



## OUR LADY OF SORROWS ACADEMY

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Dear Parents,

In the modern educational world, phenomenal amounts of money are thrown into developing new methods and programs, into providing students with state-of-the-art technology, and into a thousand other schemes and gimmicks. Nevertheless, with each passing year, the dissatisfaction with the finished product increases. Lawmakers and professional educators would save the taxpayers much money and themselves many frustrations if they remembered a simple truth, expressed by Pope Pius XI, “Perfect schools are the result not so much of good methods as of good teachers...”

Indeed, the Catholic teacher reflects Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, *the* Teacher par excellence, who came to earth to redeem us, but also to teach us the ways of God and the path to eternal life. The Church has always understood this truth, approving countless religious congregations dedicated to the education of youth and raising to the honor of the altars numerous men and women who spent their lives in this noble work. Catholic teachers who strive to be worthy disciples of the divine Master touch the souls of the young, leading them to love Almighty God and all the good things He has bestowed upon us.

Unfortunately, in our days most religious teaching orders have betrayed their mission and, seeking to follow the lead of the world in training the young, have devolved into total irrelevance and almost disappeared. Nevertheless, many lay men and women have responded to this crisis by generously putting themselves at the service of traditional Catholic education. We would be profoundly ungrateful if we did not recognize the tremendous sacrifice and hard work that these teachers expend in the interest of the rising generations of Catholics.

Rare is the traditional Catholic school that can pay its teachers what they truly deserve, and so, without being religious, these dedicated souls drink deeply from the cup of poverty. Traditional education rejects vehemently the shortcuts of modern education: multiple choice tests, ready-made assignments, teachers’ editions rife with errors and facile explanations conforming to politically correct narratives, etc. While this greatly improves the child’s education, it also means a great deal more work for the teacher, who must painstakingly prepare lessons, grade compositions and dictations, and generate assessments.

Despite all this, it is painful to note how little appreciated the efforts of these teachers often are. Their generosity is so often taken for granted, their defects real or imagined are criticized, and they are even compared unfavorably to the “qualified” teachers of modern schools who systematically corrupt and deform the minds and hearts of the children entrusted to them! The Catholic teacher has been called upon to impart knowledge and love of truth and virtue, to be an extension of the teaching office of the priest, to guard living temples of the Holy Ghost, and to help show them the way to heaven. Fr. Felix Kirsch has written, “...in lofty ideals, in unselfish principles, in sacred responsibilities the Catholic teaching profession stands side by side with the ministry of the Gospel itself.” And again, “There is no class of workers of which we demand so much.”

*“Sinite parvulos venire ad me.”*

Yet it is also true that no class of workers receives such small recompense in this life for so much effort and sacrifice. While their reward will certainly be great in heaven, all Catholics have a duty of justice to respect and support those who dedicate their lives to the sublime work of educating our little ones for their place in the life of the Holy Catholic Church and ultimately for their place in heaven.

Yours in Christ,  
J.M. McFarland+  
Rector  
Our Lady of Sorrows Academy