



Renuntio

No nobler training exists but that which cherishes the good, the beautiful, and the true, thus producing disciples of knowledge and lovers of wisdom.

FIVE FEET OF BOOKS: THE MARK OF TRUE EDUCATION

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THE XAVIER PROMISE

Xavier Classical Charter Schools are dedicated to providing a classical, academically rigorous, content-rich, liberal arts education, preparing students to excel in every duty and guiding them toward wisdom and virtue.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

- 2/6— PFA MEETING 3:15 P.M.
- 2/9— Dress Up Day—
Bikers and Surfers
- 2/12— Winter Ball (7-12)
7:00-10:00 p.m.
- 2/20— Board Meeting
6:00 p.m.
- 2/26— Spring Photos
- 2/27— Xavier Community
Open House 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- 3/5— PFA MEETING 3:15 P.M.
- 3/6— Dress Up Day—
Shakespeare
- 3/12— Lady Liberty Final Meeting
7:00-8:00 p.m.

The parents we speak to, who are considering Xavier for their children, are looking for an education that is academically challenging. They also want to make sure that while their children are at school they are receiving and learning the values that parents think are important. Both of these objectives are met through the literature program at our school.

Myriads of books have been written down through the ages, but only a few have spoken deeply to individuals and cultures through the centuries. They have proven their value over time. They were recognized as being valuable when they were written and still guide our thinking today. These are considered to be “The Classics” of classical literature.

Xavier students begin to read classical literature in the early grades and continue reading classical books until they graduate. They read whole books, not excerpts or articles about those books. These are books that would be difficult to read and understand on their own, but are accessible to students because their teacher is leading them through this process. Because students are reading books that they could not access on their own, it stretches their mental faculties.

A classical school is language-based. What this means is that words and their meanings are important. A classical school is not image-based. This means that we want words and their meaning to speak to students’ minds, not images. The nature of an image is to convey meaning without words, so meaning has to be assumed. Developing the mind needs a more exact process, because what we are developing is the process of logical thought. Images speak to the emotions; words speak to the minds to inform their emotions.

Being ‘nice’ seems to be the main virtue of our age as opposed to Plato who said there were four cardinal virtues from which all other virtues sprang forth: temperance (moderation), prudence (wisdom), fortitude (courage), and justice. As we read these words, can we already feel the conversation about virtue deepen? Sometimes classical literature is not ‘nice’; sometimes the events and life choices that characters make in classical stories are uncomfortable and we wonder if children should be exposed to these situations at such a young age.

(Five Feet cont. on pg. 2)

Five Feet cont.

We want our children to be morally virtuous. Classical literature teaches morality indirectly. The students observe characters that are wise, foolish, noble, spoiled, ambitious, witty, patriotic, evil, steady, and flighty. As students observe these character, their choices and how those decisions turn out, they have a tool to inform themselves of the character traits they would like to embrace for their own lives. They also have a short-hand way of understanding the character of others when they meet them.

I have heard through the years that there are “five feet of books” that should be read by an educated person. With a little digging, I discovered that Dr. Eliot, President of Harvard University for 40 years, was the man who put this idea forward. He suggested that a five foot long shelf “would hold books enough to afford a good substitute for a liberal arts education for anyone...” Many of the books read at Xavier can be found in these “five feet.”

Lisa Thompson
7-12 Lead Teacher

FEBRUARY PILLAR OF THE MONTH

COURAGE — We always do what we know to be right despite fear, hardship, and opposition. We resist negative peer pressure, defend our rights and the rights of others, and encourage others to do the same.

Feb. 3 – *“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.”* ~Nelson Mandela (South African anti-apartheid revolutionary/South African president, b.1918-2013)

Feb. 10 – *“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”* ~T.S. Eliot (American essayist/poet, b.1888-1965)

Feb. 18 – *“Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.”* ~John F. Kennedy (US President/assassinated, b.1917-1963)

Feb. 24 – *“Courage is knowing what not to fear.”* ~Plato (classical Greek philosopher/mathematician, 426 A.D. – 346 A.D.)

IMPORTANCE of BOOKS

“I shall be miserable if I have not an excellent library.”

~Jane Austen
Pride and Prejudice

“When I have a little money, I buy books; and if I have any left, I buy food and clothes.”

– Erasmus