



The Standard

A publication of St. Andrew's Academy

From The Headmaster

It has been a too long since we have published an issue of *The Standard*. Our plan was to publish an issue once a month. A number of other things, however, crowded in on our time and space, and here we are in the second term with only issue three coming out.

We appreciate your patience. We just finished the halfway point in the year and celebrated not only with progress reports, but with our Winter Choral Concert and Open House. The Chorus sang a selection of sacred pieces and the open House showed off projects from History, Science and Bible classes. The students also showed off their language prowess by reciting the Lord's Prayer in Greek.

At the moment, the high school students are about midway through Virgil's *Aeneid* and enjoying the story of the founding of Rome. They are also a good ways into their Intermediate Logic text. The middle school students, in science class, are looking into the part of God's creation we call our Solar System. They are also studying the civilization of the classical greeks and are parsing words in the language of the same name!

We are excited about the progress all the students have made and look forward to seeing that progress continue for the rest of the second term and into the third.

We have a few things going on outside of the normal school day that I'd like to remind everyone of. First of all, St. Andrew's is sponsoring a class for parents entitled "**Shepherding a Child's Heart.**" The class is taught, via video, by Ted Trip, the author of the book of the same name. Childcare is available and the cost of the book and notes is \$15. If you or someone you know would be interested in the class, please call the school at 596-3343 (which brings up the point that the school phone number has changed—please note it).

St. Andrew's is also sponsoring a seminar entitled "**Dating Games.**" This is a one-day seminar beginning at 10:00 in the morning on Saturday, February 24th. It lasts until 1:00 and deals with the whole issue of dating, relationships, courtship and marriage. My wife and I will be speaking at this seminar and will be speaking a bit from our own experience. During our courtship, we decided to forgo our culture's typical approach to finding a mate and sought a more traditional and biblical approach. As strange as it sounds to contemporary ears—including my own—I even waited until the minister said "You may *now* kiss the bride!"

I hope you'll take advantage of the ministry that is St. Andrew's Academy, whether it be the seminars or classes offered or the St. Andrew's Day conference or enrolling your son or daughter in the Academy. We are here to serve.

Yours,

The Rev'd Brian Foos

Forming Character

Following is the Address, by Brian Foos, at the St. Andrew's Convocation, Fall, 2000.

Welcome St. Andrew's Academy families, friends, students and faculty to the 2000/2001 Convocation for St. Andrew's Academy; and Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have, this evening, in prayer, dedicated this year of study and teaching at St. Andrew's Academy to God. This of course, includes the students themselves—and I pray, students, that you daily dedicate yourself to God and the task he has set before you—and this includes the faculty and staff, as well as families, as families are part and parcel of the education that happens here.

It is through God's grace that we are all gathered here at all, and that we have such an institution as St. Andrew's Academy. It is up to God's continued grace, but also much hard work before us that we can build St. Andrew's Academy for the future of these students and others like them.

I don't think I have to spend much time reminding us all where our culture is and seems to be heading.

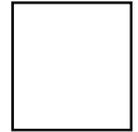
There is little love in our culture at large for the things of God. I am reminded of a passage in the book of the Judges where it is said that "everyone did what was **right** in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6).

Our culture seems to be doing just that. And "right" in our culture's eyes seems to be what we know as "felt needs." "Right" seems to be what we deserve because we're just such good people. "You deserve a break today." "If it feels good, do it."

We have a "right" to enjoy life, a "right" to this, a "right" to that. Have you ever noticed that most of the discussion in our culture using the word "right" is not about right as in "not wrong," but as in "I have the right"?

The sense that I deserve all things that I want coupled with the idea that there are no absolutes in terms of right and wrong has taken our culture to new lows. We have teenagers giving birth to children and throwing them away. Many do not even get that far. We have such a promiscuous society that the pressure upon teenagers to conform is almost completely unbearable without strong family, Church and biblical support.

The concepts of sacrifice, honor, integrity, guilt, shame and a whole host of other biblical and classical concepts have been totally lost for the younger ones of our culture. Cheating on a test used to be grounds for expulsion. Now it is winked at and, as I read in an article not too long ago, even encouraged by teachers.



The idea of respecting one's elders (parents, teachers, police officers—just plain older folks) is a foreign concept to many of *my* generation and it doesn't get any better in the generations that follow.

Illustrative of the problems of our culture and how the culture is affecting those of us who seek to live differently, to follow the example of Christ, is a survey of students of Christian Schools. Where do students in Christian schools get their information from? Where do they draw crucial information and views concerning some fairly important topics in their lives? If we can use the issue of sexuality as an indicator, we see that over half (53%) of the students got most of their information about sex from their friends—not from their parents, not from the Church.

And what are their friends saying? Look around, it is not hard to see.

Let us look at one more statistic from this survey. Many have, over the years, noted the negative affects of Television on students and their ability to think and reason. I won't spend the time here discussing it, but I invite you to investigate—you'll be alarmed at what you discover. The survey says that of the students polled, over 30% watched 11-15 hours or more of television per week! That's 78 full work days of television watching per year. That's a fifth of their year watching "the tube."

The good news is that 63% of the students watched 10 hours or less per week. Now isn't there something wrong with that figure? The thing that startled me is that they apparently didn't have much of a breakdown in students who only watched maybe 2 hours, or one hour or no TV at all! When 63% of the students watching 10 hours or less per week is the good news, we're missing something!

I've already spent too much time telling you what you already know. The world is in a mess and people of love, of character, of integrity, of humility, of self-sacrifice, of wisdom and discernment need to make a difference.

We are all on the road of learning. But children—even older children—are on that road in a more intense way. They are called to learn and

grow. As I often tell my students, "your vocation, your calling from God at this moment in your life, is to be a student."

They really like it when I say that.

They are called on by God to learn and grow so that they might make a difference in the world, so they might bring Truth to bear, Light to shine; so they might bring Wisdom to a culture that desperately needs much of it.

Our prayer and our focus here at St. Andrew's Academy is to graduate a student that will seek to glorify God in all that he or she does. This is building of character and in the Christian Tradition, has been called "spiritual formation."

One cannot separate Math and English out

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from Spiritual Formation. The attitudes, the actions, the lack of actions, the discipline, etc. that the student brings to those, and the other, subjects come from the heart. Dealing with the heart is a spiritual issue.

Life for our students here at St. Andrew's Academy is rather full fledged. We desire to graduate a student that will seek to glorify God with her whole self, with all his body, soul and mind, for this is the greatest commandment.

That said, we do, however, have to admit that the mind tends to be the emphasis of our studies here at St. Andrew's. Our students take Greek, Math, Science, Logic, Composition, Literature, Bible, History, choir and drama after all. All those require at least a little bit of diligence in the mental faculties to do well in.

If the mind is a central part of what we are trying to train, not taking it out of context of body and

soul, then it would be fair to say that we are seeking to graduate a student that can think, and think well.

We want our students to be able to, as the writer of the book of Hebrews says, "discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14).

St. Paul repeats this theme a number of times: "Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:21,22). "Hate what is evil; cling to what is good" (Rom. 12:9b).

St. John assumes his readers have the wisdom to discern, for he says "...do not imitate what is evil, but what is good" (3 John 11).

We want our students to be able to "demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (II Cor. 10:5).

We want them to "see to it that no one takes them captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy..." (Col. 2:8).

We want their "conversation to be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that they may know how to answer everyone" (Col. 4:5,6).

Yes, we want them to think, and we want them to think so that they might glorify the Lord. And, we must never forget that the reason we do this in the context of the Church and the Holy Scriptures is that as the Psalmist and the writer of the book of Job remind us, the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of this whole educational process. The fear of the Lord is the foundation.

May we, as a community of families—St. Andrew's families—keep this endeavor in our prayers and together see St. Andrew's Academy graduate students that seek to give God the glory with their whole lives.

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