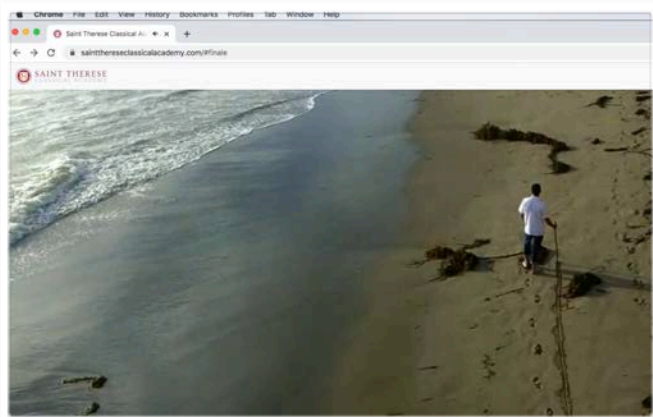


ST. THÉRÈSE NEWSLETTER

To Know | To Love | To Serve



New Website Launched

Five years ago, a friend of St. Therese with some programming skills volunteered to upgrade our website. It served us well in disseminating basic information about our fledgling academy. Over those five years, however, our academy has continued to improve in all areas and we needed a website to reflect the excellence of the Saint Therese experience. With the help of some generous benefactors, we were able to hire a professional web designer to give our website a complete overhaul. After

describing our unique curriculum to the web designer, he stated: “your program is very different - that needs to be reflected in a website that is very different.” The result is a first-rate website which offers an animated look into the classroom including interviews with teachers, parents, and students about their experience at St. Therese Classical Academy. If you haven’t already seen it, go to www.stclassical.com and check it out!

WASC Accreditation

The many hours of writing, interviews, and observations have paid off. This past winter, Saint Therese Classical Academy has now been officially accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Among other benefits, this opens the door to onsite testing through the college board, grant opportunities, and continuing improvement of the operations of the academy. Many thanks to all the parents, staff, and students who participated in this process.



Top Honors



Graduating senior Cordelia Henrie once again brings home the gold with an astonishing score on the national Classical Learning Test. Of the tens of thousands of students who took the test this year, Cordelia placed among the **top**

20 students in the nation! The CLT is a more rigorous alternative to the SAT and ACT, which is growing in popularity. We couldn’t be prouder of this and her many other achievements. She will be graduating this semester and after considering a number of excellent college choices including Franciscan University in Steubenville Oh, and Christendom College in Front Royal Virginia, she has decided to attend Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula.

Little School on the Prairie



The COVID-19 pandemic brought much suffering to our nation and local community. From the tragic loss of life to the loss of livelihoods, all of us



were subject to its adverse affects. School-aged children bore an undue burden under the mandated lock-downs in the form of “remote learning.” After experiencing first hand the disaster of virtual classrooms last year, we vowed to find a safe way to keep our students learning in-person. So, we packed up our books and



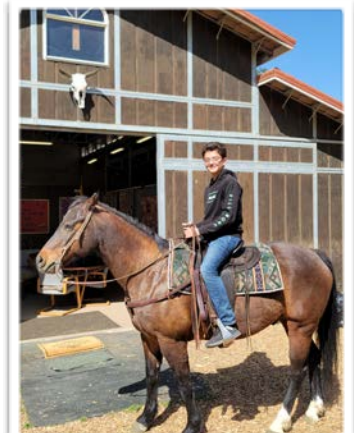
seminar tables and moved them to the fresh open-air environment of Rancho Santa Teresita where our students could continue their education and social development unhindered. While our plan was to maintain normalcy, God’s plans are always much bigger. In terms of positive school experiences, 2020-21 turned out to be one of the most memorable school years for our students. They had the opportunity to work alongside their parents designing and building a hen house. They are now raising a flock of chickens and a pair of turkeys. Both high school and junior high studied horticulture by planting their own gardens. In addition to learning the standard care of crops (watering, weeding, mulching, composting, and fertilizing), the students learned the virtue of patience in growing plants. Without a doubt, the best tasting fruit or vegetable is the one you spent two months growing!

The experience of natural wonders was also close at hand. A three-minute walk led to the junction of the Arroyo Burro and Jesusita Trails. Mule deer were frequent



guests as was a bobcat hunting pocket gophers. A great diversity of birds including families of waddling quail, soaring and screeching red-tail hawks, finches nesting in the rafters of the barn and even an occasional road-runner running down a blue-bellied lizard for lunch. Shortly after the last rains, the

mustard bloomed turning the hillsides a bright yellow and making March one of the most spectacular months of the year. We are truly thankful for the blessing this year has been and all the benefactors who continue to make Saint Therese such a unique way for our community to grow intellectually, morally, and spiritually. Even in pandemics, “all things work for good for those who love God” (Rom 8:28).

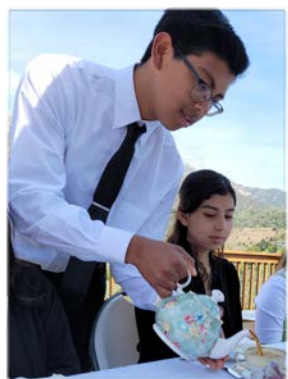


Chivalry is not Dead

In April, the academy sponsored a formation day on the feast of St. Joseph focussing on modesty and chivalry. The young men and young ladies of St. Therese participated in formation talks led by the male and female staff

respectively. Our young knights were reminded of that waning cultural principle but nevertheless innate desire of a man to sacrifice his own comfort for the sake of his beloved. The ladies were reminded to never

"settle," rather to keep their standards high and help young men rise to the occasion and be noble gentlemen. For their part, the ladies were reminded of the innate value of their physical beauty and to carefully guard it as a precious gift for just one person - her future spouse. To further cement the message, our students were joined by both the FOCUS missionaries from UCSB and the Capuchin novices from San Lorenzo seminary. Their personal testimonies were a powerful reminder of the importance of putting Jesus Christ front and center in vocational discernment. The day culminated in a ladies tea, where everyone came dressed to the nines and the chivalrous knights served their ladies tea and desserts, and where beaming smiles were not in short supply.



Easter Prep with John V

Faith formation at St. Therese was taken to the next level this year under the guidance of John Vasellina. His many years of experience in youth ministry offered the academy a full toolbox of know-how for fellowship and leadership in the faith. John planned a fabulous retreat to start off the school year at the Zaca ranch. That experience set the perfect tone and focus for a year full of overcoming unexpected challenges. We were able to celebrate Mass on the first

Friday of every month with mini-retreats scheduled every Monday. He also lined up frequent guests to share their testimonies and vocations with the student body. During Lent, our students were able to pray the stations of the cross every Friday followed by a meatless lunch of grilled cheese and pesto sandwiches prepared by Silvia Comer and Judy

Najera (perhaps a little too delicious for the Lenten fast). For Holy Week, John planned a living stations of the cross where the student playing Jesus (Melchor Olivo) literally ascended a hill like Calvary with the cross. This was a powerful experience that moved some of the participants

to tears. John was also able to arrange a visit by our own Bishop Robert Barron. His Excellency graced us a week before Easter with his first "barn mass." As usual, his uplifting sermon and very presence was an encouragement to all of us to deepen our love for our precious Catholic faith. He even made time after mass for fellowship with the staff, students and their families. 7th grader Nicholas Najera was thrilled when he was able to get Bishop Barron to sign his copy of the Word on Fire Saint Benedict Collection. We look forward to continued collaboration with John Vasellina and all his amazing work.



Homeschool Co-op



Another first for St. Therese was offering support to a number of new homeschooling moms whose older children are students of the academy. Like so many other families, to avoid the pitfall of virtual classes, these moms opted to homeschool and we shared our facility. Veteran homeschooler Claudia Henrie came to the ranch twice a week to help teach the homeschooled students as well as offer support to the neophyte homeschoolers. Her daughter Cordelia even taught the students their religion class and prepared two of them for reception of First Holy Communion. It was a real treat to have the homeschool children join the older

students on outings, assemblies, school projects, and sacraments. Sharing space with the homeschoolers was also a potent reminder that parents are always the primary educators of their children; a duty which can never be fully outsourced. We look forward to maintaining this relationship and potentially building on this foundation.

