



# The Good News

**Classical Curriculum Takes Hold at HCCS , Offering Untold Advantages for All Those Who Come and Join Us: Gifted Instruction for All Due to Rigorous Standards and Classical Methods of Pedagogy.**

**Fall 2013**



**Left: Diana Teeters, 1st grade teacher, instructing on the Riggs phonogram “ch”, Greek “k” sound, everyday “ch” & French “sh”.**

**Below: Damian Sagastume, Mid-school teacher, in a literary discussion of Saint Thomas More’s Utopia.**



Since we do not advertise a formal gifted instruction program in the K-8, there might be a misconception that we do not have it. On the contrary, gifted instruction is readily available for all of our students, not just those lucky few who test into it. We believe children should be affirmed in whatever area they excel. That is why we have a high priority for art, music, physical education, religious service and so on. These fit with the philosophy that at a classical school one should not just study subjects but should learn how to approach and make sense out of life in general.

The classical curriculum we have is an advanced curriculum starting at preschool where students move onto the quick track that will enable them to excel in above grade-level work even as early as Kindergarten (Kindergarteners are already reading well into the 1st grade level and have moved into the first grade Math book).

The classical curriculum we have is an integrated curriculum in which historically-themed units are woven throughout the subject areas and epochs which each child encounters.

Through the entirety of our language arts program—from the great books that we read to the intense focus on writing, grammar, vocabulary and the study of Latin all leading to above grade-level achievement in Language Arts—we find that the students are more open to reading original texts and esoteric novels simply because they’re used to it.

Units on rhetoric, poetry memorization and recital, and public speaking all lead to an ability to articulate some of the great ideas of mankind (and to form an appreciation for how to think as these great thinkers did).

In math , if a student can move ahead, we do what many schools cannot and will not do: we let them. We have a 6<sup>th</sup> grade-aged student in Algebra 1, several others on a track to skip Algebra 1 in high school, and most students working above grade level in all grades.

A focus on academic competition through Math Counts, Latin League, Science Fair, Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, and Faith Bowl (our students are consistently near the top of the Diocese) allows students who can go farther in their studies to have both a format and a purpose to do so. Our students who qualify take the SAT’s through the Duke Talent Search Program (TIP) in 7<sup>th</sup> grade with the possible national or state recognition ---and invites to Duke’s gifted programs all across the country during the summer.

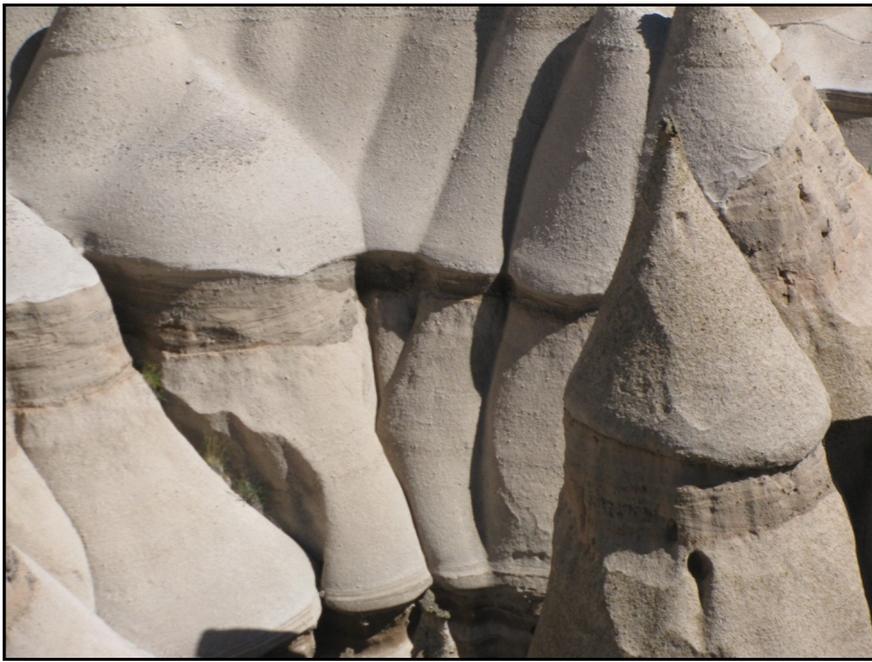
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Students in Mrs. Daugherty’s art class drawing pumpkins using perspective and centering techniques.

K-8 have art every week for one hour. Many of Mrs. Daugherty’s students have gone on to study art further.





## Tent Rocks & Science Activities

Our 6th, 7th, & 8th grade earth science and general science classes took a field trip to Tent Rocks National Monument on September 20th. They have been learning about rock formation and geological time periods.

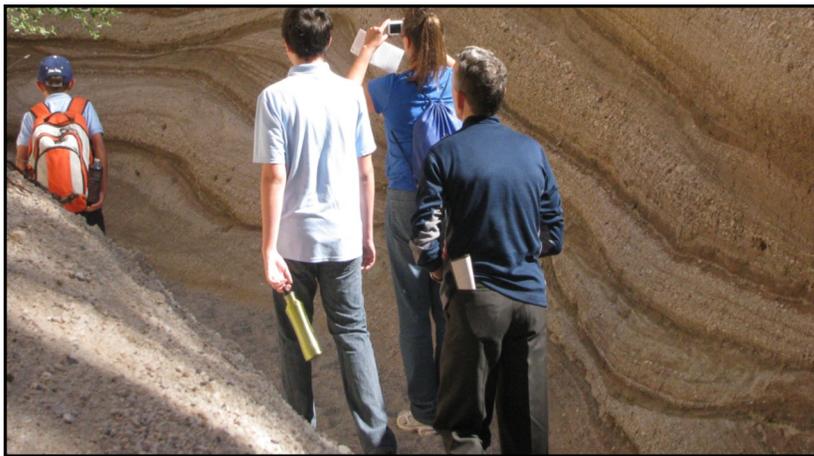
Pictured at left is the reason for the name Tent Rocks. At left and below left, you'll see the sedimentary formations, named "hoodoos", which our students hiked through. After many experiments, including those made possible by our Catholic Foundation grant, the mid-schoolers are now gearing up for the Science and Engineering Fair.

Our Kindergarten/1st graders have been doing many hands-on science activities. Pictured at below at left, the end result of a surface tension experiment: re-arranged dye.

In the 2nd/3rd Grade, the Science Experiments have focused on simple machines. The students have made pulleys, levers, and have used all types of household and garage items to experiment with simple machines.

Our 4th/5th graders are focusing on plant cells, animal cells, types of organisms, and food chains. They have been learning science through many means and methods, such as experiments, nature walks, and art projects.

Our 6th graders are enjoying the benefits of the new microscope (digital) bought by the Catholic Foundation Grant. (Picture on p. 4.)



### Fundraiser

Smith's Cards (an easy way to ensure that Catholic education thrives in the East Mountains)

Please call the school office; you must have a bar code to get your card activated so that your purchases will be credited for rebate to us. Link on constant contact email blast to print out the scan.



### Catholic Classical Schools Meet to Plan Consortium

This past summer, a group of Catholic classical educational leaders met in New York to plan for the future training needs specifically of Catholic classical schools and collaboration with the burgeoning classical schools movement in general. Article link:

<http://www.catholicliberaleducation.org/news/news-press-release-August-1-2013.htm>

## *Student Page*

*The mission of Holy Child Catholic School is to advance the development of the soul, mind and body through implementation of a rigorous classical curriculum; to foster spiritual and intellectual growth; to develop stewardship of God's gifts and inspire a love for the Eucharist, the Church, and evangelization.*

### **First St. Vincent de Paul Mission: Trip to Joy Junction**

By Maria Alonso, Dylan Figge, Andrew Housman (SDVP leaders for 2013-2014)

Joy Junction is a phenomenal center that homeless or poor people stay in. They take all who come under their wing and provide them with three meals a day and mats to sleep on.

What kid doesn't want to experience the joy of holidays? Holidays always have something fun in stock for the kids there. Easter, they have an Easter egg hunt, Halloween, they give the kids candy, and Christmas they go out and give kids toys that are donated to Joy Junction.

When our small but effective Saint Vincent de Paul youth group went there, we served the poor food at lunch time. Seeing that these children and their parents were people just like us was a real eye-opener. After we had finished the task, we all felt very pleased with the fact that we helped a great organization and also learned something about our community and ourselves.

### **Family Gathering October 25th**

By Cole Podzemny

We want to welcome you to the 1st semester Family Gathering. Every grade has created a performance to show some of what they learned this quarter. Honestly, after watching the performances of every grade, I would be looking at for the 6th grade's Iliad Reborn play, as well as the Kindergartner's Ten

### **Classes Compete in a Friendly Loose Coin Collection for the World Mission Day**

By Abby Valdez, Liam Fogarty, and Rene Alonso

From the First Monday of October to the eighteenth of October, the HCCS students and teachers raised a total of two hundred and twenty dollars as a donation to the poor. The fourth and fifth graders won the competition, with the seventh graders following close behind.

Seventh grader, Rene Alonso said, "We were disappointed that we didn't beat the fourth and fifth graders in the competition, but we at least got an average of eleven dollars per person with five people in our class." Dylan Figge said that the eighth graders only had four people so it was more difficult to try to win the competition.

### **Is Baseball Still America's Game?**

By Kameron Valencia, Jose Perea, and Joseph Grogan (7th Grade Journalism Students)

For many years baseball has been considered America's favorite pastime. But can it still hold its title? Some journalists consider that the sport of football is most popular. After all, more people watch the Super Bowl than they do the World Series. You hear about many Super Bowl parties but do you hear about many World Series parties?

This year's playoffs for the World Series are pretty exciting between the Red Sox and the Detroit Tigers, especially with the game tying grand slam for David Ortiz with the Red Sox. Since the St. Louis Cardinals have been victorious over the Dodgers, the World Series promises to be an exciting match-up of two of baseball's most fabled franchises.

Baseball is a good game for people that like long seasons and slow moving games. Also, baseball is a safe game that requires intelligence and skill. However, the attention span of your average American is not long enough to follow a baseball game, so football is gaining in popularity. Basketball, with March Madness and heroes such as Jordan and Lebron, is also gaining in popularity. Yet, what would sports be like without the boys of the summer? We hope there is always room for it in America's future.



## Back to School Speech Emphasizes the Habit of Excellence

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then is not an act but a habit”. Aristotle 384 B.C.-322 B.C.

For the purpose of this speech, I am going to use my definition of academic excellence as being, “An immediacy of needing to do something right, of being compelled to excel”.

Our motto, AMDG (All For the Greater Glory of God) is the reason the school exists. The search for Truth encompasses the 7 strategies for classical academic excellence. These are:

1. **Classical trivium** is our model for education; the grammar, logical and rhetoric stages really work as an organizing philosophy behind a curriculum;
2. Of utmost importance is parent involvement in how each day went for their child; their guidance and determination to hold the students’ accountable for strong integrity and effort is essential for success;
3. Obedience and an ability to persevere to the end of a job done right are the telltale signs of success in school; the famous test is: “When you tell your child to do his/her chores, do they?”;
4. If you create a language-rich home, extremely limit TV, videos, computer games and keep a library of books which expose your children to literature and non-fiction across a multitude of years, you will create critical readers;
5. Your child should be well-versed on and retain a multitude of math facts and math concepts (that this needs to be your expectation for them: math facts learned, whatever it takes);
6. Imitation, repetition, memorization, and emulation are the key learning methods;
7. Learning is an active occupation; you’re not going to learn by waiting to be told how and when to do something.

A more interesting approach than someone’s treasured but trite list might be to discuss just one practical question. This example question will let us see how the immediacy for the need to excel plays out in real life. The question is whether some students simply can’t learn math by algorithms (fancy word for steps—albeit in Math, there could be several algorithms by which the problem can be completed).

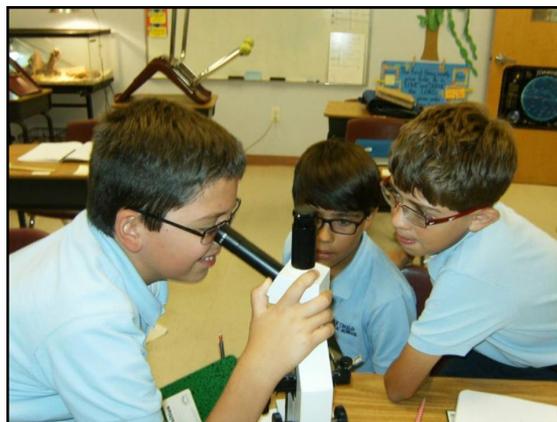
The two sides of the argument can be represented by modern educators who say that some students can’t learn math by algorithms and classical educators who might concede that other interventions might be necessary as well, but that ultimately students can learn math by steps.

Click here for the rest of the speech, but please know that, in the end, we determine that classical educators would say that students must learn everything according to the Truth of its laws of the discipline. We take pride in providing the real backdrop that will allow students to know they ARE ON TO TRUE AND MEANINGFUL UNDERSTANDING. We actually find that giving the students a “comprehensive tool belt from which to attack learning” gives them more confidence than well-intentioned but misguided efforts to make sure they’re “happy” about not being burdened with another’s explanations. There are also some very interesting observations made about developing wonder in students, developing personality, motivation, and about children’s learning styles. To learn about them, read the entirety of the speech on the constant contact email blast..

### Needs List

**WE NEED HELP WITH GETTING THE WORD OUT OF THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT AND GOOD THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING AT HCCS. Please call if you want to help in any way!!!**

Below: Science class picture: our new digital microscope; P.E. classes take their hikes in the trails near the school; one more Art class picture.



## OPEN HOUSE: NOVEMBER 16th & 17th after all Masses

- Ads will be running on Catholic Radio promoting Mission Awareness of our school and pointing to the date of the Open House.
- School Council members <sup>Out</sup> and their helpers will be getting fliers to all venues where our school might meet with interest.
- The Web page is getting a makeover and new brochures will be made for recruitment. Did you see our new logo on the front page by Jasmine Lyle?