



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Jan. 9, 16, 23, 30 Youth Basketball Clinic; Broadneck EP; K-5th: 9:30AM - 11:00AM
- Jan. 12-14 Mid-Term Oral Exams for Rhetoric Students
- Jan. 15 NEW Student Applications Due/Re-enrollment Forms & Deposits Due; NO Tuition Payment due this month
- Jan. 18 Faculty Debate @ 1:30PM; Main Campus
- Jan. 22 5th grade Colonial Ball; Baldwin Hall
4th Grade Field Trip to Library for Brass Rubbing Workshop
- Jan. 29 SCHOOL CLOSED for Teacher In-Service Day
- Jan. 30 Certamen Competition @ Archbishop Spalding HS
- Feb. 5 1st Grade Indian Feast; GIBC
- Feb. 10 Lacrosse Parents' Meeting @ 3:15PM; GIBC
- Feb. 12 3rd Grade Feast: Main Campus
End-of-Season Basketball Finale @ 3:30-8:00 PM; Broadneck EP

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words.

- ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

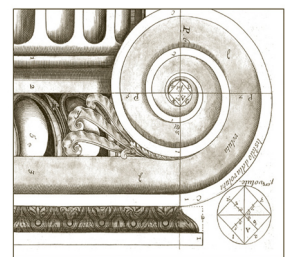
God does not need your good works; your neighbor does.

- MARTIN LUTHER

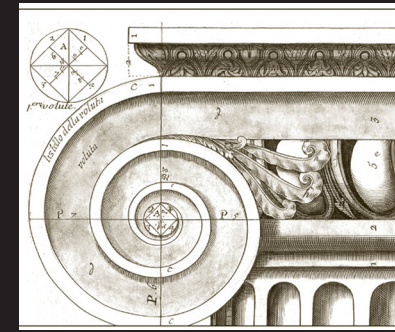
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ROCKBRIDGE ACADEMY



A CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
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ROCKBRIDGE REPORTER

A Newsletter for Rockbridge Academy

January 2010

THE SIXTH SOLA

by Ralph Janikowsky, Upper School Principal

Coming out of the Reformation, the Five Solas became the clarion cry of the new Protestant Church. They also served as guideposts for the Great Awakening. At the dawn of the 20th Century, three significant cultural, social, and economic forces collided with the doctrines of the church built around the Solas. Industrialization, urbanization, and globalization all converged to cause man to question his importance, significance, and relevance in our new Western societies. Man was searching for meaning and identity while governments labored to deal with the myriad of problems created by the forces and pressures of modernity.

The Church also responded to these significant pressures. Unfortunately, it seemed to many people as though the Solas provided little help or comfort to modern man in a different age. The Church's response, often away from the Solas, accelerated into an avalanche where seminaries, ministers, and laymen sought to restore meaning, worth, and dignity to the individual all too often apart from Christ. This avalanche overwhelmed Church doctrine and placed man's needs and desires in the forefront.

The Five Solas:

Sola Scriptura
by Scripture alone

Sola Gratia
by Grace alone

Sola Fide
through Faith alone

Solo Christo
by Christ alone

Soli Deo Gloria
to God alone be the Glory

As we start the 21st Century, we inherit a cultural and defacto Sixth Sola – Sola Me (pronounced in Latin 'may'). Me alone! Religion, particularly Christianity, has developed as its preeminent focus helping individuals become better persons, better spouses, better parents, and more successful businessmen. Far too many Christians come to worship to learn how to improve, to be entertained, and to feel good about themselves. This fundamental shift away from Christ and his atoning work on the cross creates a culture in which being called a "Christian" is a label applied to spiritual people who are basically good and generally happy. In effect, orthodox biblical doctrines have been replaced by personal enrichment.

Whatever happened to "Sinners in the hands of an angry God" or "Woe is me, for I am undone," and the belief that each of us is a miserable sinner apart from God's unmerited favor?

Surprisingly, the cultural label of "Christian" conveys significant negative implications for our students because of the cultural presuppositions built into modern thinking. First, it minimizes sin. When a student buys into Sola Me, he really does not want or need to focus on "all that negative stuff."

THE SIXTH SOLA ... *continued*

“Talking about sin doesn’t make me feel good,” or so goes the mantra. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of sin and its consequences, and a massive undervaluing of Christ and his death and resurrection. Sola Me actually encourages sin, because sin shrinks our world down to our wants, our needs, our desires, and our feelings, conforming a student to the doctrines of Sola Me. Sin is selfishness cherished and selfishness acted upon. When Sola Me is brought into a classroom, a student will first turn his learning, and ultimately the entire class’s learning, into a grinding, painful, dull, and truncated routine.

How can you recognize Sola Me in your child or in a classroom?

Do the students resort to finding someone in the class that they did better than to prove that they are OK? As long as Johnny did better than Sally, Johnny is doing just fine. Unfortunately, this form of relativistic self-righteousness, where children justify mediocre performance, marginal behavior, or sinful desires with an example that is intended to make them look better, is a denial of sinful thoughts and behavior. These thoughts and behavior must be called into account and addressed biblically for the student to grow to Christian maturity.

Does your child celebrate God’s blessing of another, or complain about not having something or not receiving special recognition?

Do we and our children believe that the real problems are external to us, rather than the far more important and difficult evaluation of the condition of our hearts?

The second important implication of the cultural label of “Christian” is that it causes students to value and seek low expectations. The forgotten truth is that expectations carry consequences for a child. Low expectations can be as damaging as the mom who is tirelessly pushing her daughter to be a concert pianist or the dad who is aggressively driving his son to be professional baseball player.

But what are the consequences of low expectations? Have you ever heard “I am not good at math” or “I don’t like to sing” or “I prefer to be creative rather than to follow patterns”? The student, the parent, and the teacher are then all tempted to agree with these statements and adjust their expectations. It is so easy – everyone is now successful – Sola Me lived out! The accomplished student who achieved below his capabilities, the proud parent who sees A’s on report cards, and the professional teacher who believes she has kept peace and encouraged the child are all satisfied.

The problem is not the grade, it is the lesson that lowering expectations produced results and motivated the student. To the contrary, low expectations teach children to fear failure, seek comfort at all costs, and to confuse real effort with “good

enough.” Low expectations are a cultural cancer that breeds complacency, compromise, and half-hearted efforts. Children need real, meaty challenges if they are to grow both as students and Christians. They need to get out of their comfort zones and learn to trust Christ, rather than themselves. They need to see their calling as a student serving Christ, rather than being a self-serving student who gets by. Low expectations go hand in glove with the doctrines of Sola Me.

Consequently, Sola Me robs students of initiative, hope, achievement, and most importantly, of the joy and peace that comes from trusting in Christ.

As our children understand and embrace their faith, they will come to love the Five Solas of the Reformation and to disdain the sola of modernity, Sola Me. In particular, their heartfelt acceptance of Solo Christo and Soli

Deo Gloria – Christ alone and to God alone be the glory – will enable them to put aside cultural labels, understand sin as cosmic treason against God, and expect great things of themselves in the service of Christ. In so doing, they will learn to live a rich, fulfilling life Coram Deo – before the face of God.

Isn’t this truly what classical Christian education is all about?

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FVF: FEENEY VS. FINKBEINER – THE GREAT DEBATE!

Our annual faculty debate will take place on Monday, Jan. 18th between Tim Feeney and Brad Finkbeiner. The topic will be: **Resolved: That men can be saved only through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

We will start at 1:30PM and we hope that parents, grandparents, and friends of Rockbridge Academy will join our Upper School for this afternoon of learning, fellowship, and growth in our faith.

Youth Basketball

starts January 9 at 9:30AM at Broadneck EP Church! Rockbridge Academy Varsity team coach Donna Duarte will provide valuable instruction in basketball fundamentals to participants in grades K-5. More information and the registration form can be found on the front page of the Rockbridge Academy website.



Rockbridge Academy Players Present

OKLAHOMA!

After a week of singing, dancing, and reading auditions, the cast of *Oklahoma!* was selected and rehearsals are now underway. This upcoming production is set for February 25, 26, and 27, 2010, at the Chesapeake Arts Center in Brooklyn Park.

The story of *Oklahoma!* is about conflict and resolution between cowboys and farmers, Laurey (Abby Harries) and Curly (Drew Tucker), Will (Seamus McKenna), Ado Annie (Heather Cate), and Jud (John Vanik). This western community finally comes together when they seek to become the 46th state of the union.

Oklahoma! was the first musical collaboration between Rogers and Hammerstein, and boasts of some of their most beautiful music: *Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’!*, *People Will Say We’re In Love*, *The Surrey with the Fringe on Top*, *I Cain’t Say No!*, and of course the theme song, *Oklahoma!* One of the unique features of this musical is the inclusion of a ballet at the end of the first act.

Rockbridge Academy is known for its excellent musical productions, which would not be possible if it were not for the diligent work of the students and the cheerful service of talented parents sharing their gifts of music, drama, visual arts, sewing, and dance.

Mark your calendars! Advanced tickets sales begin in early February: adults are \$13 and children 12 & under are \$10.



MEET THE NEW FACULTY



Lysa Lytikainen

Lysa Lytikainen is Olivia August’s new aid. After high school, she joined a repertoire theater company based in California and toured full time in the US and Canada with this drama/music ministry for 1½ years. Following this period of ministry, she went to Philadelphia College of Bible.

Lysa also studied overseas at Capernwray Bible School in England, at Columbia International University in South Carolina, and at the Holy Land Institute of Biblical Studies in Israel. She earned a BA in Biblical Languages and Bible and went on to answer the Lord’s call to be a missionary. For the next 3 years, Lysa worked as the Director of Vision Trips for Crossover Communications International. The Lytikainens came to Rockbridge in 2007.

Lysa is thankful to have been given the privilege of loving and aiding Olivia, as well as the privilege of experiencing the heart-changing classes at Rockbridge Academy.

Marleen Taylor, born the eldest of two in Pensacola, Florida is the new girl’s PE teacher. Marleen learned to enjoy teaching living with her grandmother during her brother’s open heart surgeries and from her aunt who often took her to school to help with bulletin boards and other school projects. Both were dedicated educators.

Marrying a Naval Flight Officer, Marleen moved to Jacksonville and graduated from the University of North Florida with a bachelors degree in education. The Navy then moved her to the United States Naval Academy where her husband was an instructor. It was through Officer’s Christian Fellowship that she first learned about Classical Christian education.

Marleen has been a Rockbridge mom for the last nine years and is thankful to serve on staff now.



Marleen Taylor