



## MISSION STATEMENT

**In keeping with the Franciscan tradition of intellectual inquiry and spirituality, St. Francis of Assisi School is committed to academic excellence and continuous growth in Catholic faith.**

## VISION

How do members of St. Francis of Assisi School exemplify our mission and philosophy?

### **PASSIONATELY CATHOLIC:**

St. Francis of Assisi staff, students, and parents will:

- ◆ Make prayer and worship an observable and valued part of each day.
- ◆ Participate regularly and actively in the Mass, Sacraments, prayer, and Catholic traditions
- ◆ Respect life in their actions, words, and attitudes
- ◆ Be empathetic, compassionate and forgiving
- ◆ Be involved in parish life
- ◆ Be faithful and generous stewards with their time, talent, and treasure
- ◆ Regularly reflect on their relationship with God and work to grow in that relationship
- ◆ Provide and participate in opportunities to connect through faith and actions with others

### **ACADEMICALLY EXCELLENT:**

St. Francis of Assisi staff will:

- ◆ Make decisions through the lens of our shared mission
- ◆ Recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and support them in this ministry
- ◆ Honor their students as gifts from God and their role as servant leaders entrusted to teach them
- ◆ Engage in continuous professional development focused on student outcomes
- ◆ Balance curriculum assessment and instruction practices to help each student achieve the mission
- ◆ Communicate effectively and work cooperatively with others in support of the mission

St. Francis of Assisi students will:

- ◆ Reason, analyze and evaluate effectively
- ◆ Synthesize, interpret, make connections, and draw conclusions
- ◆ Reflect critically
- ◆ Self-advocate
- ◆ Persevere in solving problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- ◆ Identify and ask questions to clarify and lead to solutions
- ◆ Communicate respectfully, effectively, and appropriately for a variety of purposes
- ◆ Demonstrate flexibility and adaptability
- ◆ Collaborate and work in teams
- ◆ Apply and use technology and various digital medias effectively and within the framework of our mission

St. Francis of Assisi parents will:

- ◆ Make decisions and choose responses through the lens of our shared mission
- ◆ Recognize teachers as trained professionals and servants of God entrusted to assist in the ministry of formation
- ◆ Honor and encourage their child as the learner to be responsive and respectful to the mission and those leading it
- ◆ Support the mission outside of school with mass attendance, prayer at home, connections with virtues, academic support, and celebration of growth
- ◆ Volunteer or donate in support of the school



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## PHILOSOPHY

Franciscan education is an 800 year-old tradition born of the insights of St. Francis and Clare of Assisi and shaped by the examples of their extraordinary lives. For the mission of St. Francis of Assisi School, this charism focuses on seven tenets that parents, staff, students, and parish community are called to encourage and model:

**Franciscan education is incarnational:** St. Francis was profoundly moved by the central doctrine of Christianity or the belief that Jesus is the Word of God made human, God “in the flesh” (ref. John 1:1-14). The Feast of the Incarnation (Christmas) was so special to him that he wanted to share the mystery of the Incarnation by organizing the first Christmas crèche or manger scene. At St. Francis of Assisi School, we believe that the Creator is found in all creation and that Jesus, most present in the Eucharist, is the way, the truth, and the light.

**Franciscan education is personal:** St. Francis saw creation as being reflective of His divine image, a network of relationships. Franciscan education is based on love of the human person and on reverence for his or her God-given dignity. It values each individual as a gift.

**Franciscan education is communal:** The Catholic Church places a high value on community. It teaches that God is not one but a Trinity of persons, a communion of love. St. Francis chose to live in the world as brother to all. At St. Francis of Assisi School, individuals are not only encouraged to grow in faith and knowledge, but they are called to support the growth of one another. Common worship and collaborative learning within a community of shared values prepares students to take their place in a global, cosmic community as responsible Christians, citizens, and stewards.

**Franciscan education is transformative:** St. Mark’s gospel begins with Jesus’ words, “Reform your lives and believe in the good news” (Mk 1:15). As Catholics we believe that religious faith and practices lead to human transformation - change of heart, mind, attitudes, and behaviors. For St. Francis this was what “penance” was about and living a life of penance, to his followers, meant being models of personal transformation - ever creating the best version of ourselves. At St. Francis of Assisi School, education is more than informative; it is transformative. We are committed to the belief that learning and formation are on-going and model that in our actions.

**Franciscan education engages the heart:** “Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1John 4:8). St. Francis was both passionate and compassionate. His emotions were very evident in his writings. In Franciscan education, that means an emphasis on interpersonal skills as well as intellectual skills. It encourages passion for one’s studies and passion for one’s neighbor in need.

**Franciscan education develops servant-leaders:** In Mark’s gospel, Jesus tells his disciples, “whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be the slave of all (Mk 10:43-45). St. Francis certainly modeled the servant attitude of Christ. He is said to have told his friars, “Let no one be called superior, but let everyone in general be called a lesser brother.” Catholic education, to those of St. Francis of Assisi School is a privilege, not an entitlement. With such privilege comes great responsibility. This understanding promotes a greater purpose which our faith calls us to. It models and encourages such purpose to our students - the future leaders of our society.

**Franciscan education pursues wisdom:** In his *Salutation of the Virtues*, St. Francis speaks of “Queen Wisdom” first, along with what he considered to be her twin sister: “holy pure Simplicity.” St. Bonaventure captured the nature of Franciscan tradition when he wrote “[Let no one] believe that reading is sufficient without emotion, speculation without devotion, investigation without wonder, observation without joy, work without piety, knowledge without love, understanding without humility, study without divine grace, reflection without divinely inspired wisdom.” This is why at St. Francis of Assisi School we focus on being, “Passionately Catholic and Academically Excellent.”