



St. Augustine Academy

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In Memoriam

Mr. Roy S. Rohter, S.F.O.
† 2018
Co-founder
St. Augustine Academy

September 4, 2026

St. Rosalia

Dear friends,

As I stated in the welcome letter last week, this year we are focusing on prudence. Prudence is a virtue that is directed toward reality. It is that virtue which allows us to see things as they really are. The prudent person is one who constantly keeps the end in mind. What end do you want for your children from St. Augustine Academy? I hear all kinds of answers to this question from parents. Sometimes it's well thought-out and sometimes it's not. Some common answers include: 1. Wanting your kids to be in a good community, 2. Not wanting the hassle of homeschooling, and 3. Wanting your kid to be the top student in class.

None of these ends are objectively bad- they're just not well thought out. Why do you want your student to be the top of the class- and what do you mean by the top? Do you mean they have the highest GPA? That can be a nice feather in the cap, but it can also be a fairly vapid goal. A GPA is just a number. We are not slaves to numbers. A more meaningful goal is to have your student develop an attitude of wonder, the tenacity of a hard-worker, and the humility of one willing to learn. You might think the top GPA student will obviously have these qualities, but I have witnessed *many* high GPA earners both here and in other schools that do not possess these virtues.

The school's mission states that *we*, the school, are here to help *you*, the parents, grow your children in the Theological, Intellectual, and Moral Virtues. This should be the main end you have in mind for your students- effective and lasting growth in these virtues.

I sometimes have frustrated parents talking to me because their student doesn't seem engaged in readings at school, or has lost interest in science, or is tired of Latin/Choir. When you reach this frustration, one important thing to ask yourself is- what are you as the parent doing to help? Are you interested in the books yourself and do you talk with them about those books? Do you allow your students to talk poorly about Latin class? Do you downplay the importance of choir?

You parents are the primary educators. The culture you build at home is much more lasting and effective than what we give to the students here at school. If you want your student to grow in the Theological, Intellectual, and Moral Virtues, but you yourself are not leading them down that path- there's a discordance.

In my own house, we talk positively about the school and school activities, and we don't allow complaints about what is being offered here at the school. This has produced gratitude from our kids. They are grateful for flag football/volleyball/baseball. They try out for plays and are excited to attend the performances, from the kindergartener to the 10th grader. Dances are a big deal in our house and it's exciting when they come around.

When our kids complain about particular teachers, we assume charity on the part of the teacher. We don't allow our kids to complain about something a teacher is doing. Instead, we tell them to take their complaint to the teacher directly, and we follow-up with our kids about that. If that doesn't resolve it, either my wife or I will go with our student to speak with the teacher. We model to them how to talk respectfully to someone you might not be seeing eye-to-eye with. At dinner, rather than asking them how their day was and getting a 'fine', we ask them to tell us what made them happy at school today. This gets a more detailed answer and makes them think about the positive aspects of the day before telling us about any rough aspects.

As far as curriculum, when my kids come home singing a tune from choir, we listen in- even if it sounds off-key. When they're reading Shakespeare, or Homer, or C.S. Lewis, etc.- we engage with them about the readings even if it is just in small ways. We encourage poetry and don't make fun of anyone presenting. These are small things, but they've led to a lot of great moments. One quick example: this summer, we were camping and the kids wanted to tell ghost stories. I wasn't in the mood and suggested a poetry night- which they were apprehensive of. I leaned into it and modeled by reciting a short soliloquy I remembered from high school 'She should have died hereafter...'. Then one of the younger ones eagerly joined in with a two-line poem about a candy cane. Soon after that everyone wanted a go. Shakespeare soliloquys, poems the older kids remembered from kindergarten, *The Fool's Prayer*, and some cowboy poems were all being batted around. It ended with my 10 year-old who doesn't take to academics naturally being so excited to recite a huge poem about a little boy who was eaten by a lion.

We saw a lot of examples of this attitude paying off over the summer. My oldest two voluntarily harmonizing on a song they learned at school to impress their grandparents, discussions about the Odyssey this summer leading to multiple people in the house reading the epic including my dyslexic child who never reads voluntarily, theology discussions happening at the dinner table, spontaneous drawings of Viking ships or Shakespearean characters around the house- just to name a few.

This isn't because my kids are savants or my wife and I are overly talented people. My kids vary wildly in natural intelligence, social status, interests etc. They are at all ends of the spectrum. And if you saw my home life, you would be likely be unimpressed. However, what we do right is to talk up the school, re-direct any of their complaints, and model interest in a subject. We do this because we fully believe in the mission of the school and want our children to grow in the Theological, Intellectual, and Moral Virtues- that is our end goal for them. This has produced good fruit.

God Bless, Timothy Moore

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CULTURAL NIGHT- The high school is going to the Hollywood Bowl this coming Thursday, September 10! A flyer with the information and sign-up went home with the high schoolers this past Monday. Please return the flyer with the information filled out by this coming Tuesday! If you need an extra copy of the flyer, see the email blast. We are in need of more drivers!

LATE START- Next Friday, September 11 will be a late start. The tardy bell will be 9:00 AM for the Upper School and 9:15 AM for the Lower School.

FRANKENSTEIN SEMINAR- Saturday, September 12 is the seminar and dinner night for the High Schoolers at the Van Hecke residence! This is a mandatory event for high school. If for some reason, your high schooler cannot make it due to a prior obligation, please let Mr. Moore ASAP. See the flyer for more details.

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER-

- Sep 4- ALL SCHOOL (K-12) Mass and Early Dismissal from Upper Campus, Mass @ 11:40 and Early Dismissal at 12:30
- Sep 7 - No School, Labor Day
- Sep 10- High School cultural night at the Hollywood Bowl!
- Sep 11- Late Start
- Sep 11- Family Dance @ the Upper Campus! See the flyer for more details.
- Sep 12- *Frankenstein* Seminar Night for High School at the Van Hecke residence!

ORA PRO NOBIS – *We continue to keep all our friends and family in our prayers! For the repose of the soul of John Summe, Jr. For a successful and joy-filled school year at St. Augustine Academy. For the health of Kevin Kolbeck. For the repose of the soul of Paul Scamperle, former SAA parent. We pray for our Pope, our Archbishop, all of our priests and religious, and we pray especially for each other!*

