

On Starting a School

I'm going to interrupt the series of inserts about scrupulosity, and initiate an effort to start a school. I've been praying off and on for some time about this; it has been my desire to start a school since I arrived. Since I follow (as best I can) a Benedictine way of searching for God's will, I've been waiting for God to make His move on this, and it happened on the Feast of the Purification, during Mass. I am now sure we should begin this project.

All of what follows should be read with the phrase "...if God wills it." So if I use words like "will," they will be written with that prayer in mind.

The school will be a cooperative home school. The only way we could afford to have a school at all like the typical Catholic school is to have a cadre of religious sisters or brothers. I've certainly looked into this, but it would take a miracle to get them. We cannot afford to hire a lay staff, and hire them at just wages with the benefits they are due.

A cooperative home school works like this: The school is run Monday through Friday, or just four or three days a week, depending on the need. We purchase a curriculum, (most likely Seton Home School) and the classes are supervised by a parent, or a volunteer from the parish. It works just like what one would do in the home, only the burden is lightened by the assistance of the teachers, and there are other students in the room than just siblings.

Say you have a 5th grader. He shows up to school, and then attends classes like any other school, but it is as individualized as at home. Mom or dad supervises three or four classes per week, or even more, helping students with their individual work. If everyone is stuck on some point of English or Math, the teacher can take some time out and give a lesson for all. Group work on some project is also supervised. Again, it's what was being done at home, only in a school.

Much has to be done to accomplish this. The requirements from the Archdiocese are many, and in a sense prohibitive to starting a school. It is understandable that those responsible for education with the Archdiocese would prefer our parishioners entering the existing schools, since most of those schools are not doing well financially, and are losing students. However, of the 230 some children who attend our community, only three attend Archdiocesan schools. They do not seem to be meeting the needs of our families. Besides, just the cost of their schools is prohibitive to many if not most of our families.

On the back of this you will find a sign up sheet. I need to assess the interest in this. The form is not a commitment, but a survey to see who is interested. This is only for our community at this point. I'm sure there are families from other parishes who might be interested, but again, this is only for registered OLMC parishioners.

So if you are interested in this project, please fill out the form on the back of this insert, and give it or mail it to me.

Form for Interest in a School at OLMC

N.B. Since this will be a cooperative home school, it can open with grades 1-12 from the outset.

Name _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Names of children and grades:

Please indicate if you would be willing to serve on a Board of Directors, or if you are willing to help with this project, in any capacity:

Name _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Capacity in which you are willing to help:
