



Dear Parents,

March 3, 2021

Thank you to all who attended our Parent-Teacher Conferences last week. The teachers told me that the conferences went very well and that the snacks and meals provided by a number of kind parents were delicious. St. James parents are the best! As important as Parent-Teacher conferences are, I opted to be elsewhere this year seizing an opportunity that I thought would be of great benefit to our school for years to come.

While you were conferencing at St. James in Crete, I was down in St. Joseph, MO attending a two-day seminar on Catholic Liberal Education. The term “Liberal” is not meant in the current political sense of the word, but rather in the sense of an education that frees the mind to think rationally and to find Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Some people prefer to call this model of education “classical” because it draws from the best of western civilization going back even to ancient Greece and Rome. Others simply call this education Catholic because it has been the educational tradition of the Church for close to two millennia and has formed the character and minds of some of the greatest people in history.

One of the main items I took away from the seminar was a sense of awe over the rich intellectual culture that is ours to hand on to our children. While I believe we do a good job in teaching our children *how* to read, I’m not so impressed with *what* we give them to read. We could do far better in our choices of academic content.

Secondly, I was impressed with the testimonies of principals from other schools who had chosen Catholic Liberal Education for their students. They spoke of highly engaged children who were excited about learning. Although I believe almost all of our St. James children are happy at school, I would not say that they are particularly enthused about or dedicated to their learning. I would like to see St. James School children pursue their education with vigor! I would like to see our children honor God by developing the gifts He has given them to the best of their ability. Testimonies of the principals I met tell me that this is possible and that teachers, as well as children, thrive in Catholic Liberal Education.

My final and biggest reason for being highly interested is the fact that children who receive this kind of education become adults who cherish and live their faith. To my sadness, I know too many of “regular” Catholic School graduates who no longer practice their faith. I also know a number who have had a Catholic Liberal Education and they, now as adults, are happily committed to Jesus Christ and His Church. What I have seen on a smaller scale is shown in a study sponsored by Notre Dame University called the **Good Soil**. Released on January 27, 2020, Good Soil is a comparative study of 24-to-42 year old alumni from various types of schools. Adults who had what I am calling a Catholic Liberal Education (the study calls these schools ACCS) far exceed their peers, including those from “regular” Catholic school such as St. James is now, in living their Christian faith. They also surpass in having a positive outlook on life, college and careers, in being independent thinkers, and several other categories. If you are interested in reading this study go to [The Classical Difference- Good Soil 7 outcomes full research report \(Draft 3-28-2020\)](#)

At our next SFA meeting on Tuesday, March 23 at 6:30 pm the teachers, SFA Board, and I hope to share more with you on what Catholic Liberal Education is and how it could be a blessing to St. James School. Please mark your calendars and feel free to talk with me at any time if you have questions.

In the Heart of Christ the King,

Sister Mary Alma, C.K.

Calendar Change St. James School will be closed for children on Monday, March 22 **and Tuesday, March 23**. Teachers will use these days to learn more about the philosophy and pedagogy of Catholic Liberal Education.

TikTok Caution Please see the important letter enclosed from Mrs. Shannon Ward, our technology instructor, regarding some dangers with TikTok.

Calendar Lottery The calendar lottery is the MAJOR fundraiser for St. James School and replaces the need to do numerous fundraisers throughout the year. Since this is our biggest fundraiser, it is very important that each family participate!

For every 10 tickets your family sells, your name will be entered in a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate to our SCRIP program. The winner can choose from various retailers such as Wal-Mart, Runza, Casey's, Amazon, etc! Imagine having an extra \$100 to spend!

Tickets will be coming come on February 22, 2021 –so watch for them!

This year we hope to use the calendar lottery funds to fill our library and classrooms with high quality classical children's literature. If you have any questions, please contact Anne & Chris Hobbs (402) 321-6697 ahobbs@unomaha.edu

Good Shepherd and Sacred Heart Scholarship: Please apply through FACTS application found at the bottom of the front page on our school website. **[St James Elementary School](#)**

Upcoming Dates:

March 1 – 5	St. James students take ITBS standardized tests
March 10	Pre-K Open House 4:00 – 5:00 pm. Children and parents are welcome
March 22	No school. Teacher in-service day Confirmation 7:00 pm.
March 23	No School. Teacher in-service day SFA Meeting 7:30 pm

Coming Home Today:

- Tuition Envelopes
- Scrip Order Form
- Summer Solutions Flier