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# ROSTRUM

GRACE ACADEMY



VOL 4 FALL 2016

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In addition to cash donations, you also can contribute stocks, property (cars and boats) and other assets. They all count towards the Annual Fund! Keep in mind that many corporations offer a matching gifts program, allowing a doubling of your donation. Please contact your employer for information regarding this benefit.

For further information, please contact Chad Warren at (512) 966-6113. Thank you for your support of Grace Academy! Grace Academy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, so your donation is tax-deductible as allowed by federal tax laws.

# GREETING *from the* HEADMASTER



The vision of Grace Academy is a long-term vision. Our classical approach to education recognizes that the formation of students' hearts and minds is a process that is never perfected and will last a lifetime. We are honored to play a key role in our students' education as they progress from kindergarten through 12th grade, and during these years they learn many important things about the nature of God, themselves, and the world around them. Even more valuable, however, are the habits and tools of learning that they develop during their time at Grace Academy which will enable them to enter future phases of their lives equipped to continue learning and growing as they work and serve in whatever roles God has for them.

As you read this issue of The Grace Academy Rostrum, you will see a variety of ways in which this equipping for lifelong learning is taking place every day at Grace Academy. From analyzing literature through a Christian worldview to entrepreneurial publishing to studying Latin, our students are being prepared for a lifetime of work and service. While a Grace Academy education does produce some immediately beneficial results like high standardized test scores and entrance into competitive colleges, it also bears long-term fruit in our students' lives as they build on their Grace Academy education and continue to learn and grow. The vision that our school's founders had for Grace Academy is being realized, and we pray that the Lord will continue using the education taking place every day at Grace Academy to have an eternal impact and bring him glory.

*Soli Deo Gloria,*  
Dr. Diener



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# NEW STAFF



## DAWN GALLAWAY

holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Development from Oral Roberts University. She also has Texas Teacher Certifications for Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education 1st-8th grade, English as a Second Language, and Special Education. She has over 20 years of teaching experience and joined Grace in 2016 as a fourth grade teacher. Mrs. Gallaway was drawn to teach at Grace after observing how her own children were understanding world cultures at young ages and connecting them to biblical and current events. In her estimation the curriculum is incredibly appropriate developmentally, and she has found a thread of excellence woven through every aspect of the school.



## KRISTEN SOWERS

began her journey to Grace Academy with her children who are now in early Grammar School. With a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Master of Education in Physical Education, Ms. Sowers was a small business owner for nearly a decade before becoming a teacher at an elementary school. With her experience teaching elementary and preschool students in a variety of contexts, Ms. Sowers joined the faculty of Grace Academy in 2016 as a fourth grade teacher. With a gift for enjoying all things outdoors and the study of natural history, Ms. Sowers brings a special set of skills to our Grammar team and especially enjoys helping students discover their own love of learning.



## CHAD WARREN,

our new Director of Advancement, discovered classical Christian education in 2002 and has not looked back since! A self-proclaimed nerd and fan of things like the Gallic Wars, the Desert Fathers, and Dostoevsky, Mr. Warren enjoys books that make most people yearn for a dose of caffeine and holds a special affection for the medieval period. Not one to back down from a challenge, he has committed to learning Latin with his third grader this year. Though he hails from Montana, he and his family most recently moved from a school in Washington where he served as the Dean of the Upper School. With certifications in development from the University of Indiana and previous advancement experience at Cary Christian School in North Carolina, Mr. Warren is looking forward to getting to know the folks who comprise the growing family that is Grace Academy.

# ALUMNI FOCUS



**CORINNA KECK**, class of 2015, recently met with one of our faculty members to discuss her experience at Dallas Baptist University where she is seeking a degree in Business Administration with a minor in Psychology. She was kind enough to answer a few questions about her experiences since graduation.

**Q:** *What has the experience been like so far at DBU?* I have loved every second here at DBU. The people, the campus, the academics, they are all amazing. Some professors in particular have been so wonderful. I absolutely love learning from people who are excited to share what they love. If I were to pick my favorite classes I have taken so far I would pick both Old and New Testament. We surveyed the entire Bible over the course of the two classes and it was so humbling and beautiful to see all the Lord has done for his people. My professor was also the most amazing man, who was just so knowledgeable of the subject that I couldn't help but want to know more! I also was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to take an upper level religion course over spring break last year where I studied the

great theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Berlin, Germany. It was such an amazing, inspiring experience!

**Q:** *How have you grown spiritually since you graduated from high school?*

I have grown so much over the course of last year and I am still continuing to grow. My freshman year of college pushed me so far out of my comfort zone. Some of my friends were coming to DBU thinking it was "small," but going from a graduating class of 7 at Grace to a school of 5,000, DBU seemed enormous to me! It is in the midst of overwhelming emotions, stresses, and deadlines the Lord has been with me holding my hand. I rest easily knowing he is working everything for my good.

**Q:** *How has your education at Grace Academy affected your collegiate academic experience?*

Writing papers is a BREEZE in college. I would begrudgingly credit that to the many, MANY in-class essays and, of course, theses, that I wrote at Grace. Some of my classmates have no idea where to even begin with research, much less how to think critically on the spot. I had to write a paper for a course called Developing a Christian Mind, and we were to have a four-page outline. I turned in an eight-page outline and eventually an eleven-page paper. I would say my critical thinking and application skills have definitely helped me thus far in my scholastic career.

**Q:** *What advice would you have for parents of young students in classical Christian schools?*

Classical Christian education is an entirely different learning environment; much more is expected of students, and work will have to be done. The payoff is what makes it all worth it! Classical education is also a demonstration of our pursuit of knowledge. In our study of the Word, truth, and the world around us we are growing in our knowledge,

understanding, and relationship with the Lord. Classical education – with a biblical emphasis of course – is not "just" an education; it is a foundation upon which young students can grow into knowledgeable adults who can actively participate in and contribute to fallen society. It's not all about the things you read or study but also how you apply what you learn in an attempt to bring glory to God!

*"Education has to do with the making of persons, Christian education with the making of Christian persons."*

**DR. ARTHUR HOLMES**



Grace Academy alumna

**ASHTON MURPHY** ('12) graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts in Greek and Roman Studies from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN, this past May. While at Rhodes, Ashton completed honors research interpreting the character of Euripides' Medea through the medium of video games and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society. Ashton began law school at New York University this past August with a full-ride scholarship. One day she informed her parents that preparing a brief in the early days of law school was much like completing a writing assignment at Grace Academy that combines literature and history.



## Did you KNOW...

Latin is Alive and well in the U.S.A.! In fact, you use it every day, every time that you make cash payment. The one dollar bill bears the images of the obverse and reverse of the Great Seal of the United States. Our founding fathers (most of whom could read Latin Literature) chose these mottoes from the poetry of Vergil, read by our Rhetoric Students.

*Obverse (front):*

### E PLURIBUS UNUM

*Out of Many One*

Origin: Vergil's poem *Moretum*

*Reverse:*

### NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM

*A New Order of the Ages*

Origin: Vergil's 4th Eclogue

*Reverse:*

### ANNUIT COEPTIS

*He Has Favored Our Undertakings*

Origin: Vergil's *Aeneid*

## WHY DO WE Study Latin?

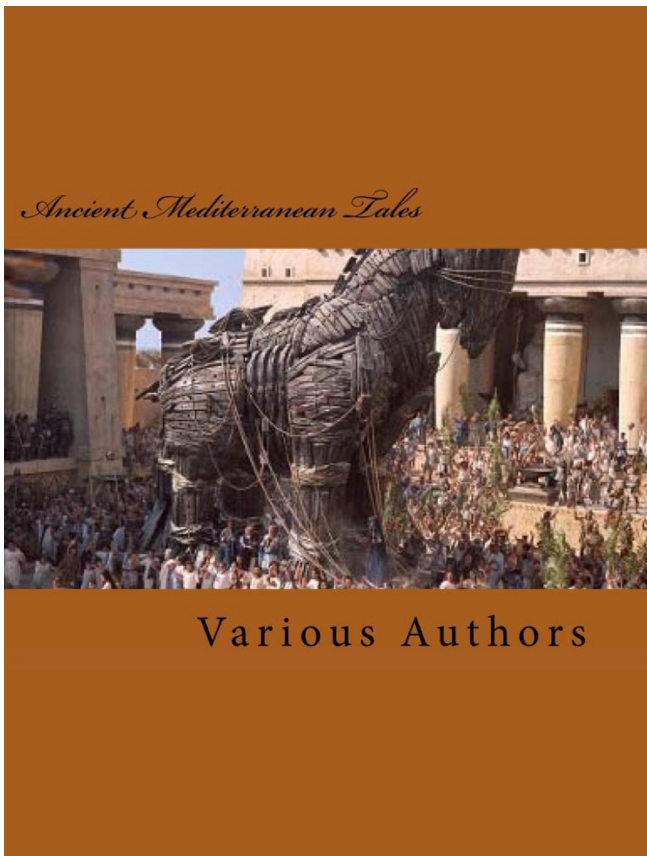
*“The Latin program aspires to train students to construe original Latin texts in order to decipher the design and intent of the author, thereby enabling them to apply these same skills to the rhetoric of their own language or any other they should choose to study.”*

The above is the mission statement I crafted for the Latin program at Grace Academy of Georgetown. But what does it really mean? To what end or purpose does it guide us? There are many treatises out there, many essays, articles and even books on why students should study Latin. They emphasize the importance of vocabulary building; they quote rising SAT and GRE scores, and other nameless standardized tests; they mention problem solving skills and the taxonomy of the sciences. They woo a courting of the many romance languages, and they stress the relationship between ancient and modern civilizations. I know these articles quite well, for I have read them a hundred times and delivered the speech myself another hundred. And yet, one night I lay awake in my

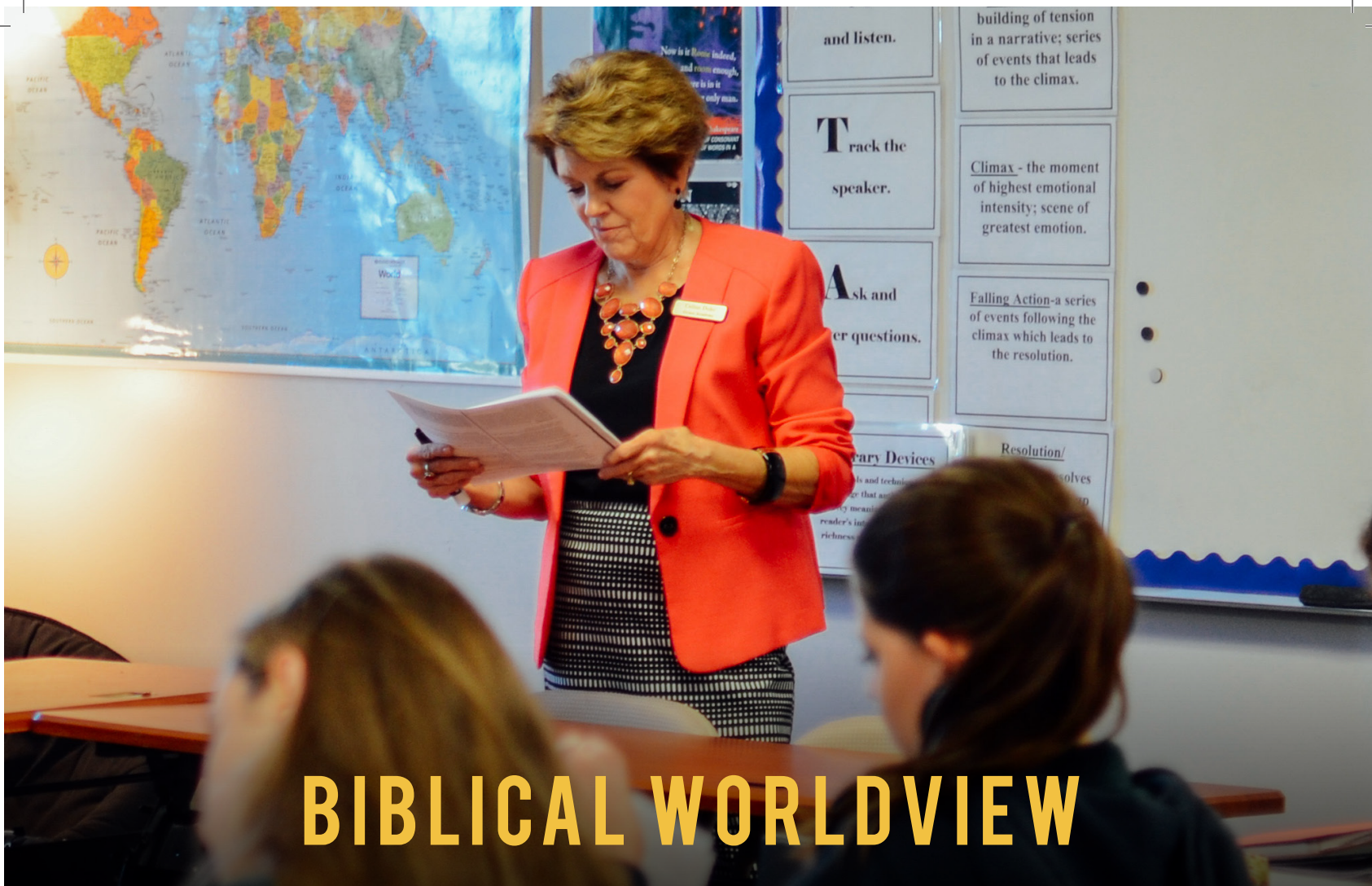
bed wondering, but why do WE study Latin? I know why the language fascinates me. I know why it is useful. I know that it has been part of classical education for ages, and therefore must have a benefit past fancy and practicality. Dorothy Sayers calls subjects “mere grist for the mental mill to work upon.” (The Lost Tools of Learning, Sayers) What advantage does this particular grist provide for our mills? Is it really just a better, more expanded vocabulary? Or is there something more?

Ms. Sayers states quite firmly in her essay that Latin ought to be a subject of great emphasis in the School of Grammar “because even a rudimentary knowledge of Latin cuts down the labor and pains of learning almost any other subject by at least fifty percent. It is the key to the vocabulary and structure of all the Teutonic languages, as well as to the technical vocabulary of all the sciences” (ibid.). We have all grasped this quite firmly. It is this benefit that shows itself so strongly in the academic tests. Many classical schools tend to stop here, or begin phasing Latin out here. Ms. Sayers does not. In the same sentence she continues to say that, “It is the key to ... the literature of the entire Mediterranean civilization, together with all its historical documents.” (ibid.). Students in the School of Grammar are not yet reading

# SILENT FOOLS: A Grace Academy Production



*The essay.* It has been a staple of every humanities class since the dawn of time (or at least for as long as anyone who has been in school can remember). The essay can be an excellent tool for developing critical thinking skills, exploring eloquent means of expression, and laying the groundwork for oratory. However, students do not always approach essay assignments with great excitement. At Grace Academy, our teachers look for ways to engage students' interest in such writing assignments, find something of inspiration in the topic at hand, and help students see beyond a single assignment to how such exercises are beneficial in the long-term and beyond the walls of the classroom. One member of our humanities team, Ed Straka, took the task of engaging and inspiring far beyond the classroom and our campus all the way to the Amazon (the publishing site, that is, not the rainforest). Each year at Grace Mr. Straka has engaged his students in reflecting upon their history and literature readings by helping them to create their own class book, a collection of stories. One year they each wrote their own addition to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and another year the class compiled a collection of anthologies on the ancient world. Each year the book has been printed, bound, and presented to grateful parents. This year, however, Mr. Straka decided to take the assignment and his young authors into the world of publishing. The result is *Ancient Mediterranean Tales*, a work of historical fiction based on the students' studies of Herodotus and other ancient sources on the Greco-Persian War. The students were permitted some artistic license with fictional characters and events as long as they remained true to the historical events and the ancient culture of this significant period in history. At first a bit reluctant, their "eyes began to glow," says Mr. Straka, with the promise of their book being published and advertised on Amazon. Once stories were composed, Mr. Straka led his group of authors through an arduous editing process. Alongside lessons in history and editing also came lessons in business and economics as they relate to the world of publication. At the end of this journey our 8th grade students became published authors in their own right. They have learned about the culture and history of Greece. They have refined their writing skills. They even have learned a bit about the business world. For Mr. Straka, however, the greatest lesson of all is that this group of young minds learned "to be part of something that is beyond the standard grade and beyond us." This project was featured in the September 22, 2016 issue of *The Advocate* lifestyle section.



# BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

*“Develop Christian worldview thinking so that students learn to evaluate their entire range of experience in light of Scripture.”*

This is one of the primary goals of a Grace Academy education. While it sounds wonderful, what exactly does it look like in a classroom? How do Grace Academy teachers go about accomplishing such a goal? One answer to these questions can be found in Mrs. Duke’s 9th grade literature class. As she guides students through various great works of literature, Mrs. Duke intentionally teaches students how to think through a Christian worldview. This doesn’t necessarily mean that she gives a Bible lesson in every class. Rather it means that whatever is being studied, whether the turn of events in a plot or the actions of a character, students always are encouraged to discuss and interpret the text via the light of Scripture.

One example of this can be seen in the 9th graders’ recent study of Shakespeare’s play *Romeo and Juliet*. Many people view this as the classic tale of star-crossed lovers – of young teenagers who are misunderstood. Mrs. Duke challenged students, however, to recognize that this is not the only way of interpreting the story. What about the numerous passages in Scripture that admonish us concerning love, marriage, and honor for our parents? How might we view the story of Romeo and Juliet through that lens? Consider, for example, Juliet’s response to Romeo in Act II, Scene 2 of this famous play. In this scene Romeo has professed his love for Juliet outside her window in the dark of night and begs her to exchange vows of love and marriage. Juliet responds, telling Romeo that if his love is honorable and he truly wants to marry her then he should send word to her the following day and she will indeed marry him. The following is how one of the freshman students applied Mrs. Duke’s emphasis on Christian worldview thinking as she evaluated this passage:

Juliet’s choice was foolish because she claims her love for Romeo the second day after they meet and kissed on the first. Their families would not be pleased to hear of their instant love, once considered hate for each other. Proverbs 24:6 suggests we have guidance from the wise and an abundance of counselors when making a decision. Proverbs 29:20 says to be careful with those who make their words or decisions with haste, so that we do not believe a fool. As Friar Lawrence said, “Wisely and slow, they stumble that run fast.”

These are the words of a young lady who, like her classmates, is learning to evaluate all things – including youthful passions – in the light of Scripture. We are grateful for Mrs. Duke and other Grace Academy teachers who use whatever they are teaching to cultivate the wisdom of Scripture in the hearts and minds of our students every day. This type of teaching truly will enable our students to “evaluate their entire range of experience in the light of Scripture” as they live for the glory of God.





**THIS FALL**, *the Grace Academy mascot changed from our previous lion to a new mascot, the griffin.*

The idea to change Grace Academy’s mascot from a lion to a griffin began over a year ago with a student petition written by two seventh graders. In the words of these students, “We think that the school should change the mascot, because the lions are over-used by many other schools. Meridian and St. Helen’s and First Baptist Marble Falls and Leander High School all use the lion as their mascot. We want to find a better and more unique mascot to represent Grace Academy. . . . The Grace Griffins would be a majestic mascot for our school.” After a series of discussions between students, parents, teachers, administration, and the board, the decision was made to move forward and officially become the Grace Academy Griffins.

While griffins appear in popular culture from time to time, many people have never heard of them. So, what is a griffin anyway? The griffin is a mythological creature composed of a lion’s body and an eagle’s head and wings. Its history is over 5,000 years old, and in the ancient world it was considered a symbol of power, majesty, and even divinity. Given that the lion was traditionally considered to be the king of beasts and the eagle was considered to be the king

of birds, the griffin (as a combination of these two) was thought of as the king of all creatures both on the earth and in the sky. During the Medieval period the griffin continued to be used as a symbol of strength and courage, and images of griffins appeared on coats of arms, castle walls, the shields of knights, and the crest of Trinity College, Oxford. Griffins also are mentioned in the writings of Dante and Milton, both classical Christian authors. For many Christians the dual-natured griffin that is lord of earth and sky became a symbol of the god-man Jesus Christ, Lord of all, whose nature is both human and divine.

As the seventh grade students who originally proposed the griffin as Grace Academy’s mascot noted in their proposal, “The griffin therefore has ties to the Classical period, the Medieval period, and the symbolism of the church. Thus this unique creature is an excellent mascot for a Christ-centered classical school.” We are excited about this new mascot and its historical symbolism, and we look forward to the Grace Academy community proudly cheering for our Griffins as we represent Christ in our competition against other schools.



Statue of a griffin at St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice, 11th cent. AD



Medieval tapestry, c. 1450



Apollo riding a griffin, Athenian red figure kylix, 4th cent. BC



*Back in the 1990's Gary and Michele Logan were concerned about the educational options for their young daughters.*

It was the late 90's and Michele, a teacher in the public school at the time, was fully aware of the environment her daughters would be steeped in by attending the public school. Therefore, she and Gary made the choice to join with two other families and launched a classical Christian school called Grace Academy. They desired to see a school where the compassion and grace of Christ would be the normative experience for all students while getting a top-tier education. It was a slow start with the humble beginnings of only seven students. Gary and Michele Logan were integral members of the Grace Academy community for twelve years. Both of their daughters attended the school. Their youngest daughter, Alexis Baum (Logan), graduated from Grace Academy in the class of 2010.

In addition to helping launch the school, Gary served on the board for nine years and Michele was one of the first teachers, teaching from the school's beginning until May 2012. They now live in San Antonio where Gary works as the Vice President for Finance and Administration at Trinity University. Their daughter Alexis also

works at Trinity in the academic affairs division, serving as a science laboratory technician in the biology/chemistry departments. Recently we were able to catch up with them and ask a few questions.

Of particular interest in this conversation was the fact that Gary recently hired Grace Academy alumna Samantha Stien, class of 2010, as a financial analyst for Trinity University.

**Q:** *What first prompted you to start a classical Christian school?*

Michele – “It was really out of a desire for more. Gary and I wanted more for our girls than what I was seeing even as a teacher in the public school. In our first attempts people seemed interested but wanted us to give them a call in a couple years when we got things up and running. So we began by homeschooling our daughters along with a couple other families using classical Christian curriculum. The next year we expanded by adding another teacher and we officially launched the school.”

**Q:** *How did you encourage parents of Grammar School students to stay the course in the early years?*

Michele – “I always like to encourage parents

that k-6 is laying the ground work. It is fun with the chants and jingles but that is just the cake. Middle school and high school are the icing. It just gets better and better. Students build on the great foundation they received in the Grammar School and learn to argue well and speak well.”

**Q:** *It has been 16 years since you helped launch Grace Academy; do you still feel as strongly about classical Christian education now as you did then?*

Gary – “We live in an increasingly fractured culture and an increasingly isolated world, even in the midst of a technological evolution. In fact, I believe technology is adding to our isolation in many cases. Even though we are all connected and talking all the time I can't think of a time in my life where we've been more disconnected from each other than now; and we have a crisis of ethics. The leaders that are going to address the major issues and turn our world in a better way are going to be people who can sit down with someone across the table and work through very hard issues. They are going to be able to think well, communicate well, and be both gracious and courageous. Classical Christian education is the only thing I've seen that can provide all of this for students.”

**Q:** *As an employer, when you see that an applicant has graduated from a classical Christian school how does that affect your decision?*

Gary – “When I am looking to hire someone and I see that an applicant has graduated from a classical Christian school I expect they will have had a rigorous liberal arts education grounded in a Christian worldview. I would also anticipate that they are bright, moral, and courageous, because I know that this kind of education develops leadership in people - the character, the thinking ability, and the communication skills that are necessary to become leaders. People who have attended and graduated from a classical Christian school have run a course that will prosper them more than someone who has had a different type of education. I know that through what they read in high school, these students have been exposed to ideas that are absolutely hostile to the Christian worldview and have learned how to identify them and confront them with both grace and truth.”

**Q:** *You’ve hired a Grace Academy graduate. Has she fulfilled your expectations of a classically educated individual?*

Gary – “My daughter Alexis works at Trinity as a research assistant in the biology/chemistry departments. But since I was not involved with her hiring, nor directly work with her, I will talk about Samantha Stien. My department hired Samantha in January 2016. I have seen that Samantha is well balanced, writes well, communicates well, and is at ease in meetings with the president of the university and others. She is far more at ease than others in meetings when everyone is watching her and asking her questions about complex financial models, and she handles it with tremendous grace and poise. Not only is she really sharp with numbers, financial calculations, and modeling but she can also communicate significantly better than her peers and make her case amidst a very talented workforce.”

**Q:** *How does having a Grace Academy graduate impact your office and broader community at Trinity University?*

“She has confidence in high-pressure situations due in part to her personality but primarily to her time at Grace Academy and the rigors of a classical Christian education where students develop that confidence early on. Samantha is the tremendous influence she is because of her godly demeanor and the way she treats her colleagues. She is the full package as an employee. I would hire as many Grace Academy graduates as I could find places for.”

## LATIN *Continued from p. 6*

such literature. Such literature appears in the Schools of Logic and Rhetoric. I believe that what is implied here is that the study of Latin vocabulary and inflected grammar is not an end unto itself, but these lessons are to be applied and used to study such literature. Should we then study this literature in English, having learned all of our Latin? No. We ought to study these works in Latin. Why?

If we do advance in our study of Latin past the School of Grammar, past the learning of vocabulary and grammatical forms, what does it look like? In the School of Logic, discursive reasoning replaces exercises of observation and memory. The key subject becomes Formal Logic, but this does not mean that Latin is no longer important. In fact, nowhere does Ms. Sayers even dare suggest that Latin studies ought to cease until the School of Rhetoric. Instead she states that now since we have, “our vocabulary and morphology at our fingertips; henceforward we can concentrate on syntax and analysis (i.e., the logical construction of speech) and the history of language (i.e., how we came to arrange our speech as we do in order to convey our thoughts)” (ibid.). What better means to study syntax and analysis then studying the prose and poetry in classical Latin? Who better to learn from about the arrangement of speech to convey thought than Cicero, Seneca, Tertullian, or Augustine? Now that we have taught students the tools of Latin grammar, let them use those tools to feast upon a banquet table of literature. Let them learn the use of figures of speech, the meter of poetry, the reasoning in prose, by studying the masters of ancient literature. Let them see the transition of history through the writers of the time instead of through the glasses of a commentator. Then let them analyze the diction and syntax of these writers in order to learn how they were able to convey thoughts and ideas so well their work stood the test of time. Let students hold their work up next to those who followed in their footsteps: writers like Shakespeare and C.S. Lewis, poets like Milton and Dickinson, theologians like Edwards and Sproul.

I believe the purpose, the “Why” of studying Latin is (as our mission statement declares) “to train students to construe original Latin texts in order to decipher the design and intent of the author, thereby enabling them to apply these same skills to the rhetoric of their own language or any other they should choose to study.” The verb “construe” derives from the Latin *construere* (to put together). It means:

- to give the meaning or intention of; explain; interpret
- to deduce by interpretation
- to translate, esp. orally
- to analyze the syntax of; to rehearse the applicable grammatical rules of

To construe original Latin literature means more than just translating. It means that the student rehearses the applicable grammatical rules, analyzes the syntax, deduces an interpretation, and finally gives the meaning or intent of the author. This means the student learns never to take language or rhetoric at face value; never to take someone else’s interpretation for granted. He learns instead to dig deep into the speech of the author to discern his design, his intent, and to learn how he communicates his thought. If students can learn this with Cicero and Caesar, how much more can they accomplish this with modern day politicians and their rhetoric? If they can find and interpret the beauty and goodness in the poetry of Vergil and Ovid, how much more clearly are they able to see beauty in Milton and Shakespeare? If students can learn to construe the writings of Tertullian, Augustine, Luther, and Calvin, how much more can they construe the writings of modern theologians, so that they are equipped to discern truth and not be, “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting” (Ephesians 4:14, NKJV). In learning to construe language through Latin, students learn to read texts, documents, and even Scripture for themselves; not taking someone else’s translation/interpretation as immediate truth.

Yes, Latin is grist for the mill of the mind. It is not only the grist of vocabulary, it is the grist of language: how it is put together, how it works; how to define terms and make statements; how to construct arguments and detect fallacies; and most importantly, how to express oneself. By studying Latin in the context of those who used her best, who mastered her vocabulary and her syntax, students learn how to construe language. In doing so, they acquire the tools to produce language themselves, to articulate thought and defend argument. The purpose, therefore, of teaching Latin grammar is to prepare students to read or construe Latin literature. The purpose in teaching them to construe Latin literature is to prepare students to apply the same skill to the literature and the rhetoric around them, so that they may find God’s truth, His beauty, and His goodness and hold tightly to it.

Quotations taken from “*The Lost Tools of Learning*” by Ms. Dorothy Sayers.



## Upcoming **EVENTS**

- 12.9 LESSONS & CAROLS
- 1.26 GRACE ACADEMY FORUM
- 4.3 GOLF CLASSIC at *Cimarron Hills*
- 5.5 SPRING GALA



**GRACE  
ACADEMY**

*Presents*

# Lessons & Carols

Friday, December 9,  
at 6:30 p.m.  
Georgetown Church of Christ

Featuring performances from our  
K-12 music students



**GRACE  
ACADEMY**

*Presents a Lecture by*

**Dr. Nicholas Perrin**

## Redeeming Our Doubts: The Overlooked Value of Skepticism in Christian Education

Thursday,  
Jan. 26, 2017  
6:30 p.m.



*City  
LIGHTS*  
A SCHULMAN THEATRE

**GEORGETOWN**

*This event is free to the public and is sponsored  
by the Grace Academy Forum Lecture Series*