RESOURCES ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

with
Specific Focus on Catholic Classical Education
(PreK-8; Secondary School)
for
Parents, Pastors, School Administrators, Faculty, and Religious Education Directors

September 2025

-Raymond Dansereau, **"Classical Catholic Education or Bust,"** *Crisis Magazine*, April 14, 2025.
https://crisismagazine.com/opinion/classical-catholic-education-or-bust?utm_source=email&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=novashare

- Luke Larson, **"Bismarck's Secret: Strong Families, Catholic Schools Fuel Vocations Boom,"** *National Catholic Register*, July 27, 2025.
https://www.ncregister.com/news/priestly-vocations-flourish-in-bismarck?utm_campaign=NCR&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_4CrYdYvo830jPxYPU4G5Jhl8l1Wzm1v5cAn8AYEknaKmGblthAVgYRqEXE6fH6kTrNwXtPTiJWXpFqA7tvSesvyPrJwaBSYrpfyxISrAdDpxicU8&_hsmi=373174671&utm_content=373174671&utm_source=hs_email

- Madalaine Elhabbal, **"Classical Catholic High School in DC Announces Plans for Second Location,"** *National Catholic Register*, June 21, 2025.
St. Jerome Institute, created as the secondary school follow-up to St. Jerome Academy PreK-8 in Arlington, Virginia, represents strong parent and student desire for classical Catholic education, the fastest growing segment of Catholic schools in the country. St. Jerome Academy in Arlington, Virginia, produced a turnaround from near-closing in 2009 to wait list and additional construction once it launched a classical Catholic curriculum.
https://www.ncregister.com/cna/classical-catholic-high-school-in-dc-announces-plans-for-second-location

- "The Schools We Need Now: How to Found a Faithful Catholic School YES in the Bay Area!" Benedict XVI Institute, Webinar (1:25), March 23, 2022.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK0Y0-1s-tk.
Webinar focuses on the San Francisco area, but the concepts can be considered for other schools and locations. Features the examples of Stella Maris Academy (PreK-8; not Chesterton Model) and Chesterton St. James High School.

- Peter Pinedo, **"Can 'Catholic Joy' Save Society? This Growing Network of Catholic Schools Says 'Yes.'"** *Catholic News Agency*, February 2, 2024. https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/256715/can-catholic-joy-save-society-this-growing-network-of-catholic-schools-says-yes
Joy is a word often expressed in the mission statements of many Catholic classical schools, and a word that **Fr. Anthony Federico, our August 2025 guest speaker**, shared several times in his remarks on the vocations explosion in the Hartford (Conn.) diocese.

- Danielle McGrew Tenbusch, **"The Joy of Learning, St. Brigid Catholic School's Renewal Through the Institute of Catholic Liberal Education,"** *Great Lakes Bay Catholic*, January 1, 2025.
Special note of the school's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) Level III Atrium for students in grades 4-6.
https://greatlakesbaycatholic.com/joy-learning-0

- Emily Kwilinski, **"Catholic Liberal Education: Rediscovering the Church's Educational Tradition,"** *National Catholic Register*, January 31, 2025.
https://www.ncregister.com/news/rediscovering-catholic-liberal-education

Mark Johnson, "High School Priest Chaplains: The Vanguard in Archdiocesan Mission Territory," *The Catholic Spirit*, September 19, 2025. (Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis).
https://www.thecatholicspirit.com/news/local-news/high-school-priest-chaplains-the-vanguard-in-archdiocesan-mission-territory-2/

- Saint John Paul the Great Catholic High School, Denver
Opened in 2022, this independent school is now expanding physical space due to market demand for this model of Catholic classical education-plus. This is a high school proud to be "***Boldly Catholic. Academically Excellent. Filled with Joy."***
https://jpgdenver.org

- St. Augustine Academy, Ventura, Calif.
Founded by parents in 1994, independent private Catholic K-12 classical liberal arts school.
https://www.saintaugustineacademy.com

- Zelda Caldwell, **"Beauty and Order: New England Catholic School Uses Classical Architecture to Form Students,"** *National Catholic Register*, September 2, 2025.
https://www.ncregister.com/features/st-benedict-classical-academy-profile?utm_campaign=NCR&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_QLlOhw-2TLKqZGprkNwSVJYhF9NjytUOXvnQ7VB84aNH2h3ztGUTyWSlrqN-m6WXE-9_U-w-aKm2c9mhAoyoav9KL14mSwiEL6d5qpUcYyU_7ZIA&_hsmi=378655426&utm_content=378655426&utm_source=hs_email

- Mark Di Ionno, **"A Classical Revival: How a New Jersey Catholic School Went from Almost Closed to Thriving,"** *National Catholic Register*, August 6, 2025.
https://www.ncregister.com/features/nj-school-revitalized-by-the-classics

- Joseph Pearce, **"Restoring the Humanities: An Education That's Not for Dummies,"** *The Imaginative Conservative*, April 3, 2025.
https://theimaginativeconservative.org/2025/04/restoring-humanities-education-not-dummies-joseph-pearce.html

- Joseph Pronechen, **"Adopting a Classical Curriculum Energized This Catholic School,"** *National Catholic Register*, January 26, 2025.
An enrollment turnaround story as **(K-8) St. Theresa School** in **Trumbull, Conn.**, adopts the curriculum model of the **Institute for Catholic Liberal Education**, following the experience of **K-12 Sacred Heart Academy in Grand Rapids, Michigan** (https://shgr.org), which converted to a classical curriculum in 2013 at the initiative of [former] pastor Rev. Robert Sirico.
https://www.ncregister.com/news/adopting-a-classical-curriculum-energized-this-catholic-school

Andrea M. Picciotti-Bayer, **"Michigan Classical School Won't Play Identity Politics,"** *National Catholic Register*, June 6, 2024.
https://www.ncregister.com/commentaries/sacred-heart-academy-michigan-identity-politics

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- Institute for Catholic Liberal Education
"The Institute for Catholic Liberal Education inspires and equips Catholic educators to renew today's Catholic schools by drawing on the Church's tradition of education, which frees teachers and students for the joyful pursuit of faith, wisdom, and virtue." The results? "The Institute has served thousands of Catholic educators who are now transforming their schools with the ideas and the tools that bring the Church's vision to life. Their success is evident not just in **surging enrollment**, but in the joyful communities of faith and learning that result when 'Catholic identity' extends throughout the school culture, curriculum, and pedagogy."
https://catholicliberaleducation.org

- The Chesterton Schools Network
Nationwide and international network of 70 Catholic classical high schools, with 19 scheduled to open in 2026, including the **Chesterton Academy of St. Serra** in Walnut Creek, California, and Chesterton Academy of Blessed Michael McGivney in New Haven, Conn.
https://chestertonschoolsnetwork.org
Academic Model: https://chestertonschoolsnetwork.org/curriculum#academic-model

- Great Hearts Academies
Classical K-12 schools, not Catholic-associated
https://www.greatheartsamerica.org

Four Major Works on the State of Catholic K-12 Education

- Brett Salkeld, Ph.D., ***Educating for Eternity, A Teacher's Companion for Making Every Class Catholic.*** Foreword by Thomas W. Carroll, [former] Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of Boston. *Our Sunday Visitor, Inc*., 2023. Earned **Second Place honors (2024)** from the **Catholic Media Association (CMA**) in the category Church Life: Church Professional.
https://www.osvcatholicbookstore.com.

Michael P. Caruso, SJ, ***The Survivability of Catholic Schools: Vigor, Anemia, and a Diffident Flock***. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022.
"… Fr. Caruso explores critical topics facing our Catholic schools and provides practical advice on holding fast to the mission and foundation that has served our schools well for nearly wo centuries …" He is the

former president of St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago. He writes, "If Catholic schools try to be all things to all people, where exactly are faithful, believing Catholics supposed to send their children?"
https://www.amazon.com/Survivability-Catholic-Schools-Anemia-Diffident/dp/147586793X

R. Jared Staudt, ed. ***Renewing Catholic Schools: How to Regain a Catholic Vision in a Secular Age.*** Foreword by Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila, Archbishop of Denver. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Education Press, 2020. Collection of essays from a variety of Catholic educators and writers covering three major themes: a turning point for Catholic education; teaching the Catholic vision throughout the curriculum; and implementing a renewed vision of education. Authors cite multiple examples of Catholic schools that reimagined and renewed their academic and religious foundations, of parents who formed their own Catholic independent schools to elevate and enhance their children's Catholic education, and of teachers who navigated the change to a classical model.
https://www.cuapress.org/9781949822045/renewing-catholic-schools/

Curtis L. Hancock, ***Recovering a Catholic Philosophy of Elementary Education***. Foreword by Peter A. Redpath, St. John's University, New York. Newman House Press, 2005.
"[Hancock's] last chapters provide an outline for a return to the Catholic philosophical tradition in the classroom…"
http://www.4catholiceducators.com/hancock.htm

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A Collection of Curriculum, Professional Development, and Special Content Choices

Sophia Institute for Teachers: (https://sophiateachers.org), ***used in 70 dioceses across the U.S.***

Special **cross-curriculum** videos, lessons, and virtual workshops for schools, parishes, homeschooling, and religious education directors are offered through the publisher's website, including:

Teachers Guides:
- **"Infusing the Catholic Faith: Civics"** Grades 5-8
- **"Infusing the Catholic Faith: World History"** Grades 5-8
- **"Infusing the Catholic Faith: Language Arts"** series consisting of:
    - C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*
    - Rosemary Sutcliff's retelling of *The Wanderings of Odysseus*
    - Elizabeth Yates' *Amos Fortune: Free Man*
    - Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*
    - Mary Jo Thoma's guide to *Story of a Soul*, the autobiography of St. Thérèse of Lisieux

- **"Infusing Lessons with Sacred Art"** virtual workshop led by Sophia institute Master Teacher Jose Gonzalez, 45 minutes.

- **"The Catholic Faith and Science"** series of virtual workshops for **adults and older teens** exploring **faith, science, and reason** taught by **Rev. Robert Spitzer, SJ, Ph.D**., over 12 hours in 20 episodes.
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/magis/,

- **"The Spirituality of the Teacher"**
Six self-paced 30-minute virtual workshop sessions taught by **Rev. Thomas Dailey, OSFS, S.T.D.**, each followed by a 15-minute instruction by Sophia Institute Master Teacher Jose Gonzalez on practical ways to incorporate Fr. Dailey's content into the classroom.
https://sophiateachers.org/courses/the-spirituality-of-the-teacher/

Free e-lessons for schools, parishes, and religious education directors.
https://sophiateachers.org/elesson

Religion Texts: **"Religion Textbooks by Teachers, for Teachers"**

High School
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/spiritoftruthhs/

Middle and High School: Apologetics
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/magis/

Grades K-8
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/spirit-of-truth-k8-school/

PreK-K
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/his-little-way/

K-8 Homeschooling
https://sophiateachers.org/promo/spirit-of-truth-k-8-home-edition/

Ignatius Press (https://ignatius.com)
Selections include Papal writings-Church documents, educational videos and other DVDs, books for all ages, and other rich resources for teaching and learning.
https://ignatius.com/religious-ed/educator-resources/

Word on Fire (https://www.wordonfire.org)
Dr. Alex Taylor, **"The Great Good of Catholic Education,"** *Word on Fire*, January 27, 2025.
https://www.wordonfire.org/articles/the-great-good-of-catholic-education/?queryID=33df468c073a29854ce969a0bacea24b

Dr. Melissa Mitchell, **"Leaders in Catholic Education: Michael Ortner's Three-Part Model,"** *Word on Fire*, August 12, 2025.
Interview with the founder of the Ortner Family Foundation, co-author of ***The Catholic School Playbook***, and supporter of the **Institute for Catholic Liberal Education**.
https://www.wordonfire.org/articles/leaders-in-catholic-education-michael-ortners-three-part-model/

Dr. Melissa Mitchell, **"Leaders in Catholic Education: Dale Ahlquist's Call from Chesterton,"** *Word on Fire*, July 24, 2025.
Interview with the co-founder of the **Chesterton Schools Network**, a parent who searched for an alternative Catholic school for his children.
https://www.wordonfire.org/articles/leaders-in-catholic-education-dale-ahlquists-call-from-chesterton/

Institute for Catholic Liberal Arts Education (https://catholicliberaleducation.org)
- Professional Development in Catholic liberal arts education for principals and teachers:
School Leaders Academy: https://catholicliberaleducation.org/events/school-leaders-academy/
Aspiring School Leaders Program:https://catholicliberaleducation.org/events/aspiring-school-leaders-program/

- Map of Schools, Catholic classical, throughout the 50 states:
https://catholicliberaleducation.org/events/aspiring-school-leaders-program/

- "High School Spotlight," invitation to teachers and school leaders to visit an ICLE flagship high school and see its classical education in action.
2025 schedule: https://catholicliberaleducation.org/events/aspiring-school-leaders-program/

- Katie Quiñones, **"'Incomparably Rich' Teaching Program Launches Amid Catholic Education Revival,"** *National Catholic Register*, August 4, 2025.
Profile of a Catholic master's degree program, "Teachers for Christ," co-sponsored by the **Augustine Institute** and the **Institute for Catholic Liberal Education**.
https://www.ncregister.com/cna/incomparably-rich-teaching-program-launches-amid-catholic-education-revival

- ***The Educational Plan of St. Jerome Academy***, Hyattsville, Md., 2010.
https://catholicliberaleducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/The-Educational-Plan-of-SJA-2020-edition.pdf

TAN Books (https://tanbooks.com)
Catholic Academic Enrichment Cycle, Set of 3.
https://classicalliberalarts.com/catholic-homeschooling/the-best-catholic-classical-homeschool-programs-a-comprehensive-guide-for-families/
Homeschool Choices, Catholic Heritage Curricula
https://tanbooks.com/catholic-homeschool-books/

Catholic Liberal Arts Academy
Overall: https://classicalliberalarts.com/classical-catholic-curriculum/
Resources for homeschooling: https://classicalliberalarts.com/catholic-homeschooling/the-best-catholic-classical-homeschool-programs-a-comprehensive-guide-for-families/

CoreKnowledge Foundation (https://www.coreknowledge.org)
Founded by **E.D. Hirsch**, University of Virginia professor emeritus of education and the humanities, to provide coherent, cumulative, and knowledge-based curricula for **PK-5 teachers and administrators**. Much of the material is free and online. The content-rich resources, especially in language arts, integrate well with Catholic studies.

PLUS:
- Robert Pondiscio, **"The Case for Curriculum: Since *A Nation at Risk*, Education Reform Efforts Have Mostly Stopped at the Classroom Door,"** Chapter 5, *A Nation at Risk+40, A Review of Progress in US*

Public Education. Report prepared by the Hoover Education Success Initiative, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 2023.
Focus is solely on public education, but this report and especially Chapter 5 offer food for thought for **Catholic education decision makers and practitioner**s, particularly regarding the **benefits of a core curriculum**.
https://www.hoover.org/sites/default/files/research/docs/ANAR_05Pondiscio_web.pdf

- Robert Pondiscio's related essay:
"40 Years After 'A Nation at Risk,' Could Curriculum Reform Finally Move the Needle on Academic Improvement?" *The 74*, April 9, 2024.
https://www.the74million.org/article/40-years-after-a-nation-at-risk-could-curriculum-reform-finally-move-the-needle-on-academic-improvement/