

## THE FAITH AND BASIS OF ST. TIMOTHY'S CLASSICAL ACADEMY

### **Preamble**

Believing that it is our duty and privilege to provide high-quality Christian and classical education for our children and believing that this can best be accomplished by concerted action, we do hereby make and adopt the following tenets.

### **Basis**

The basis of the Society is the Holy Scriptures as interpreted in the Nicene Creed from the 4th Century. This historic summary of the Church's faith is unique in its confession by Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Christians alike:

#### *The Nicene Creed*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.\* With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*\*Eastern and several other Christian churches recite the original form of the Creed and do not include "and the Son" in this sentence.*

### **Philosophy of Christian Education**

St. Timothy's aspires to be a community of educational excellence that strives to support families in raising children to realize the essential summons to "love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind," and to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27). As an ecumenical Christian initiative, we emphasize those truths that Christians have believed in for centuries, across boundaries of time, place, race, and culture, while leaving unique practices not common to all Christians to home and church. Through a classical curriculum, we engage a tradition of excellence in thought, word and deed, where students may grow in fullness of life to "reverence truth, desire goodness and rejoice in beauty; so that all may come to know and worship God, the giver of all that is good" (Collect from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer).

We assert that the best way to prepare children for life in the contemporary context is by following the classical approach to education, which derives from the medieval curriculum known as the Trivium or "three-fold way." Instruction in the Trivium involves equipping students with the essential tools of learning: the ability to retain facts easily, to think logically and to express ideas eloquently. Children educated in this way are best enabled to understand and engage the rich intellectual and artistic heritage which forms Canadian society. A St. Timothy's education applies the classical approach to learning English, French, and Latin; reading the great books; studying mathematics and the sciences; and growing in artistic and musical skill, and physical fitness.

Determined, therefore, for the sake of our children, our families and our society, to "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it" (Jer. 6:16) that we may "take every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," (II Cor. 10:5) we also affirm the following principles for Christian education:

As a Christian community we affirm the following principles for specifically Christian education:

**THE BIBLE.** The Holy Scriptures teach solidly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings for the sake of salvation: "All Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind."(II Tim. 3:16-17).

We acknowledge the Canon of Scripture held in common by all Christians, inclusive of 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament books. We respect further that the Catholic and Orthodox churches' canons differ from that of Protestants, the former having included from earliest times nine other books or parts of books, and the latter, several more, depending on the church. These texts, while not received as Scripture by all Christians, are nonetheless worthy at least of esteem as important Christian literature, given their historical and contemporary significance in several ancient churches.

**NATURE.** That in their education, children must come to learn that, "The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein." (Psalm 24:1) The cosmos and our relationship to it can rightly be appreciated only in relation to the Triune God who has created it, redeemed it and made it an effective sign of his glory, beauty and beneficent power. We in turn are called to be responsible stewards of creation, gratefully offering it back to God through our work and play, generously sharing the goods of the world with those in need, and creatively manifesting a respect for the earth that witnesses to our love for the God who made it out of love for us.

**THE HUMAN CONDITION.** That a primordial Fall has brought upon all people the curse of death, the inclination to do that which is evil, and the suffering of an impeded relationship with their Creator, their neighbour, and the world itself. Sin has distorted our view of the true meaning and purpose of life, and misdirected human culture, including the education of children. We are therefore all in need of God's grace to enable us to know the Truth which will set us free (John 8:32).

**JESUS CHRIST.** That through our Saviour Jesus Christ there is redemption and renewal of the educational enterprise since he himself is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). It is in his light that we see light (Psalm 36:9), and in turn all of human existence and experience in its proper perspective. Only in him, through the indwelling of his Spirit, are we re-oriented to the Father and enabled to live in such a way that his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**SCHOOLS.** That the purpose of the Christian school is to educate children for a life of faithfulness to their identity as image-bearers of God; that this identity implies knowledge of God's creation and revelation, appreciation of the course and content of humanity's striving to understand themselves and their world, and consecration of the whole of their talents and endeavours to the essential summons to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind," and, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

**PARENTS.** That the primary responsibility for education rests upon parents to whom children are entrusted by God. Parents should seek to fulfil this responsibility through school associations and school boards which will foster their children's growth in the virtues of prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, esteemed by all cultures, as well as in the theological virtues of faith, hope and love proper to the Gospel.

**TEACHERS.** That Christian teachers, both out of reverence for God and the service to neighbour, have the prerogative to co-operate with parents to "train up a child in the way he should go," that "when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). This prerogative, moreover, implies the solemn task of representing to students Christ the Teacher, the Rabbi who ever condescended to meet his disciples at their own level and yet lift them up to his. Teachers ought, therefore, to constantly pray to the Holy Spirit, that he himself teach them in the way they should go and guide them with his eye (Psalm 32:8).

**STUDENTS.** That St. Timothy's Classical Academy must compassionately take into account the variety of abilities and requirements of children, together with the inclination to sin, while ever seeking to lead them to fullness of life for which they have been created. Only by thus recognizing the high calling of children to take hold of God's "exceedingly great and precious promises," through which they "may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust," (II Peter 1:4) will Christian education express both wholeness and holiness.

**COMMUNITY.** That because God's plan for parents and their children implicates the ministry of the entire Church, and because Christian education contributes directly to the advancement of God's kingdom, it is the privilege not only of parents but of the Christian community at large to establish and maintain Christian schools, to pray for them, work for them, and give generously to their support.

**EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM.** That Christian schools, organized and administered in accordance with legitimate standards and provisions for day schools, should be fully recognized in society as free to function according to these above-mentioned principles.