



# Saint Abraham's

## Classical Christian Academy

### Goals of a Graduate

*A measurable breakdown of St. Abraham's School-wide Expected Student Outcomes.*

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**Our Vision:** *To be the academy of Christian discipleship and classical learning for the Monterey Bay region.*

**Our Mission:** *To be a community of learners who seeks to **love** and **know** the Triune God, His Word, and His world.*

Our educational vision and mission is accomplished in a classical and Christian framework, rooted in the Liberal Arts Tradition. The seven goals listed below are our school-side expected student outcomes. With these in mind, we have constructed a unique and successful academic program beginning in Kindergarten. Having the above vision and mission as our point of reference, by considering these goals every time we make improvements, we continue to develop students who will impact the world for Christ.

*Successful graduates will:*

#### 1. Possess Virtue, Love of God, and Rightly Ordered Affections

- Rightly ordered affections (*ordo amoris*) involves worship. We accomplish this goal by educating students at every level to see themselves first as worshippers of God and disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Knowing that all education is formative (not just informative), all students (K-12) engage in liturgies of prayer and worship daily and weekly.
- A graduate St. Abraham's will have studied under the elevated standards (*classis*) of decorum and dress, as well as submitting to the high and difficult calling of piety and godly living.
  - On rightly ordered loves, St. Augustine writes, "But living a just and holy life requires one to be capable of an objective and impartial evaluation of things: to love things, that is to say, in the right order, so that you do not love what is not to be loved, or fail to love what is to be loved, or have a greater love for what should be loved less" (Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, I.27-28).

## 2. Possess Sound Reason and Sound faith

- Speech and thought are inseparable. Students at St. Abraham's develop and sharpen language skills through the core discipline in their study of Grammar (studied throughout the K-12 years).
- Students develop their reasoning skills, most notably the ability to measure and weigh statements, through their study of formal Logic (a required class in 7 & 8th grade).
- Successful graduates will have integrated the disciplines of Grammar (how language works) and Logic (how thinking works) in the study of Latin (required in grades 3-8, grades 9-10 optional).
- Graduates will apply their trained skills of mind to the service of their faith in both the duty (pietas) to God, family, and community, as well as to their study of Holy Scripture (required in each grade of our K-12 program).
- Graduates will integrate their knowledge of how to think with their study of Church Doctrine, moral theology, and with the articles of the Christian religion.
- Christian discipleship is accomplished through small class sizes, through the relationship of the teacher and student, and by the pedagogical means of "teaching, for reproof, correction, and instruction in justice" (2 Timothy 3:16).
  - Knowing that a disciple in Christ never stops learning, Paul prays that we might mature to measure of Christ (*donec occurramus omnes in unitatem fidei, et agnitionis Filii Dei, in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi* — Eph. 4:13).

## 3. Posses Eloquence and Command of Language

- Students at St. Abraham's will employ their learned skills of Grammar and Logic in the study and skill of Rhetoric (how to say things beautifully).
- Rhetoric (as defined by Aristotle's Canons and Appeals) is the discipline integrated into the program, most clearly in the writing standards in Literature classes (grades 9-12), the Speech Meet (grades K-6), the Theatre Elective (grades 7-11).
- In their Junior/Senior Thesis, graduates must demonstrate what Charles Taylor calls "poetic knowledge," knowing that language is not simply a game of filling empty receptacles with the meanings of our choice, to be used for the purpose of gaining power over others.
- Graduates who have received instruction in Latin (grades 3-8) will demonstrate their knowledge of the origins of words.

#### 4. Participate In the Great Conversation as Literate Learners

- Successful graduates will become familiar with the voices of the great thinkers and authors of the West, known as the Great Conversation through their reading of select works of the “Great Books” of the Western civilization.
- Required Bible classes (K-12) means that students become literate and versed in Holy Scripture as the central text that gives meaning to all other texts.

#### 5. Live as though made in the Image of God

St. Abraham's graduates learn what it means to be made in the image of God (imago Dei) not only in the training of their mind but also in the training of their bodies through our sports program, athletic teams, and physical education classes (required in grades 1-10).

- The required complementary classes/assemblies of Biblical Manhood and Biblical Womanhood instruct students in what it means to be human, both male and female (Gen. 1:26).
- Graduates from St. Abraham's will experience the only K-12 educational program in all of Santa Cruz County; this means all ages interact; learning, working, playing & praying together.
- Required Leadership classes mean that older students have the opportunity to serve younger students and to be an example of virtue for them.

#### 6. Possess Aesthetic Judgement, Worshipping the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness

(“Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” Psalm 96:9)

- Graduates of St. Abraham's will have received instruction in Art (basic disciplines) and Aesthetics (instruction in Beauty and good taste).
- Through the mandatory uniform policy (K-12), students inculcate standards of Beauty in dress, as well as cultivate a dimension of honor to their studies and classes, which elevate the school culture.
- Having submitted (hopefully joyfully) to student expectations and rules of conduct, students learn that living in a “holy” way is beautiful.
- Graduates of St. Abraham's will also be given the blessing of Music instruction through Choir (required in grades 1-11).
- Through their required Music classes, students are introduced to sacred music, drawing especially on the Protestant and Catholic traditions in the Western Church.

- St. Paul enjoins Christians to speak “to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:12).

## 7. Live as Stewards Of What Has Been Given

One of the three school rules is “Practice Godly Stewardship” (p. 29). This means students are taught to see that all things have been given to us, that the student learns to see himself as a trustee of things given to him.

- G. K. Chesterton says education is “the transfer of a way of life.” In light of this, St. Abraham’s graduates are guardians, taught to see the knowledge and wisdom as a great treasure which has been deposited in his care in order that it can be passed on to the next generation.
- At the graduation ceremony, after having received their diploma but before they are pronounced official graduates, students who walk take the following oath (from Luke 12:48):
  - Officiant: “*To whom much is given—*”
  - Graduates: “*Much is required!*”
- By virtue of knowing our school motto (*in mille generationes*) Students who graduate are encouraged to proudly bear the name St. Abraham’s name proudly, mindful of how the education they’ve received serves not only themselves but the next generation (such is the legacy of our namesake, Abraham, who children’s children saw the blessings of God “unto a thousand generations” – Psalm 1).
  - “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ” (Paul, *Titus* 2:11-13).
  - “Education is not a subject, and it does not deal in subjects. It is instead the transfer of a way of life” (G. K. Chesterton).