



MARTIN SAINTS  
CLASSICAL HIGH SCHOOL  

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A CHESTERTON ACADEMY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



MARTINSAINTSCCLASSICAL.ORG

# PRESIDENT'S LETTER



## *Dear friends of Martin Saints,*

Archbishop Nelson Pérez recently asked every Philadelphia priest and deacon to read a new book, *From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age*.

The book begins with a quote from Archbishop Fulton Sheen: “We are at the end of Christendom. Not of Christianity, not of the Church, but of Christendom.”

He means that we are living through the end of an era. For centuries, “Christendom” provided us with a common identity that at least nominally shaped our culture and politics. But in our day, the west is abandoning even token accountability to Christian morals.

It’s possible to track some of these trends statistically. For example, pollsters report that 40% of 20-somethings identify as “nones.” 62% of the ex-Catholics in that group left the Church before age 18.

But we don’t need statistics to tell us what we all experience daily in our society. As Bob Dylan once sang, “you don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”

Once upon a time, it might have been possible to catch the faith by osmosis, simply by showing up and participating in society and our civic institutions. But no more.

Nowadays, to hold or grow in the faith, it requires intention. We have to want it, to choose it, and be willing to be countercultural.

Perhaps paradoxically, this is where hope starts to emerge. From *Christendom to Apostolic Mission* proposes that we should live our lives “in the full consciousness of this hour of testing, and rally close to the heart of Christ.” Like the early apostles, obstacles and challenges can sharpen and quicken our faith.

G.K. Chesterton wrote that a dead thing flows with the current, but only a living thing can swim against the stream.

This is why we have Martin Saints.

We are on an apostolic mission. We are a living thing, swimming against the stream.

We are a school with a sober, clear-eyed view of today’s culture. And yet still we insist: the glory of God is man fully alive. Everything that is good, true, and beautiful is still fresh and vital. The Holy Spirit still pumps in our veins.

Co-operating with God’s grace, at Martin Saints, we have done something truly special together. Please behold this annual report, and cherish what you – our students, parents, teachers, donors, and friends – have built together at our young school.

As you look at this report, please study the faces of our students, and share in their joy and accomplishments. Please read all the quotes and testimonials, and remember how important it is to support this work and build our school together.

The good news is that whatever else may be happening in the world, you really can start and grow a school, with a curriculum like it ought to be, with a culture that is wholesome and good.

The good news is that whatever else may be happening in the world, we have just graduated our third class of students. Our new little school is growing and, praise God, someday soon we will need to move into larger premises.

Once again, it’s possible to track some of these trends statistically. We’ve put a few graphs in this report.

More broadly, the ecumenical Association of Classical Christian Schools has done a national poll over several years, comparing graduates from classical, parochial, and public schools. Their statistics show that the classical alumni have significantly higher rates of church attendance, gratitude for their lives, and generosity to charity (as well as lower rates of divorce and premarital cohabitation).

But again, we don’t need statistics to tell us what we all experience daily in our school.

At Martin Saints, academics are the heart of school life. In class, our teachers lead our students through the great books of western civilization, searching for truth, beauty, and wisdom.

But our students and teachers also go camping together. They go on the March for Life. They serve the poor. They attend orchestras, theaters, and museums. They have craftsmanship classes, and work with their hands. Most importantly, they pray and worship together every day.

Martin Saints is a community of ordinary people who aim high. Martin Saints is a community of families, faculty, and donors who are building a faithful and resilient school for today's challenges, and for the future.

Our work together has a financial side. We are still several years away from being fully enrolled. That means, for now, that only about 50% of our revenue comes from tuition. Moreover, roughly 60% of our students receive some form of financial aid.

Financially, you make up the difference. The difference comes from you, from faithful and generous friends who believe that Philadelphia needs a school like this, who want to see a school like this take root and grow.

Pope Benedict taught that while the world offers us comfort, we were made for greatness. Please, will you say a prayer over this annual report, and consider making a donation.

Martin Saints solves problems. We are rising to the challenges of an apostolic age. We are an antidote to nihilism and rootlessness. We fight despair and drift. Our young men and women get to experience a Catholic community that is faithful and credible.

Do we win every battle? Is every graduate canonized the next day? Of course not.

But we have proof-of-concept. We are no longer a brand new, baby school. We have had three graduating classes. We have an outstanding faculty, without parallel for a high school in the Delaware Valley. We are fighting the good fight, and we need your help.

Please pray for us. I am confident that there is a role in this community for everyone reading this report. Please contact me if you have questions, observations, or ideas. Most practically, thank you for making your donation today.

Gratefully yours in Christ,



Deacon Chris Roberts  
*President, Martin Saints Classical High School*

P.S. Please donate at [whymsc.org/support](http://whymsc.org/support)



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## OPEN HOUSES

October 17, 2023

November 8, 2023

January 28, 2024

February 26, 2024

## 8TH GRADE VISITATION DAY

November 14, 2023

## 7TH GRADE VISITATION DAY

March 12, 2024

## ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

December 14, 2023

## DRAMA CLUB SPRING PERFORMANCE

April 26-27, 2024

## EVENING OF THE ARTS

May 16, 2024

*For details visit  
[whymsc.org](http://whymsc.org)*



# DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT



It has been my pleasure to be the Director of Advancement at Martin Saints this past year. The best part of my job is the vibrant community that surrounds such a wonderful institution.

The heart and soul of Martin Saints is something that is so unique in today's world. It attracts a group of people who are serious about their faith and the pursuit of a life lived through Christ and His Church. We need more beacons of hope that offer the essence of a life lived in truth, goodness, and beauty.

This year, our EITC/OSTC program has grown to provide \$84,675 in scholarships for our neediest students. We are especially grateful to all our new EITC donors. We plan to keep growing this program in the next year.

On the admissions side of things, we will enroll about 18 new students for the 2023-2024 academic year. Since we graduated eight seniors this past June, that will bring our total enrollment to about 58 students. I am so excited to see our school growing at a steady pace!

I look forward to continuing this journey of faith at Martin Saints. Thank you for being a part of our Martin Saints family. Sts. Louis and Zélie, pray for us. St. Thérèse, pray for us. Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, pray for us. G.K. Chesterton, pray for us.

Blessings in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicole Marshall  
*Director of Advancement*  
*Martin Saints Classical High School*



# EITC/OSTC

**Instead of sending your tax dollars to Harrisburg, you can redirect and designate your annual state taxes to fund scholarships at Martin Saints Classical High School.**

Please contact us for a short application. Here's how it works:

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) is a Pennsylvania program supporting all students with financial need. The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) is a similar program, but prioritizing students who also live in low performing public school districts.

An individual or business owner with an annual Pennsylvania tax liability over \$1000, and up to the amount you owe in state taxes, is eligible to enroll and designate their state taxes to fund these programs.

It costs you a penny to donate a dime. You will receive a 90% tax credit for your contribution to this program. The money will directly fund scholarships for young men and women at Martin Saints.

When you are ready to enroll, or if you have any questions and want to hear more, please contact the Martins Saints Director of Advancement, Ms. Nicole Marshall, at [nmarshall@martinsaintsclassical.org](mailto:nmarshall@martinsaintsclassical.org) or (267) 495-4865, ext. 204.



# NEWS AND NOTEWORTHY



## 2022-2023 TRACK AND CROSS COUNTRY

Sophomore Magdalena Baumeister medaled at Districts and advanced to the State Championships in her first cross country season.

Senior Ty Tindal qualified for State, East Coast, and National indoor track championships. Ty placed sixth in one of the fastest hurdle races in the country. He won his third District championship 300m hurdles title and advanced to the State Championships.

Sophomore Regina Callihan medaled in the District Championship 100m hurdles.

For a small school, we had an incredible season. Congratulations to the students, and to the coaches, Mr. James Williams, Mr. Charlie Dirvin, and Mr. Brian Shells.

Finally, we would like to extend our gratitude to Robert Lombardo Photography for the excellent photographs of our track and field athletes.

## FALL 2022 TENNIS RESULTS

Martin Saints completed its inaugural girls tennis season during the fall 2022 semester. Seven freshman and one sophomore, all with no competitive match experience, comprised the team that competed against the varsity teams from Little Flower, Springfield Township, and Archbishop Wood, as well as the junior varsity team from Cardinal O'Hara.

The team recorded its first win against the O'Hara JV team with Catharine D'Agostini at singles, as well as Nora Raybould/Jacqueline Perry and Katie Ferguson/Delaney Stryd winning at doubles. While varsity matches were against older students, they provided valuable experience that built confidence.

We look forward to seeing how the student athletes do next year. Congratulations to the team and our coach, Mr. Dan Donnelly.



## 2023 NATIONAL LATIN EXAM HONORS

Every year, from Zimbabwe to Poland, from New Zealand to the United States, around 100,000 students from around the world take the international Latin exam. The very best receive gold and silver medals. This year, Martin Saints had an astounding fourteen students receive honors: Patrick Corozo and Delaney Stryd were gold summa cum laude. Micaiah Andrejczyk, Ruth Roberts, Magdalena Baumeister, and Joel Kaceli were silver maxima cum laude. Finally, Owen Dernlan, Felix Ortega, and Luke Luna were cum laude.

Xavier Hallowell, Amelie Livingston, Andrew Hughes, Carina Fiorella, Keira Watters were magna cum laude. Ruth Roberts, Magdalena Baumeister, and Joel Kaceli were silver maxima cum laude. Finally, Owen Dernlan, Felix Ortega, and Luke Luna were cum laude.

Congratulations to the students, and the teachers, Dr. Erika Harnett and Mr. Matthew Ryan.



## FINE ARTS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Our student actors, musicians, artists, choristers, and craftsmen had a beautiful and busy year. In December we held our annual Advent Lessons & Carols by candlelight. Also in December, the drama club performed *Speakeasy!*, a play written by sophomore Abigail Dickerson, which was directed by Abby and two other students, Jeremiah Baldon and Elizabeth Kaceli. This story was set during World War One, when a young woman named Evelyn is forced to flee her village. After journeying to America, Evelyn joins a newspaper whose writers are determined to bring joy to a dark and troubled culture through the stories they tell. After a few more months of rehearsing, the drama club returned in the spring, with *Much Ado About Nothing* at the elegant Highlands Mansion & Garden. Shakespeare's beloved comedy explores the universal themes of love, miscommunication, honor, deceit, and the complexity of human relationships. Finally, almost at the end of the school year, our friends at Immaculate Conception parish in Jenkintown hosted our annual Evening of the Arts. Student paintings, sculptures, textiles, and woodworking were all on display, alongside a string ensemble, more Shakespeare, and a full choral concert.

## CLASS OF 2023

We are very proud of our graduates this year, who were accepted and received generous scholarship offers to Bloomsburg University, Boston University, Catholic University of America, Drexel University, Eastern University, Franciscan University of Steubenville, George Mason University, Hampton University, John Paul the Great University, Lincoln University, Lynchburg College, Massart University, Montgomery County Community College, Moravian College, Ohio Wesleyan University, Pennsylvania State University, Rosemont College, Rowan University, St. Francis College, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Susquehanna University, Syracuse University, Temple University, University of Massachusetts, University of New Hampshire, University of Oregon, University of Pittsburgh, Walsh University, Belmont Abbey College, and West Virginia University.



# TESTIMONIALS



“I had the pleasure of spending an evening with the faculty and lay leadership of Martin Saints Classical High School. The discussion was lively, a sign of the vitality and promise of the classical school movement.”

- *R.R. Reno, editor, First Things magazine*

“It was a humbling experience, that while difficult at times, felt rewarding afterwards. I had to be intentional about my attitude, energy, and effort, and it offered a rich view into all the pieces that must come together to make this ministry.”

- *MSC 10th grader after a Frassati Friday serving in a soup kitchen*



“I’m struck anew by the depth and beauty of what they are studying. I marvel all the more because their innocence is still intact. Watching them engaging in their studies fills me with gratitude. This formation is a gift and I will encourage my girls to pour themselves out in love and service as they discern their vocations and future paths after their time at Martin Saints.”

- *MSC mom*



“I feel tremendous gratitude toward Martin Saints high school. I have seen an extraordinary transformation in my daughter since she joined this community; she has blossomed in a beautiful way. I must admit that I never fully understood the school mantra of ‘being fully alive’ until I saw how the truly nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment that Martin Saints provides has impacted her. It is delightful to watch her so engaged, so thinking, and so feeling.”

- *MSC dad*



“I must tell you that I am here because when Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are fully alive they become The True, The Beautiful, and The Good. They are no longer inaccessible ideas, but that which surrounds you, in the forms of your friends, your teachers, creation, and yourself. They become things you can name, feel, and know. Isn’t it something special that we have the opportunity to grab hold of the very core of our high school education and lean fully into it? Everyday I am affirmed that what and how I am being taught is in order to pursue realities which will apply to every moment, every season, every chapter of the rest of my life.”

- *MSC student*

“When I am outdoors, especially in the wilderness, I feel closer to God because I am within his creation. In the wilderness, everything I see practically screams the name of God and his wondrous creation. It helps when I am alone so I can hear God more clearly.”

- *MSC student*

“The world is so much bigger than just the town or place where we live. There is an importance to being in nature, to seeing how ecosystems exist, how science becomes incredibly physical, and experiencing directly our place (and smallness) in the vastness of creation. On our outdoor Frassati Fridays I have found myself with a deeper longing for God and a greater wonder for Him and His works, when contemplating both the beauty that surrounds me, and my place in its vastness.”

- *MSC student*

“I’ve learned that these teenage years need community. Our children need others besides their parents, to speak truth and love into their lives. How grateful I am for our daughter that this now includes teachers from her school! Thank you for being one of those voices. Communities are beautiful and lovely and messy. Thank you for entering the fray so fully for our children. I am so grateful.”

- *MSC mom*

“We were both struck with the care and thorough evaluation of our son. The notes on his report card were full of detailed examples on how he can improve as well as reinforcing his positive traits. This type of evaluation is not common in today’s corporate world and virtually non-existent in education. We are so very appreciative! Thank you to you both for leading the efforts of MSC, and for hiring gifted and caring teachers.”

- *MSC dad*

“Our son just received his first MSC report card. I just read over two pages of typed, single paced comments about his strengths and weaknesses. Each of his teachers contributed. I could not have asked for a better representation of his progress. Way to go Martin Saints faculty for taking such a personal approach!”

- *MSC mom*

“Our discussion-based classes help make the texts we look at engaging as well as beautiful. The best thing about MSC is that everything we learn is Christ-centered and all our discussions point back to the faith.”

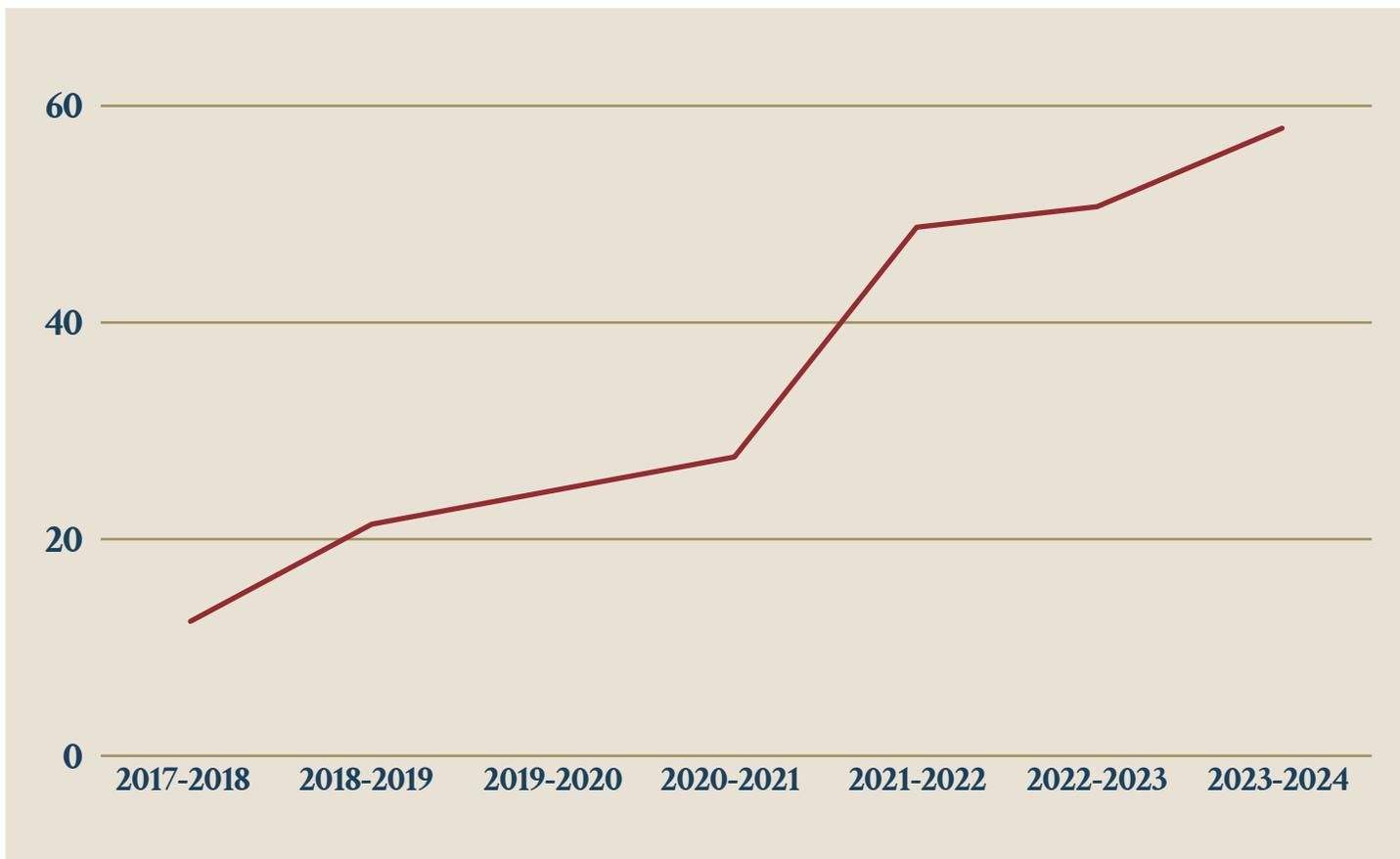
- *MSC student*

“I can confidently say when I first transferred to Martin Saints sophomore year I grew in so many aspects of my life. I was taught by teachers who encouraged us to ask deeper questions. I was included in this family-like atmosphere that I had never been exposed to at any other school. The 95 minute commute was worth it.”

- *MSC alumna*

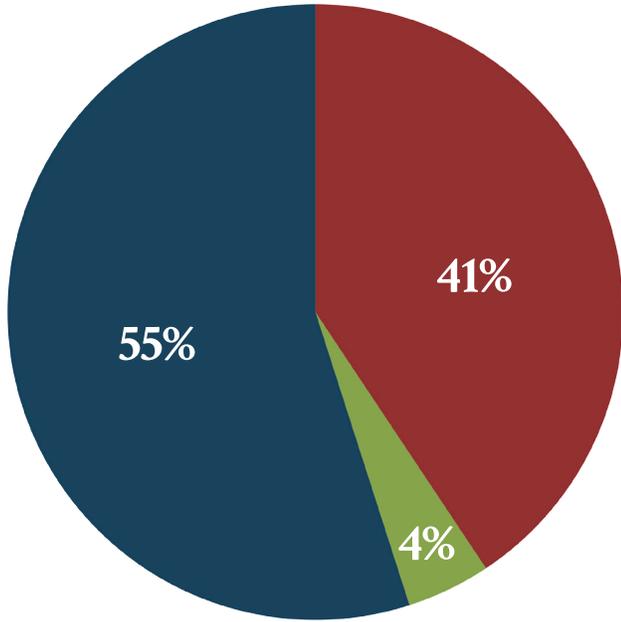


# ENROLLMENT TRENDS



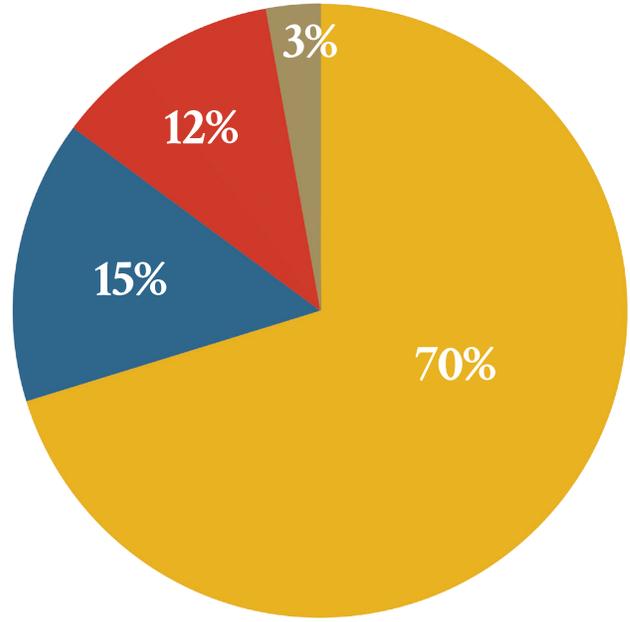
# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## Income \$1,461,345



- Tuition and Fees (gross)
- Named Scholarships and EITC
- Fundraisers and Donations

## Expenses \$1,371,100



- Education and Instruction
- Financial Aid
- Facilities and Operations
- Frassati Fridays and Camping





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