

Light FROM THE Light

“OF ALL THE HOLY WORKS, THE
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IS MOST HOLY.”
— ST. THEOPHAN

August 2011



inside

- 2 Name FOR SCHOOL
CHOSEN
- 4 PROFANE Learning and
CHRISTIAN Faith
- 6 ON THE SHOULDERS OF
GiANTS



ORTHODOX CLASSICAL SCHOOL
News & Views

Steering Committee Releases Report for Orthodox School

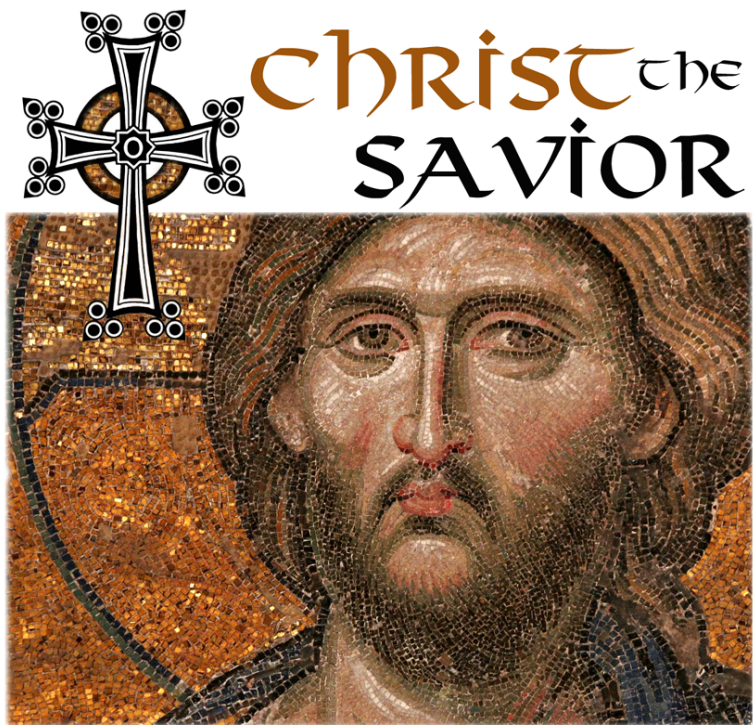
After seven months of research, consultations and planning, the 18 members of the steering committee have released a proposal for the formation of an Orthodox classical school at St. George Orthodox Christian Cathedral.

The plan was developed by a team of professionals with experience in business, education, marketing, finance, fundraising, architecture and real estate (for a complete list of names, see sidebar on page 3). All three Wichita Orthodox parishes were represented on the committee. The committee consulted with schools, headmasters, lawyers, engineers and education professionals across the country.

The proposal recommends establishing a private kindergarten through fifth grade Orthodox Classical day school in the facilities of St. George Orthodox Cathedral. The plan is to begin with kindergarten through second grade and add a grade each year until fifth grade, limiting class sizes to 15 students.

Continued on page 3

August 2011



A C A D E M Y
M I N D - B O D Y - S O U L

Name for School Chosen

Christ the Savior Academy. That is the name the Steering Committee chose for the proposed Orthodox classical school at St. George Cathedral. It is a name that was unanimously and enthusiastically embraced.

The Bible proclaims in Ecclesiastes, "A good name is better than precious ointment." So it is with great care and laborious precision that the Steering Committee selected a name.

The Criteria?

*The name should perfectly reflect the mission and vision of the school: "To train the mind of the student to recognize the unchanging truth and form the soul in virtuous character, by immersion in a classical curriculum and historic orthodox Christian spirituality. Our students will enjoy superior

"FOR a SCHOOL THAT seeks TRUTH, THE NAME ITSELF CONFESSES THAT TRUTH is FOUND IN THE PERSON OF Jesus CHRIST."

preparation for higher education, future vocation and virtuous living and eternity."

*The name should not be exotic, so as to exclude or intimidate non-Orthodox students.

*The name should suggest ownership by all three churches: St. Mary, St. George and St. Michael.

*The name should convey a sense of permanence, timelessness and prestige.

In the end, "Christ the Savior Academy" met all the criteria. For a school that seeks truth, the name of the school itself confesses that truth is found in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the beginning and end of all knowledge, and so it is His name that becomes the cornerstone of the Orthodox classical school at St. George Cathedral. May it be blessed.

Continued from page 1

The following is a summary of basic questions and answers about the proposal. For a full review of the plan, please go to www.ChristTheSaviorAcademy.org or pick up a copy of the plan in the offices at St. George, St. Michael, or St. Mary.

“76% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID AN ORTHODOX SCHOOL WOULD BE THE TOP SCHOOL PREFERENCE, IF ONE EXISTED”.SOURCE: FALL 2010 SURVEY.”

The tuition for Christ the Savior Academy will fall in the lower end of the private school average. It is our goal to be able to provide

financial aid to Orthodox students who cannot afford to pay full tuition.

Average Tuition in Wichita:

Private Schools: \$9,700

Parochial Schools: \$5,500

Classical Schools: \$5,000

Christ the Savior proposed tuition: \$5,000



What will the curriculum look like?

We have developed a classical curriculum that is uniquely Orthodox. In addition to teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, we will be exposing our students to art, music, Greek, Latin and Christian studies, which would include memorization of Psalms, Church prayers, and scripture. We will be a Great Books school. (For full K-5 curriculum, see pages 17 - 33 of Strategic Plan).



Is there a need for an Orthodox school in Wichita?

According to a Fall 2010 survey of Orthodox parents in Wichita, 76 percent of survey respondents said an Orthodox school would be the top school preference, if one existed. Academic excellence and a well-formed soul were the top priorities for those parents. There are 261 baptized Orthodox, school-age children in Wichita. In 2010 alone, there were 21 infant baptisms at St. Mary and St. George Cathedral.

When would the school open?

It is our goal to begin the school by the Fall of 2012, God willing. (For a timeline, see page 48 of Strategic Plan.)

What is a classical, liberal arts education?

A classical, liberal arts curriculum is one that addresses the two root ways of knowing: literacy and numeracy; but it does so with a distinct approach to detail, content and mastery not to be found in all schools. (See page 13 of Strategic Plan).

How much is the tuition?

Members of the Steering Committee

- Craig Ablah
- Father Benedict
- Stan Cox
- Dr. George Farha
- Warren Farha
- Father John Flora
- Roger Henre
- Tom Jacob
- Anthony Jacobs
- Gayle Malone
- Justine Nightingale
- Father Paul O’Callaghan
- Dr. Myrna Rezcallah
- Jennifer Sebitts
- Gigi Shadid
- Elena Somerhalder
- Father Aaron Warwick

Profane Learning and Christian Faith

By His Grace Bishop JOSEPH

Diocese of Los Angeles

The holy Fathers of the Church have always advocated learning. St. Basil the Great encouraged Christians not to fear pagan literature, but rather to study it with care and to understand its philosophical implications. Yet, he never advocated that Christians become philosophers. Let him speak for himself:

Into life eternal the Holy Scriptures lead us, which teach us through divine words. But so long as our immaturity forbids our understanding their deep thought, we exercise our spiritual perceptions upon profane writings, which are not altogether different, and in which we perceive the truth as it were in shadows and in mirrors. Thus we imitate those who perform the exercises of military practice, for they acquire skill in gymnastics and in dancing, and then in battle reap the reward of their training. We must need to believe that the greatest of all battles lies before us, in preparation for which we must do and suffer all things to gain power. Consequently, we must be conversant with poets, with historians, with orators, indeed with all men, who may further our soul's salvation. Just as dyers prepare the cloth before they apply the dye, be it purple or any other color; so indeed must we also, if we would preserve indelible the idea of the true virtue, become first initiated in the pagan lore, then at length give special heed to the sacred and divine teachings. Even as we first accustom ourselves to the sun's reflection in the water, and then become able to turn our eyes upon the very sun itself (St. Basil the Great, To Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature).



Notice that St. Basil relegates secular learning to a state of immaturity. This is true. The process of intellectual learning is the opening of the mind to the possibility of greater experience. In the case of the philosophers, their writings opened the fallen Hellenistic mind to the idea that something greater existed in the world beyond mere concerns about rainfall and sheep tending. St. Basil teaches us that we can and should adopt a positive attitude toward worldly learning (what he called “profane learning”), since training of this kind prepares us for discretion in the higher learning, which comes from God Himself, directly to the heart through faith and ascetical endeavor. Learning through profane subjects must, however, be taken with careful discernment, St. Basil notes:

But when [profane learning] portrays base conduct, you must flee from it and stop up your ears, as Odysseus is said to have fled past the song of the sirens, for familiarity with evil writings paves the way for evil deeds. Therefore the soul must be guarded with great care, lest through our love for letters it receive some contamination unawares, as men drink in poison with honey.



“AS ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS BEARING THE GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE CAN TAKE THE BUILDING BLOCKS AROUND US AND FASHION AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CONTEMPORARY CULTURE.”

Some fail to heed discretion and become seriously infected with deleterious ideas. In the case of St. Basil, he makes a very critical argument: the knowledge derived from reading Greek literature builds up the ability to think, but it does not inform the Christian what to think about.

For St. Basil, the use of reason can be likened to an exercise of the mind, training the mind to think. Reason is commendable, and that which is unreasonable is certainly suspect, but reason is at best an “educated guess” of the truth. Faith is superior to reason when it is defined as experience. This notion, “the theologian is one who prays,” precisely constitutes the *modus operandi* of the Church.

Let me give you an example. A scientist uses reason to develop his hypothesis, but until he impartially tests his reason in the laboratory, all he has is conjecture. Reason is conjecture, not experience, and certainly not reality. We as Orthodox submit only to reality. If reason appears to lead one in a certain direction, then we must ask, “So, can you prove it is the reality?” It must be stated that the holy Fathers of the Church purified the vocabulary and intellectual methodologies which they received. They were holy men; their thought and confession repaired the errors of philosophy and formed a new Christian intellectual culture, based upon their

holiness of life and their experience of uncreated Grace, expressed in the high language and art of the time.

Just as the early martyrs and apologists sacked the intellectual and cultural elements of the old, moribund Graeco-Roman culture and created a new Christian synthesis, an illumined Christian culture, so we too face the same project. As Orthodox Christians bearing the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can take the building blocks around us and fashion an Orthodox Christian contemporary culture. Remember, the ancients took the marble columns and capitals from the decaying pagan temples to build the great cathedrals! So we can do the same. As our secularized and increasingly confused modern culture descends ever deeper into ethical indifference and outright godlessness, we can exercise much discernment and utilize its constructive elements in the fashioning of our Orthodox Christian proclamation and godly way of life. We must incarnate the Faith in the language and ethos of our contemporaries through our own holy practice. We must study to speak effectively from such a holy life; but we must heed Palamas as we do so, lest we become “captive to vain philosophy.” We must be conversant in the issues at stake today. We must remember, however, to lead our hearers and followers away from these “mirrors and shadows” into the Substance itself, our Faith. ❀

ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

BY REBECCA LIKIARDOPoulos



St. Theophan the Recluse says, *In the Spiritual Life and How to be Attuned to It*, "Metaphysics and true philosophy, which have always been and always will be in the realm of human knowledge, are the ideal manner of viewing things." True philosophy is rare and perhaps so because we sometimes fail to see what is a part of philosophy. Philosophy, or the speculative sciences are divided in classical understanding as mathematics, physics and metaphysics (otherwise known as natural philosophy). Together these three are the culmination of the seven liberal arts. The modern fields of physics, economics and engineering are rooted in this culmination of speculation, or philosophy.

The understanding of one's heritage, one's roots, is essential to the knowledge of who one is. As Orthodox Christians we know our identity and purpose by our heritage and our traditions. Through our families, the saints, monastics, and most of all Christ our Savior, we come to understand ourselves. In a similar manner, the engineers, economists and physicists of today must come to know who they are and where they are headed by looking at where they have been. Newton mentions how this knowledge of his predecessors aided him, "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants."



“WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR HERITAGE THROUGH CLASSICAL TEXTS, MODERN METHODOLOGY AND THE FAITH AS AN EVER -GUIDING LIGHT; THE CHURCH WILL SUE CLASSICAL EDUCATION LIKE ALL ENDEAVORS TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND SPREAD THE GOSPEL.”

These “giants” in the Western world such as Melissius, Zeno, Aristotle, Euclid, Galileo, Maxwell, Newton, and Einstein have formed how we know the world in this never ending search for truth. Christians who choose to pursue the truth in sciences in the modern world have a wonderful advantage of knowing certain truths by faith. The truths of creation revealed by faith allow for theories to be examined: knowing that God is Good, His Creation is good—and perhaps the most asked question of all—what is man’s purpose? Faith states it is to be loved by His Creator and joined to Him in all eternity. Faith gives answers that reason longs for. Quantum theory currently stipulates that an object can be

in two places in the same way at the same time. This is not so difficult for those of us who know of the saints and the abilities and powers they have been granted. We know through the eyes of faith more that we can ever know through a microscope or telescope.

It is in this way that an Orthodox Christian Classical education will be an asset to our children, community, and the growth of our faith. With the knowledge of their heritage through classical texts, modern methodology and the faith as an ever-guiding light, the Church will use classical education like all endeavors to go out into the world and spread the Gospel. 🦋



FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To read the full draft proposal for the formation of Christ the Savior Academy go to www.christthesavioracademy.org or stop by the offices of St. George, St. Michael or St. Mary to pick up a copy.
- Questions about the school? Please contact [info @ christthesavioracademy.org](mailto:info@christthesavioracademy.org)



LIGHT
FROM THE
LIGHT

7515 E 13th St
Wichita, KS 67206

