the merry traditions and celebrations of Christmas.

Broadly grinning, he quaffed down another flagon of Katie's schwarzbier. And then together the whole manse hall rang out with joyous cries of, “Ein frohes Weihnachtsfest! Blessed Christmas!” ■■

GEORGE GRANT served as an assistant to D. James Kennedy at the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and taught at Knox Theological Seminary. He founded the King's Meadow Study Center and Franklin Classical School in Franklin, TN. He is the author of more than 60 books and hundreds of articles, and currently serves as pastor of Parish Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Franklin.

DOWN THE HALLWAY



James Barton
Grade 3
Cary Christian School, Cary, NC

According to art teacher Alexis Booth, this submission was for an assignment where students were asked to create an expressive portrait using torn paper and glue.



Megan Saltzman
Grade 12
Veritas Academy, Lancaster, PA

This portrait was created for a “pen and ink” drawing assignment. Using a process called stippling, the student meticulously made thousands of dots with black drawing pens. Submitted by art teacher Sonya Long.



Katherine Mealy
Grade 11
Veritas Academy, Lancaster, PA

This likeness, entitled “G.K. Chesterton,” was created for a linoleum block print assignment. The student carved the design out of linoleum, then printed several copies. Each student was required to do a portrait of the person for which their “house” is named. This print now represents the “House of Chesterton” in the Veritas Academy halls. Submitted by art teacher Sonya Long.

Deck our halls!

We like to fill our hallway with student art, poetry, essays, short stories and other good works.

Send your submissions to Classical-Difference.com/submissions. Published student works earn a **\$10 Amazon gift card** for purchasing classic books. Or crayons.



Joshua Lee
Grade 7

Jonathan Edwards Classical Academy,
Whites Creek, TN

This self portrait study focused on shading, proportion, and accurate placement of facial features (eyes, nose, mouth). Submitted by art teacher Jami Shumate.



Georgianna Wells
Grade 12
Westminster Academy, Memphis, TN

According to the artist, this self-portrait using graphite on paper, “captures me looking through the blinds, out a window ... seeking something more in life: looking, observing, and finding stillness.” Georgianna received the Westminster Academy upper school art department award in 2016, and is now a sophomore at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Submitted by Mandy Cantrell.

The goal of art at Westminster is ultimately about training the eye, the heart, and the mind of the student to observe God’s creation and to see beauty as a means to glimpse His transcendent existence. To do this we focus on the foundational skills and language of art, beginning in kindergarten. These skills are expanded on year after year.

—Jocelyn Collins, Upper School Art Teacher



Watch the interview

Dr. Yenor was recently interviewed by Fox News on the subject of rational inquiry at universities today. To watch the interview, visit ClassicalDifference.com/2017-winter.

“University” in Four Generations

Where has all the wisdom gone?

GENERATION GAP

If you are over 40 but not yet retired, you probably had a college education that was composed mostly in your major, with a small General Education requirement that you could choose

from different areas. This is called a “distribution requirement.” This distribution requirement is itself a corruption of what college once was.

Previous to the distribution requirement, say if you attended college before 1964, General Education made up around half your courses. Nine courses were mandatory, and they involved the core of Western civilization in addition to coursework in other areas of the humanities.

If you go back in time more than 100 years, nearly the entire bachelor’s degree

was comprised of required coursework. History, literature, and philosophy enjoyed a special status in the curriculum at over three-quarters of the “elite” top fifty institutions. Over time, the university became less and less willing to say what an educated person should know, so it focused on expanding the menu of electives.

Years ago, the National Association of Scholars (NAS) published a striking report called “The Dissolution of General Education, 1914-1996.” The NAS surveyed graduation

Education in the 1980s paled in comparison with education in previous generations.



Trinitas Christian School, Pensacola, FL

requirements at the country's top fifty universities, on the reasonable assumption that other universities take their cues from our elite institutions. The report showed that education in the 1980s paled in comparison with education in previous generations.

Looking at the core curricula of a century earlier, I was, at the beginning of my academic career in 2000, filled with envy at the unity of purpose and vision. I was quite impressed with—on paper at least—how students would be prepared for self-government in a republic. One can see this in the speeches of presidents and senators of the time, since they presume a people exposed to great ideas and enduring questions.

I had thought nothing could be worse than the general distribution approach. I was wrong. Today, even the General Education approach is watered down toward a “core of competency.”

IF YOU ARE OVER 40 BUT NOT YET RETIRED ...

General education made up about 30% of your courses. You took four science classes from a menu of dozens, and four humanities classes and four social science classes from a similar list. Only two or three writing courses were required of all students. Very few classes were in sequences, where one built on another. Only about half the courses had prerequisites (and those mostly in math and science), and professors probably waived what prerequisites there were in the humanities and social sciences. You may not have had a foreign language requirement (only 60% did). There were a total of over 70,000 courses available at the fifty elite institutions in 1993, with the humanities leading the way in expanding their offerings.

IF YOU ATTENDED COLLEGE BEFORE 1964 ...

Over 80% of courses had prerequisites, in all the fields. Foreign language requirements and writing were ubiquitous. There were less than 40,000 courses available at the elite fifty institutions.

COLLEGE 100 YEARS AGO ...

History, literature, and philosophy were considered vital for a truly educated person. All students were required to take a distinct and stable core of classes that made up a large portion of the curriculum. Fewer than 20,000 courses were on the books at this time.



Tall Oaks Classical School, Bear, DE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE EDUCATED?

The mild discipline of General Education is too irksome for universities across our country. Today, colleges are replacing the distribution requirement with “university learning outcomes”—clear statements of expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to acquire. Faculty are asked to justify their existence not in terms of subject matter, but in terms of these outcomes. By adopting the new approach emphasizing a core of competence, General Education courses give way to courses designed directly to teach skills, such as teamwork, critical inquiry, or civil engagement.

Today, confidence in our colleges and universities is at an all-time low. Free

speech is under assault throughout the university system. Conservatives and Christians hardly have a voice on our campuses. There is increasing skepticism that a college education is worth its risks, in both corruption and debt.

A university aimed at “competencies” will fail to achieve either competence or true education.

A genuine university education presupposes that basic competencies are developed before students arrive. Classical Christian schools are among the few K–12 options that prepare students for true education. ■■

DR. SCOTT YENOR is a professor of political science at Boise State University and Chairman of the Board at The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID.

Some are now saying: If my son learns enough to earn a penny, he is learned enough. Nowadays nobody wants to rear children for anything else than the knowledge and ability to make a living. All that people think about is that they are free and at liberty to rear their children precisely as they please, as if there were no God and Lord over their children. But if there were ... found folk so shameful and wicked that they refused to change for the better and give their children a different training, then ... they are the most noxious and harmful folk on earth ... Then nothing but wild animals and hogs remain in the world, and they are good for nothing but gorging and guzzling.

—Martin Luther

Classic Learning Test

What is education for, if not to equip an individual with the wisdom and virtue necessary to be truly happy in life? While many might agree with this time-tested vision for education, they may not realize that most kids receive an education whose mission does not address these foundational concerns. As scoring well on tests has become the supreme aim

of education, education has become subservient to the tests. The loftier goals of education once taken for granted have been abandoned.

The CLT exists to change that. All students should have the chance to deeply engage classic texts which ask and address the questions humanity must face in every age: What is the purpose of life? Is there a God? Can I know Him? Who am I? What is true? How, then, should I live?

Greek and Roman classics, English literature, moral phi-

losophy, and passages respecting the ethics of scientific discovery allow students to grapple with the great questions central to human life. The mind and the soul do not function separately, nor should we educate as if they do.

The CLT is helping to lead the way back to a focus on true education. It seeks to assess aptitude and the ability to comprehend and synthesize ideas, not rote memorization and regurgitation of facts. With the CLT, “teaching to the test” would mean not only exposing students to the brightest minds and most enduring texts of Western civilization, but offering them time to discuss, challenge, and reflect upon these treasures. That’s a good thing!



The CLT is accepted by over 80 colleges and universities. Learn more at CLTExam.com.

Beauty Follows

A path well-defined

According to Mary Kathryn Davis, there is a direct

link between her insatiable appetite for beauty and her education. It was the pursuit of God's truth, goodness, and beauty that cultivated her interest in history and fine arts, developed her finely-tuned sense of aesthetics, and forged her unlikely path. As she followed Beauty, beauty followed her.

Mary Kathryn was exposed to the truly beautiful at a young age by her local classical school, Westminster Academy, in Memphis, TN. Here she was taught to love the truth, and became familiar with an objective standard and purpose of beauty. Having met Beauty Himself, there was no option but to be enamoured.

As her studies progressed, her delight in fine arts grew and resulted in a deeper interest in the classical world and its history. Nearing graduation, she wondered where to go next. She struggled with forging her deep love of humanities and her

liberal arts education into a career path that could actually make ends meet.

Little did she know the path would find her. By chance, her first internship was at a fine arts museum, and here she struck gold. According to Mary Kathryn, the prospect of "educating and exposing" visitors to the truly beautiful "excited me." Granted an arena to display and nourish her zeal for beauty, Mary Kathryn went full steam ahead to Georgetown University where she earned her MA in art and museum studies.

Now a manager at Dixon Museum and Gardens in Memphis, Mary Kathryn shares her love of beauty with others. "I have the wonderful opportunity to catch a glimpse of God's beauty every day through the paintings hanging on the Dixon's walls, and I have the privilege of sharing the transformative power of art with others," she says.

Moreover, she still uses the skills developed in Westminster's classrooms on a daily basis. "As the membership manager at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, I



raise money by selling memberships and frequently find myself using skills that I learned in the classical classroom," she relates. Beyond simply cultivating a love of beauty itself, Mary Kathryn's education assists her in the more practical aspects of her job at the Dixon. "Logic gives me the ability to form a compelling argument for why people should become Dixon members. The knowledge I learned in art history allows me to talk to donors about art, and rhetoric gives me the skills to speak comfortably in public." ■■

MARY KATHRYN DAVIS graduated in 2010 from Westminster Academy in Memphis, TN.



Parents Speak

Better Days Ahead

When words and music point to higher things, they can bring us beauty, truth, and hope in an eternal future. Here are some

albums and books that do just that. Share them with those you love this Christmas.



CD'S

Kids

★ *Getty Kids Hymnal: In Christ Alone*



"Engaging kids with songs to carry for life that share timeless truths with intentional artistry. Twelve hymns old

and new sung by kids for kids of all ages to sing along to!" GETTYMUSIC.COM

Latin

★ *Beth Nielsen Chapman: Hymns*



A popular singer-songwriter of contemporary pop and country hits, Chapman reawakens traditional Latin

hymns. While often recognized by their use in the Catholic church, these peaceful melodies can be enjoyed by any student of Latin. BETHNIELSENCHAPMAN.COM

Alternative

★ *Josh Garrels: Love & War & the Sea In Between*



Rediscover Josh Garrels, former skate punk and seller of drugs turned believer, through this "longingly spiritual" work and *Christianity*

Today's album of the year for 2011. JOSHGARRELS.COM

The Gray Havens

In the last issue we learned more about The Gray Havens, known and loved for their stories set to music. Josh Garrels is another narrative musician telling the same story in his own unique way.

*And wisdom will honor everyone who will learn
To listen, to love, and to pray and discern
And to do the right thing even when it burns
And to live in the light through each treacherous turn.
A man is weak, but the spirit yearns
To keep on course from the bow to the stern
And to throw overboard every selfish concern
That tries to work for what can't be earned.*

*Sometimes the only way to return is to go
Where the winds will take you,
And to let go of all you cannot hold onto
For the hope beyond the blue.*



NOTE: We found these CDs and books on Amazon.com.

BOOKS

Who says Latin is dead? Here are just a few books you can get online in Latin.



★ *Hobbitus Ille (The Hobbit)*

★ *Winnie Ille Pu (Winnie the Pooh)*



★ *Ubi Fera Sunt (Where the Wild Things Are)*



★ *Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis (Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone)*



★ *Quomodo Invidiosulus Nomine Grinchus Christi Natalem Abrogaverit (How the Grinch Stole Christmas)*

★ *Arbor Alma (The Giving Tree)*



★ *Regulus (The Little Prince)*

★ *Aeneid (The Aeneid by Virgil in the Original Latin)*



★ *Easy Latin Crossword Puzzles*

Standing the Test of Time

Everyone has a grandmother who makes it, everyone knows one eccentric soul who loves to eat it, and hardly a holiday passes without this peculiar dessert making an appearance. **Fruitcake.**

The loaf found its roots during the Middle Ages, when dried fruit entered European cuisine, and people sought dense, fat-filled nutrition.

The discovery of an impeccably preserved 106-year-old fruitcake further twisted fruitcake lore. The fruitcake relic, excavated in Antarctica in 2016, was believed to be a snack left behind by British explorer Robert Falcon Scott in 1911. Described as “almost edible” and in “excellent condition,” the cake was likely made by Huntley & Palmers, an English bakery still popular today.

While few bakeries in the U.S. still offer this age-old dessert, a surprising venue stands out among the rest: The College of the Ozarks. Here students have the unique opportunity to study tuition-free through



Want to try your hand at making the “Best [Darn] Fruitcake Recipe Ever”? Visit ClassicalDifference.com/2017-winter.

comprehensive work-study programs. (Their unofficial nickname, “Hard Work U,” is prominently displayed on their website.) Part of that program is the bakery, renowned for its (you guessed it!) *fruitcake*.



Have your (fruit)cake, and eat it too.

The College of the Ozarks offers their wares online. Visit ClassicalDifference.com/2017-winter for easy access.



LYCEUM SCHOLARS AT CLEMSON UNIVERSITY, SC

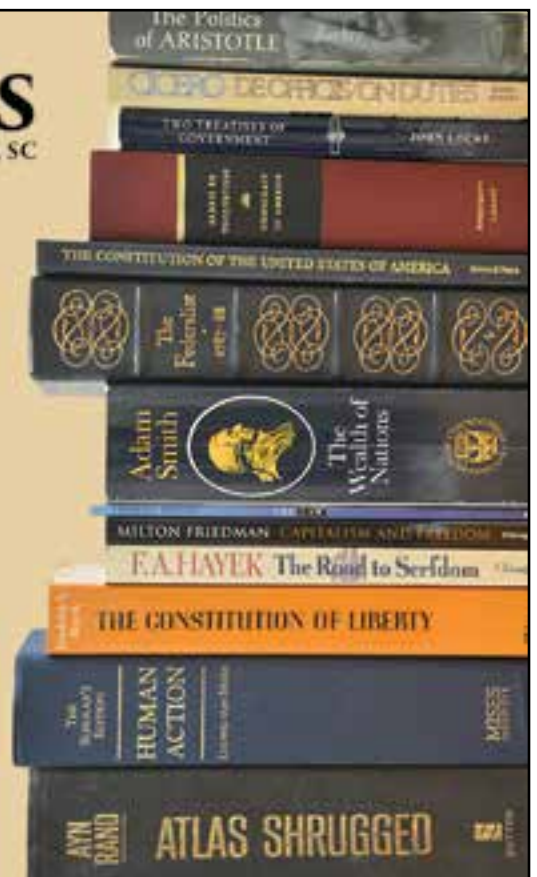
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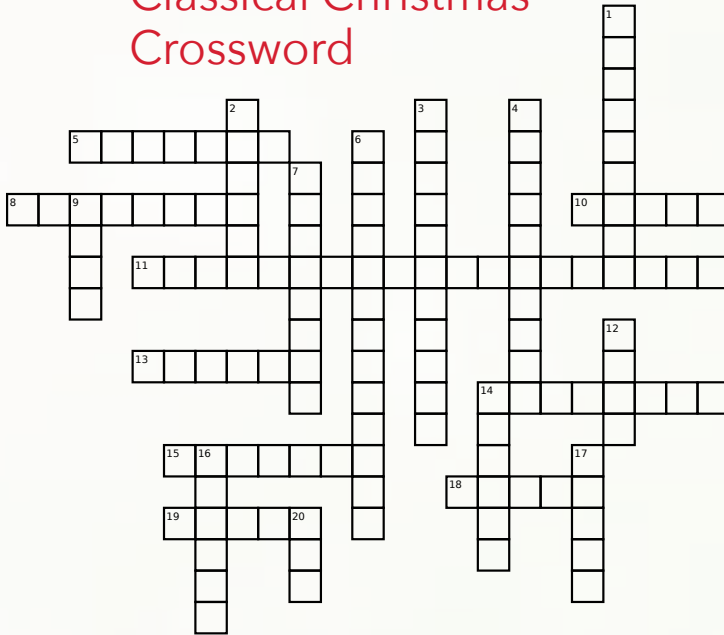


LYCEUM PROGRAM
at Clemson University





Classical Christmas Crossword



Need a little something to do while you wait for the turkey? Challenge your kids

to a crossword puzzle! See who can complete it first. Or for a fun twist, get some buzzers and have a younger student read the clues. Whoever answers first gets to write that answer. Set aside an extra large piece of pie for the scholar who gets the most correct.

DOWN:

1. Third ghost
2. Tree decor and town
3. Crowned Christmas Day, AD 800
4. Pagan December celebration
6. Historical origin for Santa
7. Roman emperor at Christ's birth
9. For bad children
12. --- log
14. Χριστος in English
16. Time of preparation
17. King of Judea at Christ's birth
20. Name of Grinch's reindeer

ACROSS:

5. Old Christmas beverage, like mulled cider
8. "In --- Deo"
10. Decorative holiday plant
11. Crowned Christmas day, AD 1066
13. Latin word for star
14. Street singers (banned from churches for disruptive behavior)
15. Mary's angel
18. Medieval Christmas meat pie
19. Latin word for sheep



The Institute of Faith and the Academy

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SPECIAL CALL FOR PAPERS

Building the City of God: The Past, Present, and Future of Christian Higher Education

Spring Conference at Faulkner University: February 8-9, 2018

In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Faulkner University and the 10th anniversary of IFA, we are seeking conference papers from all academic disciplines exploring the relationship between faith and learning, especially as they relate to the value of Christian education.

Please submit at 250-word abstract to jfullman@faulkner.edu no later than 15 December, 2017.

Select papers from the conference will be published in a subsequent issue of *The Journal of Faith and the Academy*.

Manuscripts

Joshua S. Fullman, Co-Editor
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Jason Jewell, Co-Editor
jjewell@faulkner.edu | (334) 386-7919

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2018 BLAKEY PRIZE *in* FINE ART

WHO: High school students (9–12) from ACCS-accredited schools.

ART: The two categories are “Drawing” and “Painting.”

PRIZE: The First Prize is \$500 cash & the Runner Up is \$250. Winning art will be displayed at the 2018 Repairing the Ruins Conference in Dallas, Texas.

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DETAILS:

HOW:

- Record a video of yourself giving a 10-20 minute speech.
- Submit video to ACCS.
- See your rhetoric teacher for guidelines.

WHO: Juniors & seniors at ACCS member schools

PRIZE: First and second prize winner will share their speech at the 2018 REPAIRING THE RUINS CONFERENCE in Dallas, TX, receive a CASH PRIZE, and earn an all-expense paid trip for themselves, a friend, and a parent to Dallas, including a pass to SIX FLAGS RESORT.

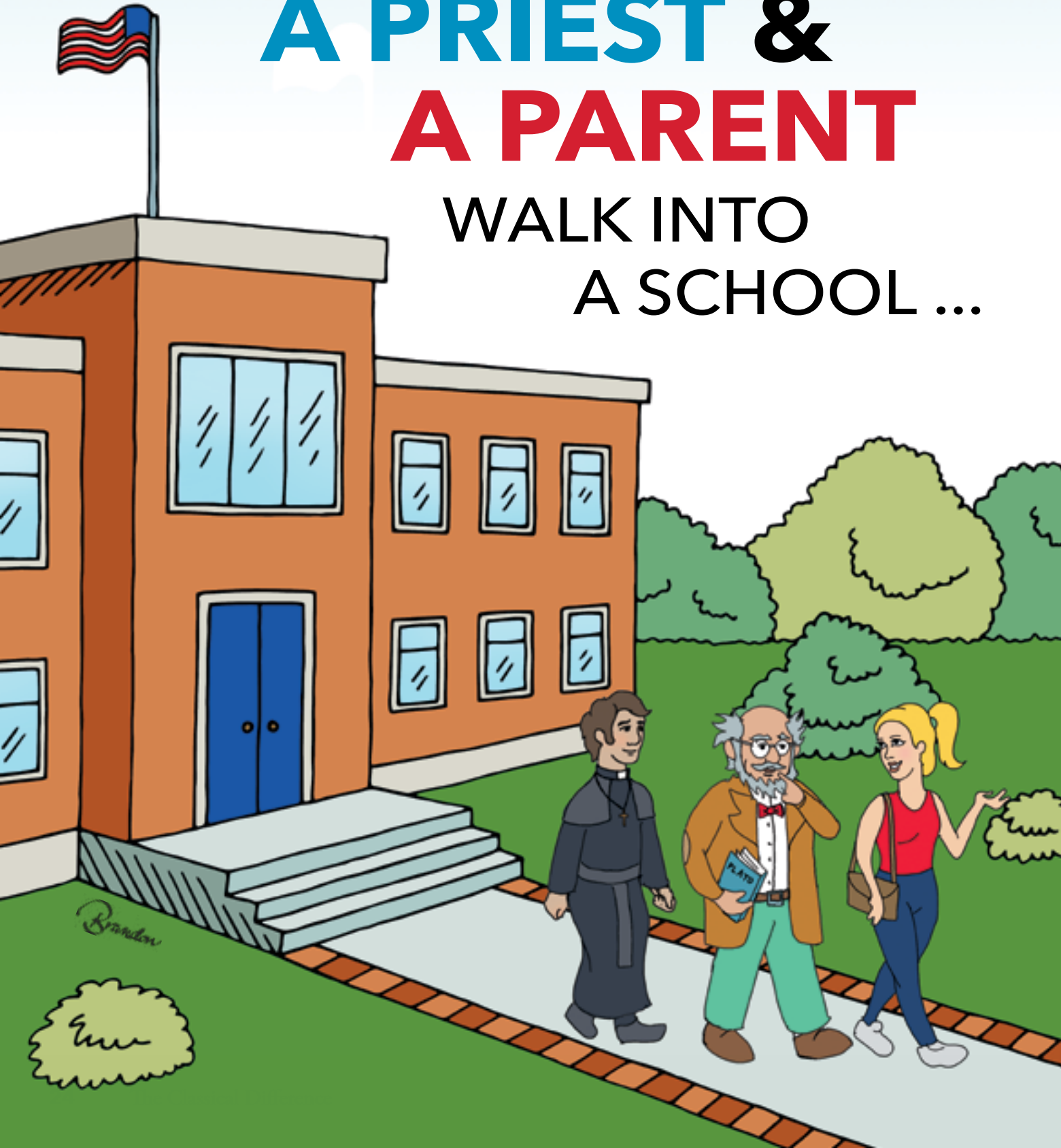
2018 CHRYSOSTOM ORATORY CONTEST

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A PROFESSOR, A PRIEST & A PARENT

WALK INTO
A SCHOOL ...



... AND THEY ALL FIND SOMETHING ON WHICH TO **AGREE.**

Classical Christian education has come a long way. It traveled thousands of years to reach us where we are today, and it's spreading. Here are three takes on classical education from perspectives you might not normally hear.

PROFESSOR

DR. LOUIS MARKOS



In Defense of Beauty

Those who have not had the opportunity to study literature at a university may be surprised to know that most English departments in our nation—whether secular or

Christian, college or high school—have thrown out the concept of beauty. If that statement does not shock you, then consider a doctor who cares nothing about health, or a philosopher who cares nothing about wisdom, or a scientist who cares nothing about the laws of nature. What would you think about such people? You would think they were frauds who had betrayed their profession and were running their race in vain. And you would be right!

For the last three millennia, beauty has been the end, the goal, and the criterion of great literature, not to mention music, dance, and the visual arts. Men wrote poetry as a way of approaching that divine Beauty which transcends the ceaseless change and decay of our world. They yearned for a kind of balance and harmony that was not subjected to death and

corruption—that celebrated wholeness and clarity, that dwelled together with goodness and truth, and that carried in its wake understanding and illumination.

C. S. Lewis is best known as an apologist for the Christian faith, but he was also an apologist for beauty. With great courage, he





To induce him to reject Christ and accept the Head, Mark is thrown into a lopsided room whose function is to disrupt all standards of beauty and thus pervert his natural human reactions. What Mark is confronted with in the room is an illusion of order that continually deconstructs itself. Every time he tries to rest his eyes or mind in one corner of the room, his attempts are frustrated. The point of the exercise—which disturbingly mimics what thousands of undergrads and high schoolers have faced in literature classes across America—is to get Mark to reject Beauty, Form, and Meaning, and embrace, in its stead, the void.

But the exercise backfires! By being confronted with ugliness in all its horror, Mark is pressed to embrace something deep within him, something he calls the Normal. It is my prayer, as it was Lewis's, that the nihilism of the modern university will push its charges, not toward the abandonment of standards but toward a realization that standards do exist and that their source lies outside our ever-shifting world.

But while we wait for that day, we can find hope in the growing number of classical Christian schools

resisted those who sought to deconstruct beauty and convert it from an essential element of the Creation, inscribed by God in the heart of man and nature, into a bourgeois construct, a tool of the status quo used to enforce conformity. Rather than give in to the modern Cult of the Ugly, which embraces ugliness as a form of freedom and self-expression, Lewis championed the pursuit of Beauty as an affirmation that we were created in the image of a God who is Himself the standard of Beauty, Truth, and Goodness.

Lewis dramatizes this titanic struggle between essential Beauty and the Cult of the Ugly in part three of his Space Trilogy, *That Hideous Strength*. In the novel, which fuses domestic drama with apocalyptic fantasy, Lewis introduces us to N.I.C.E. (the National Institute of Co-ordinated Experiments), an anti-Christian, anti-beauty, anti-humanistic society that worships the decapitated head of a criminal that they have managed to preserve through their occult science.

Near the end of the novel, Lewis's male hero (Mark Studdock) prepares to be initiated into the inner circle of N.I.C.E.

that have reclaimed Beauty and made it one of their sacred goals to instill that Beauty in their students. Do not be fooled. The fight for the souls of our children is not just a fight for Truth and Goodness; it is a fight for Beauty as well. ■■

LOUIS MARKOS (www.Loumarkos.com), Professor of English & Scholar-in-Residence at Houston Baptist University, holds the Robert H. Ray Chair in Humanities. His books include *Restoring Beauty: The Good, the True, and the Beautiful in the Writings of C. S. Lewis*; *Literature: A Student's Guide*; *C. S. Lewis: An Apologist for Education*; *From Achilles to Christ*; *Heaven and Hell*; *From A to Z to Narnia with CSL* (from which this essay is adapted); and *On the Shoulders of Hobbits: The Road to Virtue with Tolkien and Lewis*. These, and his children's novel, *The Dreaming Stone* (in which his kids become part of Greek mythology and learn that Christ is the myth made fact), are available on his Amazon author page. Dr. Markos also lectures on Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages for HBU's Honors College and speaks frequently for classical Christian schools.

PRIEST

FR. ROBERT MCTEIGUE, SJ



Does modern education endanger the soul?

Who said this? And when?

The trouble with modern education is you never know how ignorant people are. With anyone over fifty you can be fairly

confident what's been taught and what's been left out. But these young people today have such an intelligent, knowledgeable surface, and then the crust suddenly breaks and you look down into the depths of confusion you didn't know existed.

So spoke Father Mowbray, in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. I am inclined to agree with Mowbray, and not only because I am "over fifty." But there is a problem. The novel was published in 1945—well before my time. So, will there always and forever be educators complaining about education? Or is our time an especially poor time for education?

Disputes about the education of youth have been recorded since at least the time of Socrates. Some of the most articulate critics of educational routine, even in the twentieth century, were writing before I was born. Consider this from Dorothy Sayers' "The Lost Tools of Learning" from 1947, decades before political correctness, relativism, self-esteem, trigger warnings, micro-aggressions, etc.:

For we let our young men and women go out unarmed, in a day when armor was never so necessary. By teaching them all to read, we have left them at the mercy of the printed word. By the invention of the film and the radio, we have made cer-



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Veritas Academy, Leola, PA

tain that no aversion to reading shall secure them from the incessant battery of words, words, words. They do not know what the words mean; they do not know how to ward them off or blunt their edge or fling them back; they are a prey to words in their emotions instead of being the masters of them in their intellects.

It's probably useless to argue about which time was worse than any other time or precisely when things got as bad as they are now. But there are certainties:

1. No one can seriously maintain that American public education is enjoying broad and deep success at any level;
2. In living memory, in America we taught Latin and Greek to high school students, and now we teach "Remedial English" to college students;
3. Very many self-identified Catholic schools offer an education that would not be recognized as Catholic or humane by their founders.

The human soul has always been in peril. Authentic education teaches accordingly. As a student and as a professor of many years, even amidst luminous teachers and students, I have seen a downward trajectory. That downward turn is being accelerated by our addiction to social media and frenetic consumption. ... As parents send their kids to college, wondering when they will return home, I

urge them to ask, "Will my child return to me with his soul intact?"

Have I painted a dark picture? Yes. Yet I've had hope renewed by Father James Schall's latest book, *Docilitas: On Teaching and Being Taught*. Consider:

Facing the truth of things is both our glory and our burden...And why...is it so difficult to know the truth? In part... because we know that it requires us to change our lives... The very nature of our being is unsettled until we stand in truth... Saint Augustine said that... 'Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee...' No university or other kind of education that does not know this metaphysical restlessness about ourselves will ever be anything but boring.

Our salvation and the salvation of our children and students depend, as always, upon our ability to conform our intellect and will to what is true, good, and beautiful. Faithful education provides what the human person needs in this life to reach what he was made for—the happiness of Heaven. Now, as always, the soul's enemies would teach something else. Souls are always being contested for—here and now, let's be vigilant. ■■

THIS ARTICLE EXCERPT reprinted with permission: <http://aleteia.org/2016/08/24/does-modern-education-endanger-the-soul/>. August 24, 2016.

PARENT

JACKIE JAMISON



Our Experience with Progressive Education

The culmination of my son's first grade year involved waving a large pink cardboard fish onstage while he sang about ten little fishies at our local public school. I was at the back of the auditorium

bouncing our three-month-old, looking out at the backs of the 250 other parents and wondering how many were appalled at the inane display. This was the only time we had been called together as a group all year, so surely their performance encapsulated what the school thought was worthwhile. And by the standards of progressive liberal education, the performance was excellent. It was innovative—an original work written by the music teacher—with multiple learning styles, and a focus on loving the earth.

But what was true, good, or beautiful in that performance beyond the youthful enthusiasm?

The performance was a huge blessing to our family because it absolutely confirmed our decision to send our kids to The Regents School of Charlottesville [an ACCS school in Virginia]. Since then, I've gotten lots of questions about our switch, many of them from parents at my son's new school, wondering how big a difference there really is in classical Christian education.

Our public school has a reputation for excellence. The classrooms are new, the technology is abundant, and the teachers are at the cutting edge. Of course, I knew I would not share the school's worldview and expected that this would spark discussion. I was only partly right about this. The guidance counselor came in weekly and I always asked what they discussed after the second week of kindergarten focused on homosexuality. Mostly the focus was a humanistic let's-fill-each-other's-buckets-with-kindness message. But it was harder than I expected to have a conversation about worldview issues with my

kindergartener who was mostly interested in talking about gym, recess, and what he ate for lunch. Especially with issues that were more nuanced, our discussions left me unsure what my son was taking away.

I expected that my son would be in a socially unprotected situation and that this would sometimes be hard. I was right about this. My son's classrooms didn't have desks—the children typically were in groups rotating through stations, playing learning games. Instead of memorizing sight words they played Candy Land with sight word cards. Occasionally the content was objectionable like the video game *Walking Dead Zombie Hunter*, but the bigger problem was how all this unstructured social time reinforced bad social behavior. Disobedience seemed to be a mark of masculinity. By the end of first grade, my son (who is a rule follower) hardly had a male friend at school.

Although I expected some difficulties, I also expected some benefits of the public school system, namely educational quality. This was where the real surprises started. Kindergarten was the best of the two years because there was broad consensus on what the curriculum should focus on: learning to read. But first grade



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Trinitas Christian School, Pensacola, FL



became more problematic after many of the kids started reading—there was little consensus what the children should learn next.

My son spent a lot of first grade reading the Magic Treehouse series in a corner when he wasn't making teepees out of sticks and snowmen out of newspaper for STEAM projects (it's not just STEM anymore: Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math). Progressive education's focus on learning as fun created an entertainment culture.

I toured The Regents School of Charlottesville while both first grades were doing a mammal unit. At the public school, the climax of the unit was watching a live stream of a watering hole in Zambia where a lion attacked a gazelle. Compare that to Regents where the kids enthusiastically sang me a song about all the characteristics of a mammal. Guess which kids were well entertained and which ones actually learned what a mammal was—and remembered it a year later? (My son still wishes he could have done first grade science at Regents so he could know as much about animals as his friends.)

Our public elementary is excellent at what it sets out to do. When I enrolled my son, I knew that its values would never be mine. What I didn't expect was how intertwined values are with methodology, nor how the methods of public education have been influenced by our entertainment culture. The content was also problematic—but how can I expect my public school to have

substance and direction when our society doesn't know what is worth knowing and prefers tolerance to truth?

It wasn't until I observed a classical Christian classroom that I saw how much more education could be. I saw content that was both true and rigorous, students focused on more than just the amusing, new, or politically correct, and high expectations for the development of character.

My family is very thankful to have found Regents. At the end of last year, instead of a silly song about fish, my son's class recited all of Ephesians 2. If you ask him, he'll tell you that Regents is much harder—and then he'll proudly want to recite the first 26 U.S. presidents, or quiz you on Latin. At Regents, my son has found delight in challenge and depth, friends traveling the same path, and a place where truth, beauty, and goodness connect to his everyday experience. ❖

JACKIE JAMISON is a parent at Regents School of Charlottesville, VA.



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- Geneva Academy**
Monroe, LA
- Geneva Academy**
Roseburg, OR
- Geneva Academy**
Lincoln, DE
- Geneva Classical Academy**
Lakeland, FL
- Geneva School of Boerne**
Boerne, TX
- Gloria Deo Academy**
Spring Branch, TX
- Good Shepherd School**
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All Good Things

■ OAK HILL CLASSICAL SCHOOL, DACULA, GA

At Oak Hill, our mission is to provide an education that cultivates wisdom, joy, and love for God and others. Cultivating wisdom, joy, and love starts with HUGS! Kindergartners share a group hug with our headmaster, Mr. Cain.

CHRISTY MONJURE
Admissions



■ WESTMINSTER ACADEMY, MEMPHIS, TN

At our Secret Santa Reveal Party last year, upper school student Henry Reneau reveals he was paired with grammar school student Henry Walker. Our upper school French and theology teacher, Kyle Dillon, is Santa.

Over the years, the event evolved from simple gift giving into a celebration of the season of giving with an outward focus. This year, we acted as a partner with Su Casa Family Ministries to provide less fortunate children with gifts. According to Mary Banks Hickman, one of the event coordinators, “not only does it allow ... students to cultivate great relationships, but also ... allows for everyone to experience the true meaning of Christmas.”

JULIE NAGEM
Public Relations

■ HORIZON PREP,
SANTA FE, CA

The beauty of housing early education through rhetoric school on the same campus! Then 8th grade student Camden Brown high-fives grammar school student Sage Brandon on the way to class! (Photo Credit: Student Ethan Hendrickson)

Submitted by

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY LIFE



■ TRI-VALLEY CLASSICAL
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY,
LIVERMORE, CA

Tri-Valley Classical students want to remind us all that Jesus is Lord in California, and that in Him is the good life.

The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts.

—C.S. Lewis

BENJAMIN ALEXANDER

Principal

■ FAITH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY,
KANSAS CITY, MO

Elementary students at Faith Christian Academy learn one hymn each month to sing in chapel. While waiting for their parents during school conferences, a small group of girls broke into a spontaneous singing of “Holy, Holy, Holy.” Fortunately, one girl had her violin ready to accompany the singers.

GINA SCHAEER





The Carpool Lane

Festive thoughts for the drive

I love Christmas. Perhaps it helps that to practice for Christmas each year, I have

roughly 28 birthdays, 7 anniversaries, 14 graduations, 5 baby showers, and 3 weddings, along with Valentine’s Day, Boss’s Day, Easter, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Independence Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. And, as luck would have it, my wedding anniversary is two weeks after Christmas, so I don’t have to worry about the dreaded after-holiday slump.

And I wonder ... might the world’s tendency toward commercialism be slipping into the celebratory cracks here and there? I’ve heard faint whispers, and even loud roars, from others who feel the same, but somehow those voices trickle away like fall leaves on the wind, blown over into my neighbor’s lawn and forgotten.

After briefly hoping that I don’t get a call from the aforementioned neighbors, and picking up the chatty 3rd grader from two streets down, I turn on talk radio to relax. Today they are discussing a thought-provoking, non-holiday book called *The Benedict Option*. Anything that sounds like a monastery sounds pretty good at the moment.

Between merging traffic and telling the kids I’m not going to change the station, I hear about turning from our society’s self-saturated culture by developing a stronger Christian one. The hosts start in on how we can begin transforming lives by adopting some good ideas from the early church. Of course my first thought, as with most practically minded moms, is, “Are there any organizational tools available to help make that happen?”

Actually, apparently there is one. Centuries ago they might not have had Google Calendar and books called *More Hours in Your Day*, but they had something—the church calendar. It organized life into seasons and holidays around which everything revolved, with traditions built in. Good-bye “decision fatigue.”

I wonder, again ... would it be so bad if, where holidays are concerned, we made do

with less? Our lives seem cut in two. We are torn between the secular and the sacred, good intentions and endless stoplights, abundance and busyness. And so are our holidays. But it doesn’t have to be that way! What peace would reign if we learned to get by without so many “days,” and simply focused on those that focus on Him?

As I pull into the parking lot my brief bubble of peace pops. Before revamping our family’s traditions and usurping our culture, I have to deliver all the gifts to friends and teachers, juggle semester final projects, help with class holiday celebrations, attend the annual Christmas program, make hors d’oeuvres for another party, write 200 Christmas cards, finish the Christmas shopping, and then wrap it all up, literally.

Maybe I don’t have time for a revolution. But I could google “church calendar.” On second thought, to avoid endless ads for calendars with religious quotes, I’ll just ask my Lutheran pastor friend. They are into that sort of thing. ❖

Once again we find ourselves enmeshed in the Holiday Season, that very special time of year when we join with our loved ones in sharing centuries-old traditions such as trying to find a parking space at the mall. We traditionally do this in my family by driving around the parking lot until we see a shopper emerge from the mall, then we follow her, in very much the same spirit as the Three Wise Men, who 2,000 years ago followed a star, week after week, until it led them to a parking space.

—Dave Barry

The Traditional Church Calendar 101

Practicing Holidays

The year is full of holidays. From December through May, the holidays we celebrate are largely sacred

in origin. The biggest, of course, are Christmas and Easter, but there are many more. The holidays from June through November are largely secular. Oddly, the sacred-secular divide is alive and well in the American holiday calendar.

These holidays are gathered into six-month time frames for a reason. Historically, Christians have followed a schedule of Scripture readings for worship that divides the year in two, the Half Year of Our Lord (approximately December through May) and the Half Year of the Church (June through November).

The benefit of remembering these holy days is obvious: they teach the story of Jesus.

During the Half Year of Our Lord, readings trace the life of Christ. Throughout this time, specific holy days observe important events in His life and ministry, and there are more well-known celebrations.

The benefit of remembering these holy days is obvious: they teach the story of Jesus. When celebrated properly, your faith and knowledge of Christ are fed and strengthened. The Annunciation (March 25) remembers Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she will be the mother of God—and so Jesus is both God and man. The Baptism of Our Lord in January reminds us that Jesus numbered Himself among sinners to be our Redeemer.



Get to know your Christian calendar

BEGINNINGS

Start of a season in the church year.

FESTIVAL DAYS

Commemorating an important aspect of Christ's person and/or work.

FEASTS OR FESTIVALS

Remembering individuals, most of whom interacted directly with Christ, usually during a worship service with holy communion.

COMMEMORATIONS

"Second-tier" holy days commemorating important individuals, perhaps by recalling them at the start of a class or during family devotions.

THE HALF-YEAR OF THE CHURCH		
DATE	TITLE	SIGNIFICANCE
SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST	HOLY TRINITY	ONE GOD IN THREE PERSONS
SEPTEMBER 30	JEROME	TRANSLATOR OF HOLY SCRIPTURE
OCTOBER 25	DORCAS (TABITHA), LYDIA AND PHOEBE	FAITHFUL WOMEN
OCTOBER 31	REFORMATION	BIRTHDAY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION
NOVEMBER 1	ALL SAINTS' DAY	REMEMBRANCE OF ALL WHO HAVE DIED IN THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
NOVEMBER 19	ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY	CHARITY
4TH SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS: SEASON OF ADVENT	ADVENT	PREPARATION FOR CHRIST'S COMING
DECEMBER 17	DANIEL, SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDENEGO	WITNESSES IN EXILE

THE HALF-YEAR OF OUR LORD		
DATE	TITLE	SIGNIFICANCE
DECEMBER 24: SEASON OF CHRISTMAS	CHRISTMAS EVE	NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
DECEMBER 25	CHRISTMAS DAY	BIRTH OF CHRIST
DECEMBER 28	HOLY INNOCENTS	MARTYRED IN BETHLEHEM BY KING HEROD
DECEMBER 31	EVE OF CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS	CHRIST'S FIRST INCARNATE OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW
JANUARY 6: SEASON OF EPIPHANY	EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD	PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS
1ST SUNDAY AFTER JANUARY 6	BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	JESUS IDENTIFIES HIMSELF AS SAVIOR
JANUARY 18	CONFESSION OF ST. PETER	"YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." (MATTHEW 16:16)
JANUARY 25	CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL	MISSIONARY TO THE GENTILES
FEBRUARY 14	VALENTINE	MARTYRDOM
FEBRUARY 15	PHILEMON AND EPHEBUS	MASTER AND SLAVE ARE BROTHERS IN CHRIST
SUNDAY BEFORE ASH WEDNESDAY	TRANSFIGURATION	CHRIST REVEALS HIMSELF TO BE GOD INCARNATE
EARLY - MID-FEBRUARY: SEASON OF LENT	ASH WEDNESDAY	REFLECTION AND PREPARATION FOR EASTER
MARCH 17	PATRICK	MISSIONARY TO IRELAND
MID-MARCH - MID-APRIL	PALM SUNDAY	BEGINNING OF HOLY WEEK
MID-MARCH - MID-APRIL	HOLY THURSDAY	CHRIST INSTITUTES THE LORD'S SUPPER
MID-MARCH - MID-APRIL	GOOD FRIDAY	DEATH OF JESUS
MID-MARCH - MID-APRIL: SEASON OF EASTER	EASTER SUNDAY	RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD
MAY 9	JOB	BELIEVER
MAY 24	ESTHER	BELIEVER, WIFE OF XERXES
40 DAYS AFTER EASTER (MID-MAY TO MID-JUNE)	ASCENSION OF OUR LORD	ASCENSION OF JESUS
50 DAYS AFTER EASTER: SEASON OF PENTECOST	PENTECOST	THE HOLY SPIRIT IS Poured OUT ON CHRISTIANS IN JERUSALEM



The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID

One sort of church holy day remains: commemorations of saints. These are often ignored, as Protestants are normally quick to dismiss it as a Roman Catholic practice. However, if we define “saint” from Scripture alone, a saint is one who is sanctified or made holy by God; therefore all Christians are saints. If we Christians are happy to take time off in remembrance of Washington, Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr., and if we’re happy to teach our children virtue from Aesop’s fables and Grimm’s fairy tales, why would we not also learn from the saints, our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have gone before us?

The courageous witness of Stephen (December 26), Ignatius (October 17), and

Polycarp (February 23) inspires us in fearful times. The faithfulness of Dorcas, Lydia, and Phoebe (October 25) teaches us humble service. Elizabeth of Hungary (November 19) sets the bar for charity and sacrifice in the midst of materialism, and a nod to Martin Luther on his birthday (November 10) reminds us of the joys of a good conscience fed by Scripture alone.

Between the festivals of the church year and the commemorations of saints, the calendar is full of Christian celebration—and opportunities to think on holy things. Blessed holy days! ■■

TIMOTHY PAULS serves as pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and a board member of The Ambrose School, Meridian, ID.

If we’re happy to teach our children virtue from Aesop’s fables, why not also learn from brothers and sisters in Christ who have gone before us?

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This Christmas Will Be One for the Books.

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Be sure to include ACCS students in school apparel for top consideration. Visit ClassicalDifference.com/partingshot to submit your photo and see submission details.

Photo: Jude Grieser, grade 8

Model: Sydney Miller, grade 8

Set director: Solomon Howard, grade 8

Photography elective taught by Lisa Hughes,
Logos School, Moscow, ID



2018 NATIONAL HONOR CHOIR



DETAILS:

WHO CAN ENTER: Students, age 14 and older, of ACCS member schools or ACCS member homeschool families

HOW: To be considered for invitation to the ACCS Honor Choir, each student will submit an unaltered, a capella recording online at <https://music.nsa.edu/accs-honor-choir/audition/> by January 15.

THOSE SELECTED will be notified by January 30, 2018, and perform at the 2018 national ACCS Repairing the Ruins conference in Dallas, Texas.

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Deadline: JANUARY 15, 2018