



Introduction to Saint John of the Cross Academy For Prospective Families

(Revised 08/21/2021)

Mission Statement

Saint John of the Cross Academy is a classical Roman Catholic tutorship based upon the natural institution of the family, for the purpose of aiding its primary responsibility of cultivating children in the Greco-Latin Tradition as preserved and interpreted by the Roman Catholic Church in her dogmas and liturgies.

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Education and Culture

Classically understood, education is not an occupation. It is a lifestyle. More exactly, it is the transmission of an entire way of life from one generation to the next. It is the formation of the mind and heart to become free and fertile ground into which may be planted the seeds of a common culture, the social virtue, which rightly disposes a person to their heritage and society, both the immediate society of their family and the state as a whole, and to their duty as members of that society. When understood in this light, it becomes manifestly absurd to expect any external institution to shoulder the entire responsibility of education. Not only is such a thing impossible (except in some socialist nightmare), but would we even desire it if it were? Would any responsible parent, understanding the true nature of education, simply relinquish their full rights and responsibilities to “experts” and “professionals,” whose standards and expectations are as varied and unknown to the parents--and sometimes as mechanical--as those of the factories that produce their computers and phones?

We know that the answer is no. Education forms an essential part of the rearing of a child, and is therefore primarily a duty of the parents themselves. It is itself part of the very basis in natural law for the permanence of the matrimonial bond¹ and the primary end toward which the natural communion of life and work of the spouses is directed². Thus, the primary educators of a child must be the parents.

Of course, this is a very heavy responsibility and can at times even become a burden. It is for this reason that parents ought to seek out a community of like-minded people to aid them on this singularly difficult and important task. That community ought to include tutors, themselves dedicated to mastering the intellectual and moral traditions at the heart of their shared culture, to aid them in achieving their goal of firmly instilling the best aspects of that culture in their children. This is the reason for the founding of Saint John of the Cross Academy, a classical tutorship that facilitates the kind of community, bound together by a truly traditional Catholic culture, in which children receive an education worthy of the name.

The tutors of SJCA recognize their role and its importance, but they know that it is essentially a secondary and instrumental role. Thus, while they all have a total and lifetime commitment to the mastery necessary to be classical tutors, they also understand that their expertise does not in any way supersede the rights and responsibilities of parents. Tutors are instruments in

¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Sup. III, Q. 41, art. 1; also, Q. 67, art. 1: “By the intention of nature marriage is directed to the rearing of the offspring, not merely for a time, but throughout its whole life. Hence it is of natural law that parents should lay up for their children, and that children should be their parents' heirs (2 Corinthians 12:14). Therefore, since the offspring is the common good of husband and wife, the dictate of the natural law requires the latter to live together forever inseparably: and so the indissolubility of marriage is of natural law.”

² *ibid*, Q. 49, art. 2, ad 1

the hands of the parents cultivating their children, and indeed the whole family. They dedicate their life not so much to an occupation, but to a work of mercy.

The tutors of SJCA, with this understanding of education and the role they play in it, have two primary responsibilities to the community: (1) to help the parents gain a more perfect understanding of the intellectual and moral traditions of their culture so that they can better transmit that culture to their children; (2) to tutor children directly throughout the years most formative of their rational powers, training them to master grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric (the three foundational *artes liberales*, or liberal arts) in the various areas of study and in accord with the best our tradition has to offer. The tutor does not strive for novel methods or to impress his own personality upon his pupils. Indeed, it is the great authors of the Western tradition who are the teachers, and it is their wisdom that informs all of the tutor's methods. The tutor is doing his work well insofar as his pupils can think well about the ideas before them, focusing totally on the intellectual activity at hand rather than on personality of the tutor. The ultimate end for the tutor himself is that the pupil will one day no longer need his guidance, as a child gradually learns to ride his bike without training wheels. For at the completion of his schooling, the pupil will have demonstrated his own mastery over the liberal arts. He is now free to pursue wisdom on his own, possessing the right rule of reason in his soul as a virtuous habit.

When it comes to contemporary education, especially of the Catholic variety, a common advertising tactic is to claim that the institution is “renewing” or “rebuilding” culture, or that it is “counter-cultural” in the sense that it is a bastion for a culture which is not in vogue. These are bold claims. Does SJCA make a similar claim? Is it the goal of SJCA to “renew” the culture? We must answer with a firm, if surprising “no.” This is not because we think that our culture does not need renewing and rebuilding. Rather, it is because we realize how absurd it would be for a single institution to claim for itself such a task³. At this point, is it even possible for any merely human institution to do so? Only the pervading work of supernatural grace in and through the Church is powerful enough to bring about such a change. We all pray to be instruments, God willing, but surely this could only occur through our excellent attention to the task immediately before us. We must be “faithful in that which is least,”⁴ as Our Lord says, if we are to have any part in that which is great.

At this point, it would be useful to give an account of just what we mean by “culture.” Culture is a manifestation on a societal scale of excellence in the whole spectrum of rational behavior of mankind developed over multiple generations and informed by a common tradition. The relation of this word to “agriculture” is no accident and helps to illustrate our point. Just as agriculture is the art of disposing the field well to bring forth its latent perfection in a good crop, so

³ T. S. Eliot, *Notes Toward a Definition of Culture*, pg. 109: “For the schools can transmit only a part, and they can only transmit this part effectively, if the outside influences, not only of family and environment, but of work and play, of newsprint and spectacles and entertainment and sport, are in harmony with them.”

⁴ *Luke* 16:10

human culture, through the fertilizing effects of tradition, disposes the hearts and minds of those who share it in common to bear the fruit of human perfection: the virtues.

Given this view of culture, it ought to be clear why SJCA has a much more modest goal than a wholesale renewal of culture. Our goal is simply to help parents educate their children into a tradition and culture that has proven to be the strongest and most fruitful culture in the history of the world, namely, Catholic culture. SJCA will not distract itself with grandiose plans of creating a new culture or converting the whole world. We choose instead to focus on the family in front of us, helping each member of the family to be as well formed as they can be into a culture more ancient and longer-lasting than anything devised through the machinations of men. If God decides to use this modest work to bring about a more general renewal, then we would certainly be grateful instruments. But as T.S. Eliot remarked, culture is something that comes about as a result of the members of a community simply pursuing true human excellence in their diverse activity⁵. The minute the abstract “culture” becomes itself the aim of our action--one begins to wonder what the word means in such a context--, that is the same minute we cease to be active participants in culture. This is the path to becoming an ideologue, but not a cultured human being. We have plenty of the former, and not enough of the latter. Culture is virtuous precisely because it is a habit for concrete action in accord with the human excellence, and it is gained, like other virtues, through the painstaking repetition of those actions. The tutors of SCJA accordingly have as their goal to help their pupils to gain the intellectual and moral formation which most disposes them to excellence in any genuinely human activity. Thus, while we do not take as our primary goal the “renewing of culture” at large, we see our work as an incredibly effective tool in the hands of families seeking excellence within their own lives. In turn, we may hope with the help of grace that this excellence may organically take root and bear fruit for generations to come. Only then will there be any sort of rebirth of culture. And if there is, it will be the cause of generations of families obeying the dictates of God, His creation, and the ancient customs those dictates inform. The tutors of SJCA, again, will have only been instruments.

Why is a classical tutorship particularly fitted for this goal? We believe that it is because it is the best way for children to be initiated into our ancient and common culture. Through the imitation of the great masters of the Western intellectual and spiritual tradition, children become habituated to think and desire along with those great models that laid the foundations of our civilization. Being steeped in the ancient traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, both in doctrine and practice, children find their place alongside “so great a cloud of witnesses,”⁶ and learn to think, pray, and worship, even in the unity of our sacred Latin tongue, with the Saints that have handed us this

⁵ T. S. Eliot, *Notes Toward a Definition of Culture*, pg. 17: “For if any definite conclusions emerge from this study, one of them is surely this, that culture is the one thing that we cannot deliberately aim at. It is the product of a variety of more or less harmonious activities, each pursued for its own sake: the artist must concentrate upon his canvas, the poet upon his typewriter, the civil servant upon the just settlement of particular problems as they present themselves upon his desk, each according to the situation in which he finds himself.”

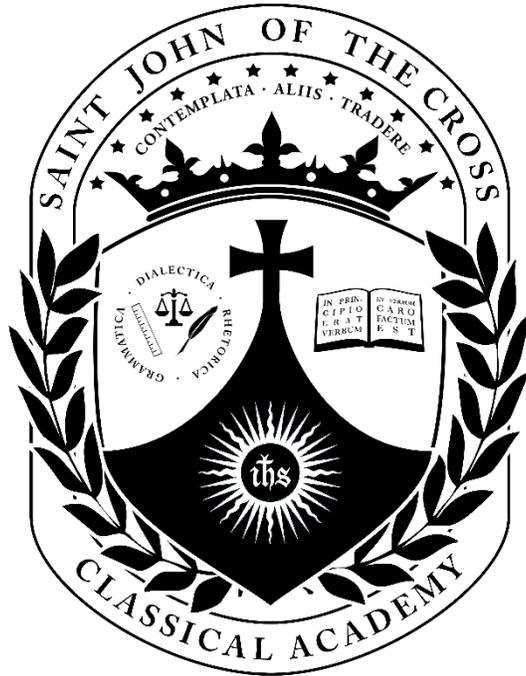
⁶ *Hebrews* 12:1

patrimony. Thus, a Catholic and classical education provides the intellectual and spiritual formation necessary to liberate people from the bondage of being a mere child of their age, and the ignorance that leads to mindless assimilation. They become part of something far deeper, far more human and real than any fad of modernity.

In this way, perhaps this kind of education may be called “counter-cultural,” but this is certainly not its essential characteristic. (We might even pray that the leaven of Catholic classical education would permeate to the point that no “counter-culture” was even necessary.) Indeed, if we are reflective about the current state of our world and the diseases that ail it, it would become clear that what we are dealing with is not simply an evil culture. Rather, we look in vain for signs of any culture at all. Tradition, the very lifeblood of culture, is nearly wholesale rejected. In the obsession with entertainment and self-gratification, true human virtue is choked out. Mediocrity rises to the top because it is not a threat, while magnanimity is labelled “arrogance,” “extremism,” or “bigotry.” In short, any true cultivation of human excellence is abandoned. What is left is barbarism covered with the veneer of technological sophistication, which has succeeded in giving our modern brand of barbarism ever more ways to express its brutality. But as we have seen, the essential characteristic of classical education is precisely human excellence, enabling human beings to reach out for the highest virtues of heart and mind. True human excellence, whether it is that of the farmer or the politician, is a free, deliberate, and rational excellence. So while a classical education may not claim to be itself the cause of culture or even of the renewal of culture, it is a necessary element in forming those who can make that claim in the future: generations of families properly formed in the best their tradition has to offer.

All of this provides the inspiration for the founding of SJCA and will inform every aspect of its life: its character as a classical tutorship rather than a modern school, its absolute emphasis on the family, its Four Marks of Tradition, Subsidiarity, Simplicity, and Contemplation as laid out in its Bylaws, its historic-classical curriculum, and even its yearly calendar, organized around the ancient liturgical calendar of Holy Mother Church. All of this is to ensure that the families and tutors of SJCA are thoroughly immersed in the life-giving flow of the traditions of Catholic culture, that with grace we all might be disposed to seek with Saint Augustine that “Beauty ever-ancient, ever new,” without Whom no heart could find rest.

Explanation of Insignia



The main inspiration for this insignia is the Carmelite coat of arms, the order to which our patron, Saint John of the Cross, belonged and to the reform of which he devoted his life. We have tried to make of this insignia a true sign of the nature and mission of SJCA, as well as the inspiration for its founding.

Mountain. The peak in black represents Mt. Carmel, the holy mountain where Elijah lived. The ascent of the mountain is like the spiritual ascent of the soul to communion with God. At the top of the mountain is the Cross of Christ, where God delved most deeply and lovingly into humanity so that man might be made a partaker in the Divine Nature. We strive to unite ourselves to Christ Crucified, with sights firmly fixed upon the instrument of our salvation.

IHS Monogram. At the base of the mountain is the symbol of Christ, IHS being the Latinized first three letters of Jesus' name in Greek. This is especially associated with Christ present in the Holy Eucharist, which alone grants us entrance upon the holy mountain. The rays of the sun come from our Eucharistic Lord, enlightening the heart and mind. Without this *lumen Christi*, the soul cannot even begin to ascend. Thus Christ is the beginning and end of our ascent. This symbol is associated with the Jesuit order, whose early classical schools have served as an inspiration in the founding of SJCA. This symbol with its rays is also reminiscent of that which appears in many images over the

enlightened heart of Saint Thomas Aquinas, whose teachings serve as the sure guide for the intellectual formation of SJCA.

The Scriptures & the Trivium. To aid our ascent, we look to the two great sources of wisdom: Nature and Revelation, the latter being the perfection of the former. Thus, SJCA strives to cultivate a disposition for natural wisdom and virtue attained through the mastery of the three liberal arts of the classical Trivium (Grammar, Dialectic, and Rhetoric), and ultimately a disposition for the supernatural wisdom granted to us in Divine Revelation (in both Scripture and Tradition). The words “*In principio erat Verbum...et Verbum caro factum est*” (“In the beginning was the Word...and the Word was made flesh”) give the very heart of Revelation, that is, the Incarnation of the Eternal Word, the Son. Without these “two wings” of faith and reason, as Saint John Paul II calls them, we remain grounded, unable to ascend the mountain.

The Crown & Twelve Stars. In our endeavor to aid the families of SJCA in the spiritual, intellectual, and moral formation of their children, we recognize our great need for the intercession of our Blessed Mary. Thus, atop our shield is the crown of the Queen of Heaven, to whom we at SJCA always pledge our devotion. The twelve stars, as described by Saint John in the book of the Apocalypse, represent the twelve tribes of Israel, and point also to the twelve Apostles, whose teaching tradition forms an essential part of the deposit of faith. Our devotion to the Blessed Virgin, Glory of Jerusalem and Queen of the Apostles, guarantees our holding fast to the Traditions and Magisterial authority of the Roman Catholic Church, which is the seat of the Apostles and the New Jerusalem.

“CONTEMPLATA ALIIS TRADERE”. This phrase comes from the *Summa Theologiae* of Saint Thomas Aquinas and aptly sums up the mission of SJCA. “For even as it is better,” he says, “to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to hand on to others the fruits of one's contemplation [*contemplata aliis tradere*] than merely to contemplate” (ST, IIa-IIae, Q. 188, art. 6). This principle leads Saint Thomas to conclude that teaching and preaching, those arts which consist in this “handing on” of contemplated truths, are the highest vocations of religious life because they are inherently directed toward perpetuating amongst all the highest activity of the human soul--contemplation. This is why all aspects of SJCA, whether it be the study of theology, pilgrimages and religious events, or even works of mercy carried out in the community, must always flow from and be directed toward contemplation.

Bylaws of Saint John of the Cross Classical Academy

(Revised 7/17/2015)

I. Marks of St. John of the Cross Academy

1. **Tradition.** In both intellectual and spiritual matters, the families and tutors will always consult primarily the authority of the Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church⁷ as expounded and protected by the Magisterium, and secondarily the intellectual tradition of the classical civilization of the West which has been adopted by, baptized into, and become an essential part of Roman Catholic culture.⁸
 - 1.1. In intellectual matters, therefore, the Academy gives pride of place to the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas as the Universal teacher of the Catholic Church.⁹ Thus, all curriculum will be ordered according to the Thomistic hierarchy of the Sciences: Sacred Theology being the highest science, followed by Philosophy, then Mathematics, and finally the Experimental Sciences.
 - 1.2. The Academy recognizes that the study of the Latin and Greek languages is indispensable for a truly historic-classical education. Indeed, there is no classical education apart from the classical languages.
 - 1.3. In Liturgy, Prayer, and Devotion, the Academy accepts the traditions of the Church with eager docility and promotes them with zeal. Therefore, the Academy seeks in accord with the will of the Church to preserve above all else those elements of the Roman Liturgy which have been inextricably linked to the glory and solemnity of the sacred rites themselves, namely, the primary use of Latin¹⁰, the sacred language of the Church, and Gregorian Chant as the standard of sacred music¹¹. In daily prayer and

⁷ Vatican Council II, *Gravissimum Educationis*: “. . . in a special way, the duty of education belongs to the Church, not merely because she must be recognized as a human society capable of educating, but especially because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe, and, in her unflinching solicitude, of assisting men to be able to come to the fullness of this life.”

⁸ Bl. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*: “. . . in engaging great cultures for the first time, the Church cannot abandon what she has gained from her inculturation in the world of Greco-Latin thought. To reject this heritage would be to deny the providential plan of God who guides his Church down the paths of time and history.”

⁹ St. Pius X, *Doctoris angelici*: “We therefore desired that all tutors of philosophy and sacred theology should be warned that if they deviated so much as a step, in metaphysics especially, from Aquinas, they exposed themselves to grave risk.” ; and also Pius XI, *Studiorum Ducem*: “We consider that Thomas should be called not only the Angelic, but also the *Common* or Universal Doctor of the Church; for the Church has adopted his philosophy for her own.” ; cf. Bl. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 78

¹⁰ Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Art. 36

¹¹ St. Pius X, *Tra le Sollecitudini*: “Gregorian Chant has always been regarded as the supreme model for sacred music, so that it is fully legitimate to lay down the following rule: the more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savor the Gregorian form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.” see also, Vatican Council II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Art. 116

devotion, the Academy is formed by praying the Divine Office, the Holy Rosary, silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as a real extension of the Divine Liturgy¹², and the pursuit of Contemplation as the height of the Spiritual Life¹³.

2. **Subsidiarity.** The Academy delegates authority so that all its affairs are handled on the most local level possible¹⁴. This principle guides all relationships at the Academy. The responsibility of any authority is thus to aid whoever is directly under his care in the things which they cannot accomplish well without his aid.

2.1. **The Division of Rights and Responsibilities** according to the principle of Subsidiarity:

- 2.1.1. **The Parent.** The leader of the Domestic Church, the parent, is the primary educator of their children¹⁵, and is therefore the primary holder of all rights and responsibility regarding the education of their children. Thus, the authority of the tutor is granted by delegation of the parent as a member of the Academy.

2.1.1.1. By becoming a member of the Academy, the parent agrees to adhere to this document, especially with regard to the Four Marks of the Academy. Any serious deviation therefrom can result in expulsion from the Academy upon the decision of the Parent-Tutor Council.

2.1.1.2. Parents are required, in accordance with the high calling of educating their children, to actively engage in the intellectual and spiritual formation of their children.

2.1.1.2.1. This shall include the mandatory attendance of quarterly seminars and workshops offered by the tutors of the Academy.

- 2.1.2. **The Tutor.** The primary responsibility of the Tutor is to assist the parents of the Academy in the education of their children.

2.1.2.1. In all academic matters, the Tutor holds the primary right and responsibility of ensuring the parent understands and can meaningfully administer to their children the standards and curriculum of the Academy, as laid down in this document and the

¹² Ibid, Art. 13; Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 58. The Prayer of adoration should be made “always giving priority to silence in which to listen inwardly to the Lord who is alive and present in the Sacrament.” (Benedict XVI, *Angelus* of 10 June, 2012)

¹³ CCC 2714. cf. Lk 2:19; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 3, a. 8

¹⁴ Bl. John Paul II, *Centessimus Annus*: “A community of a higher order should not interfere with the life of a community of a lower order, taking over its functions.”

¹⁵ CCC 1656; *Lumen Gentium*, 11; *Gaudium et Spes*, 52

Curriculum Guidelines.

2.1.2.2. By becoming a member of the Academy, the Tutor agrees to adhere to this document, especially with regard to the Four Marks of the Academy. Any serious deviation therefrom can result in expulsion from the Academy upon the decision of the Parent-Tutor Council.

2.1.2.3. Understanding the inexhaustible depths of the complementary realms of natural reason and faith, tutors are required to engage in a life-long pursuit of that wisdom. Docility and wonder are necessary qualities of the classical tutor.

2.1.2.3.1. The Academy will provide opportunities for its tutors to grow intellectually and spiritually as a community and as individuals in at least the following ways:

2.1.2.3.1.1. Tutors are each required to present talks or lead discussion at quarterly seminars for parents.

2.1.2.3.1.2. Tutors are each required to engage in academic studies with their fellow tutors, the topic of which will be determined yearly by the group of tutors themselves.

2.1.3. **The Addition of Members to the Academy.** In consideration of the unique and communal nature of the Academy, it is necessary to place certain restrictions upon the admittance of new members into the community.

2.1.3.1. **Prospective Families** must complete the required application and provide a statement of agreement with this document, and will be admitted only after an interview with the Parent-Tutor Council.

2.1.3.1.1. After the initial interview, granted the continued interest of both the prospective family and the Academy, the child(ren) will be given an assessment to determine placement in the curriculum and whether and what kind of remediation may be required.

2.1.3.1.2. The Academy is committed to helping families whose children are in need of remediation even before entrance into the Academy. Thus, even if it is decided not to admit a pupil on the basis of a lack of academic development, the Academy

will offer whatever aid it can reasonably offer given time and resources, and will be open to a continued relationship with the family until the required benchmark is reached.

2.1.3.2. **Prospective Tutors** must complete the required application, provide a statement of agreement with this document along with a sample of relevant academic work, and will be admitted only after at least one interview with the Parent-Tutor Council followed by an additional interview with the tutors.

2.1.3.2.1. In the event that new tutors are needed, the Academy will give first consideration to those already connected in some way to the community. Only after its own resources have been exhausted will the Academy consider adding those with no previous connection to the community.

2.1.3.3. All prospective members of the community are required to take an oath to the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church and to show in their lives continual and zealous effort to live out and defend the precepts of the Faith.

2.2. **Parent-Tutor Council.** In order to maintain subsidiarity and accountability to all in positions of authority at the Academy, there is instituted the Parent-Tutor Council, consisting of three parents and three tutors. This Council will function as the Academy's board of directors and can in no wise depart from this document.

2.2.1. The Parent-Tutor Council shall be composed of three parents and three tutors. Members will occupy their seats on the Council as long as they remain willing and in good standing with the Roman Catholic Church and the Academy, that is, in compliance with the rules of this document governing their respective roles in the Academy.

2.2.2. If any member of the Council acts in any way contrary to the common good of the Academy or its mission and character as laid out in these bylaws, he or she may be removed from office by a majority vote of fellow council members, but only after full consultation with the Chancellor.

2.2.3. An office of chancellor shall be filled by a Roman Catholic Priest in good standing with the Church. He will be elected by a vote of the Council and will occupy the office for as long as he maintains the faculties to do so.

2.2.3.1. In-case of a deadlocked vote, the Council agrees to adhere to the advised course, being a preference of one of the two proposals, of the

Chancellor.

- 2.2.4. The offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be determined annually by a vote of the Council.
 - 2.2.4.1. To ensure equitable representation, the offices of President and Vice-President cannot be occupied by either two parents or two tutors at the same time.
 - 2.2.5. Committees may be established by the Council as the need arises for the organizing and evaluation of the spiritual, intellectual, and practical aspects of the Academy.
 - 2.2.6. Membership in the Council is strictly voluntary. Therefore, no Council member shall be entitled to compensation for his or her time and work as a council member.
 - 2.2.7. All motions presented at Council meetings must accord with these procedural guidelines: (1) Member, with permission of President, states the motion to be tabled, (2) Motion is seconded, (3) Motion is stated by President, opening the floor to debate or discussion, (4) Amendments of motion are stated, (5) Motion is voted on, (6) President announces the results of the vote.
3. **Simplicity.** Contrary to the modern trend of diversion, multiplicity, and specialization in education, the Academy seeks to cultivate simplicity and unity in the intellectual and spiritual lives of its families. Therefore, the tutors and families of the Academy gladly accept the responsibility of safeguarding the culture of the Academy by simplifying the following:
- 3.1. **Simplicity of Association.** Though the Academy is open to relationships with outside communities, no such relationship can be made essential to the very life of the Academy, or binding in its internal affairs or direction--a relationship reserved solely for the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. This includes any relationship to businesses or orders, whether lay or religious. This will ensure the essential stability and simplicity of the mission of the Academy.
 - 3.2. **Intellectual Formation.** The Academy recognizes that “all men by nature desire to know,”¹⁶ and that the knowledge of the truth for its own sake is a higher virtue than any technical, vocational knowledge. Therefore, all academic pursuits of the Academy and its pupils are ordered to the unifying pursuit of the truth for its own sake.

¹⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 980^a1

- 3.2.1. **Class Schedules.** Regarding scheduling for pupil courses, the Academy follows the dictum, “*multum non multa;*” depth over quantity. Therefore, the daily schedule of each pupil should not be overly weighed down with electives and extracurricular activities.
- 3.2.2. **Preeminence of Liberal Arts.** Any activity which prevents the daily pursuit of the mastery of the Liberal Arts is incompatible with the intellectual formation of the Academy.¹⁷
- 3.2.3. **Pedagogical Simplicity.** The standard of each tutor’s method and content must never be multiplied or reduced according to the least common denominator of pupil performance. Rather, the standard, which is mastery of the relevant stage dictated by the Trivium¹⁸, remains unified for every pupil regardless of his or her intellectual gifts.
- 3.2.3.1. The parent and the tutor are responsible for applying this high standard in prudent and formative assessment of the individual pupil; thereby addressing the diversity of intellectual ability without compromising the unity of the standard of the Academy.
- 3.2.3.2. **Class Sizes.** The growth of classes necessarily harms the pedagogical simplicity of the Academy, either by forcing the tutor to compromise the standard, or else by forcing the tutor to leave some pupils behind. Since neither is acceptable, classes must remain as small as possible.
- 3.2.3.2.1. If the size of a given class exceeds 4 pupils, it will be split into two classes as practical consideration provides, preferably single-gender (Art. 3.3.1).
- 3.3. **Spiritual Formation.** The Academy seeks perfection of its unique spiritual formation¹⁹, rather than needless diversion of spiritual practice; a sort of spiritual schizophrenia.
- 3.3.1. The prime way in which the Academy simplifies its spiritual life is by ordering all activity to the liturgical seasons of the Roman Catholic Church, which frees us from the continual and often frantic pursuit of novel spiritual experience. In this way, the Academy cultivates a unity of life for all its

¹⁷ St. Augustine, *De Ordine* 1, 8, 24: “Such studies are the way to the highest things, the way of reason which chooses for itself ordered steps lest it fall from the height. The steps are the various liberal arts.”

¹⁸ The Classical Tradition upon which the Academy was founded mandates that children in grades K-12 be educated primarily in the three Liberal Arts which comprise the Trivium: Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric. This will equip the pupils not merely with knowledge, but the very tools of learning (see Dorothy Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning*).

¹⁹ This formation, as in Sect. I, Art. 4, is centered on docile contemplation of the highest Truths of the Faith.

members, following the teaching of St. Paul to “redeem the time.”²⁰

- 3.3.2. Any spiritual activity which does not raise the mind to God, curb concupiscence, and give Him due glory and honor in accordance with the ancient law and custom of Holy Mother Church, is considered by the Academy to be an act of superstition rather than true religion.²¹
 - 3.3.3. The Academy specifically endorses as part of its spiritual formation those events or activities which are focused upon the disciplines essential to Christian life, being prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. These three disciplines dispose the soul to the right worship of God and engender Contemplation and its flower, which is Charity. These activities especially accomplish those conditions of true religion set forth above (3.3.2) and taught by Sacred Scripture.²²
 - 3.3.4. Any spiritual activity which focuses primarily on moving the emotions rather than forming the whole person for liturgical contemplation is incompatible with the charism of the Academy.²³
 - 3.3.5. **Unity of Spiritual and Intellectual Formation.** Since the contemplation of God is the highest act of man, and since this is primarily an intellectual action, the Academy recognizes an inextricable bond between its Spiritual Formation and its Intellectual Formation.²⁴ Therefore, unity and simplicity of Spiritual Formation must be maintained in and through the academic curriculum, most especially that of theology, as properly disposing the minds of pupils to contemplation of the highest truths.
- 3.4. **Social Formation.** The Academy seeks to promote in pupils depth of friendship over multiplicity of acquaintances. The former fosters self-knowledge and true moral growth, while the latter breeds mediocre superficiality and stifles magnanimity.
 - 3.4.1. **On Co-ed Relationships at the Academy.** It follows naturally that the Academy holds the ideal of single-gender classes to better foster genuine, lasting friendships among the young men and the young women of our Academy. This also also allows tutors to better adapt their curriculum and

²⁰ Ephesians 5:15-16: “See therefore, brethren, how you walk circumspectly: not as unwise, but as wise: redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

²¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 93, a. 2

²² James 1:27: “Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulations: and to keep one’s self unspotted from this world.”

²³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 91, a. 2.; St. John of the Cross, “When these emotions go unbridled they are the source of all vices and imperfections, but when they are put in order and calmed they give rise to all the virtues” (*The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, Book Three Chapter 16, par. 5)

²⁴ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 3, a. 5.

method to each individual class.

- 3.4.1.1. No public displays of affection between male and female pupils are allowed during any activity under the banner of the Academy, in the interest of removing the unnecessary distraction from healthy intellectual, spiritual, and social formation.
- 3.4.1.2. Any proposed event involving relational instruction or formation, especially with regard to co-ed relationships (on dating, Theology of the Body talks, etc.), must be approved by the Parent-Tutor Council.

3.5. **Communal Formation.** Since the Academy is made up of its families and exists for their common good, it seeks to foster genuine relationship and trust between the families and tutors of the community. The Academy refuses to embrace any policy which would put undue strain on or bifurcate that relationship.

3.5.1. Since the parents are the primary educators of their children, the Academy will consider it paramount to foster and bolster trust between parents and tutors.

3.5.1.1. Following the Mark of Subsidiarity, the final onus of developing an intimate relationship between tutor and parents falls upon the tutor, whose responsibility it is to practice consistently open and honest communication with the parents whom he serves.

3.5.1.2. **Conflict Resolution.** In case of tension between a parent and a tutor, the parties involved will consult, in succession until resolution: (1) Among themselves alone, with this document as a guide, (2) two fellow members of the community, being one parent and one tutor, (3) the whole community being represented by the Parent-Tutor Council. This is modelled after the practice of fraternal correction taught in the Gospel.²⁵

3.5.2. Parents and tutors will be required to participate in the intellectual and spiritual formation of the Academy, in accord with their respective rights and responsibilities as laid out in Article 4.1.

3.5.3. **Practical Arts.** Beyond academic formation, the Academy will cultivate among its members a community of life through the facilitation of those arts and practices which human beings undertake for enjoyment and edification of both body and soul. Thus, the Academy will offer, as far as possible, opportunities for communal training and practice in horticulture,

²⁵ *Matthew* 18:15-17

woodworking, the culinary arts, and other arts beneficial to life.

4. **Contemplation.** As stated above, the Academy holds fast to the immemorial teachings of the Catholic Church with regard to the highest act of the soul, which is Contemplation. Therefore, in all realms of formation, the Academy recognizes the preeminence of the contemplative life.²⁶

4.1. **Regular Adoration.** The Academy is graced by being in a larger Catholic community that provides ample opportunity to adore our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament. Therefore, our families and tutors are required to do so regularly.

4.1.1. Any activity at all that would disturb the solemnity and silence of adoration is absolutely unacceptable, being diametrically opposed both to the contemplative charism of the Academy and the solemn reverence always due to our Lord present in the Sacrament.²⁷

4.2. **Mandatory Retreats/Trips.** Trips and retreats planned for families and tutors, as extensions of the curriculum of the Academy, are meant to highlight the spiritual and intellectual formation had throughout the year. Therefore, these events should reflect the contemplative charism of the Academy, as well as the liturgical seasons of the Roman Catholic Church.

4.2.1. During all trips and retreats, pupils should be allowed ample time for silent study and reflection.

4.2.2. When these events include communal Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, all members of the Academy must be careful to obey the norms and regulations set out by the Magisterium.²⁸ The liturgical nature of such celebrations must be safeguarded to distinguish them from personal devotions.

4.2.3. Reflections offered during these trips will be focused on contemplation of the truths of the Faith rather than on the sentiments of the pupil; the latter may come into view only as related to the former.²⁹

4.3. **Parent-tutor Retreats.** The Academy seeks to promote contemplation in its parents

²⁶ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 3, a. 5.

²⁷ See Art. 1.3

²⁸ General Instruction of the Roman Missal, No. 3; Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass, *Roman Ritual*; Adoration and benediction are seen in these sources of Magisterial teaching as no longer to be considered mere devotions but have been raised to be part of the Church's official liturgy, following the norms and regulations governing the celebration of the Christian Mystery. (CCC, 1066-1075) As liturgies, they "acknowledge Christ's marvelous presence in the sacrament and invites us to the spiritual union with him that culminates in sacramental communion" (*Order for Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*, No. 7).

²⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 91, a. 2.

and tutors by providing opportunities to take at least one communal retreat a year.

- 4.3.1. These retreats, in order to ensure their contemplative nature, will be preferably held in religious houses such as monasteries or convents.

II. The Process of Amending These Bylaws

1. **Conditions of Amendment.** The proposal of any amendment to these bylaws must be shown and proven by the proposing party to meet the following conditions:
 - 1.1. The proposal is in keeping with each of the four Marks of the Academy.
 - 1.2. The proposal reflects a genuine need in the community; that is, the common good of the community *requires* it.
 - 1.3. The proposal, if adopted, would not cause unnecessary unrest in the community or the undue isolation or mistreatment of any of its members, whether families or tutors.
2. **Who Can Propose Amendment.** In order to ensure stability in the community, it is necessary to restrict the proposal of amendments to some extent.
 - 2.1. A group of three or more members of the community, being parents or tutors, may propose an amendment to the Parent-Tutor Council.
 - 2.2. Any two current members of the Parent-Tutor Council may propose an amendment.
3. **Procedure of Proposal.** In order to ensure clarity and efficiency of proceedings, the following guidelines must be followed in making a proposal for amendment.
 - 3.1. The proposal must be submitted in written form for review to each member of the Parent-Tutor Council at least 30 days prior to the scheduled presentation of the proposal, which will take place at quarterly meetings.
 - 3.2. The proposer of the amendment must structure the proposal document in the following manner:
 - 3.2.1. **Statement of Amendment.** This should include a brief and concise statement of the amendment itself, with reference to the relevant section and sub-section of these bylaws.
 - 3.2.2. **Rationale of Amendment.** This section will include a brief description of the reason the proposed amendment would be beneficial to the Academy.
 - 3.2.3. **Proof of Conditions.** This section will include, in detail, proof that the

proposed amendment meets each of the conditions as required above.

4. **Adoption of Proposal.** Proposed amendments can only be adopted upon a five-sixths majority agreement of the Parent-Tutor Council of the Academy.
 - 4.1. Agreement may be reached not before two weeks of consideration by council members following the initial presentation of the proposal, at which time the Council will convene to vote on the proposal.
 - 4.2. Upon agreement to adopt any amendment, the council must agree further, by the same five-sixth majority, upon whether the amendment be adopted immediately or at some agreed upon time in the future.

Introduction to Curriculum

Mastery of any activity is only obtained through repeated, guided exercises. The historic-classical curriculum provides the space for such mastery on at least three fronts.

Exercise to Perfection: The classical pupil perfects his first exercises before he moves to his second exercises. Because he is not drowned by a surfeit of subjects, the classical pupil gains confidence by mastering each step in the said subject before moving on to the next. He remains at step one until he masters step one. The classical pupil does not simply pass tests; he masters intellectual content and skills. He wastes no time. He masters his exercises through concentration and repetition. His mind is not cluttered with half-remembered facts but is organized by fixed points, flexible to learn anything because he has developed the intellectual habits of mastery.

Master Tutor: A master tutor is necessary for classical mastery. SJCA is a classical tutorship in which the pupils are coached and trained one-on-one. Pupils must perform. They must perform repeated mental acts well in order to master their academic subjects. The tutor makes that possible because he is always coaching, prodding, correcting, and informing the pupil. Unlike modern students, the classical pupil cannot hide in the lecture room. He is not left alone in his passivity. He must act; he must act well. The “gadfly” tutor is working with the pupil one-on-one ensuring that there are no half measures.

Continuity: Following the stages of the Medieval Trivium (Grammar, Dialectic, and Rhetoric), the classical pupil deepens his understanding of familiar content. The seeds of the Grammar Stage bear fruit in the Dialectic and Rhetoric stages. This repeated exposure and continuity ensures that the pupil’s mind is fertile ground for mastery.

Grammar Stage (3rd-6th Grades): The essential focus in the Grammar Stage years is the training of the mind for the Dialectical Stage in the Trivium. This includes first and foremost, education in the Latin tongue. The pupil will also be expected to have memorized the “grammar” of the various subjects listed below: theology, literature, history, mathematics, empirical science. The primary faculties perfected in this stage are observation and memory.

Dialectical Stage (7th-9th Grades): The essential focus in the Dialectical Stage is the training of the mind for the Rhetorical Stage in the Trivium. This includes first and foremost, education in the pupil’s ability to discern the difference between good and bad argumentation by developing an understanding of ideas and their relations. The method in this stage hones skills of analysis and argumentation, building upon the skills of the Grammar Stage. With the Latin language as the backbone of a historic-classical curriculum, the pupils become familiar with words and the structure of language in the Western tradition. The primary faculty perfected throughout this period is discursive reasoning, the ability to move correctly and quickly from propositions to their logical conclusions.

Rhetorical Stage (10th-12th Grades): The essential focus in the Rhetorical Stage is to hand on the tools of persuasion so that each may more readily convince his neighbor to embrace the good, the true, and the beautiful. This serves as a culmination of the pupil’s imitation of the greatest teachers of the

Western tradition. Rhetoric is the art of expressing oneself artfully and persuasively. In order to obtain good rhetorical skills the pupil must have mastery over the subject in question and over himself. The first two stages of the Trivium will have prepared the pupil for the former, while an emphasis on virtue, both intellectual and moral, will prepare him for the latter. Thus, the faculties perfected in this stage are those of the whole man, intellect, will, and the passions, and their proper ordering in obedience to reason.

Grading Scale

At SJCA, all assessments consider the pupil's performance on two fronts: mastery of the material and self-mastery, or the development of the habits proper to a good student. The symbols for mastery are the letters "A," "B," and "C." The letter "A" means that the pupil has mastered his exercises and has done so in an appropriate timespan. His tutor is confident that he is ready to progress further in his studies. The letter "B" means that the pupil has satisfactorily completed his exercises but needs improvement for mastery. His tutor will continue to review and drill before he substantially progresses in his studies. Letter "C" means that the pupil is not mastering his exercises, his work is inconsistent, and the organizational skills essential for mastery are lacking. The tutor will focus more on this particular subject, insuring that the pupil perfects those exercises and skills necessary in order to obtain academic excellence.

Second, the tutorial assessment also reflects the habits, disposition, and discipline of the pupil's work ethic. The symbols for this are the numbers "1," "2," and "3." The number "3" means that the pupil has a habitual disposition to complete his exercises with concentration and consistency. The number "2" means that the pupil is organized, but struggles to stay focused during exercises and is inconsistent. His work is completed half-heartedly. For the next few weeks, his tutor will be more strict and demanding. The number "1" means that the pupil lacks the habitual disposition to complete his work. He is unorganized and inconsistent. Again, his tutor will become more strict and demanding. His tutor will also ask of his parents that they be extra vigilant in checking in any vices that may be associated with his laziness or disobedience.

The highest grade given on report cards is therefore an A.3 and the lowest a C.1. The former shows that pupil has not only shown mastery in the given subject material, but has also shown the self-mastery of discipline in the skills proper to the stage in which he is. On the other hand, a pupil might excel in a certain topic for which he have natural aptitude, yet remain undisciplined in his day to day work. Such a pupil would be given an A.1, which should indicate to the parents that the pupil frequently gets answers to questions correct, but he has not developed the self-mastery required by the classical curriculum.

2021-2022 Calendar

(*Indented dates are Feasts that occur during in-session weeks of school. **Bolded** dates indicate weeks in which classes are in session.*)

Note: Given the plans to continue construction on our new facility in Sunset, this schedule is subject to adjustment to provide enough time for the required work.

Aug. 15 (Assumption)

Four weeks of school (Aug. 18 - Sept. 11)

Sept. 6 - Labor Day, no classes

BREAK: Sept. 13-17 - No Classes

Sept. 14 (Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

Five weeks of school (Sept. 20- Oct. 21), through:

Sept. 23 (Ember Wednesday) - Mass, acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Sept. 25 (Ember Friday) - Mass, acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Sept. 26 (Ember Saturday) - Mass, acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Sept. 29 (Dedication of St. Michael: First Class Feast)

Oct. 7 (Our Lady of the Rosary)

Oct. 11 (Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary) - Sunday

Oct. 18 (St. Luke) - Sunday

Oct. 22 - Faculty Meeting, no classes

BREAK: Oct. 23 - Nov 7 - No Classes

Oct. 25 (Christ the King) - Sunday

Nov. 1 and 2 (All Saints and All Souls)

Two weeks of school (Nov. 8 - 19)

Nov. 20 - Parent Meeting and SJCA BBQ at Sunset Property

BREAK: Nov. 22-26 - No Classes

Three weeks of school (Nov 29 - Dec. 17), through:

Dec. 8 (Immaculate Conception) - No Classes - Holy Day of Obligation

BREAK: Dec. 20 - Jan 7 - No Classes

Dec. 16 (Ember Wednesday) - Mass, acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Dec. 18 (Ember Friday) - Acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Dec. 19 (Ember Saturday) - Acts of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving

Dec. 25 (The Nativity of the Lord)

Jan. 1 (Circumcision of the Lord; Mary, Mother of God)

Jan. 6 (Feast of Epiphany)

Four weeks of school (Jan. 10 - Jan. 28)

Jan. 13 (Baptism of the Lord) - Wednesday Mass

BREAK: Jan. 31-Feb. 4 - No Classes

Three weeks of school (Feb. 7 - Feb. 25)

BREAK: Feb. 28-Mar. 4 - No Classes

March 1 (Mardi Gras/"Shrove" Tuesday) – Once the last perishables are spent, the traditional Catholic community makes sure to make a good Confession ("to shrove" means to have one's sins absolved) before Ash Wednesday.

March 2 (Ash Wednesday)

Five weeks of school (Mar. 7-April 8)

Mar. 7 (Feast of St. Thomas Aquinas)

Mar. 9 (Ember Wednesday)

Mar. 11 (Ember Friday)

Mar. 12 (Ember Saturday)

BREAK: April 11 - Apr. 22 - No Classes

TRIDUUM

Apr. 14 (Holy Thursday)

Apr. 15 (Good Friday)

Apr. 16 (Holy Saturday)

Apr. 17 (The Resurrection of the Lord)

Six weeks of school (Apr. 25 - June 3)

May 26 (Ascension) - LONG WEEKEND, No Class from May 26 -May 30

June 4 - SJCA Graduation (Vigil of Pentecost)

BREAK: June 6 - 10 - No Classes

June 8 (Ember Wednesday)

June 10 (Ember Friday)

June 11 (Ember Saturday)

Two weeks of school (June 13 - 24)

June 11 (Corpus Christi)

June 24 (Nativity of John the Baptist)

June 25 - SJCA Convivium

BREAK: June 27 - July 8 - No Classes

June 29 (Saints Peter and Paul)

Two final weeks of school (July 11 - July 22), through:

July 16 (Our Lady of Mount Carmel)

Next academic year begins on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 2022

Please contact us for information regarding the daily class schedule, as this is subject to change based on the needs of the families in our community.

Price Table for Enrollment

Subjects	Tuition	Monthly Payments
5-6 (Full-Time)	\$7,000	\$584
4	\$6,400	\$534
3	\$4,800	\$400
2	\$3,200	\$267
1	\$1,600	\$134

*Full-time families enrolling multiple children will receive a \$1000/year discount from the full price of enrollment for each new child enrolled.