



Eyes Toward Eternity

The Sramek's Choose to Refocus on Faith

Wes and I, Amelia, an alumnus of Bishop Baraga and Father Marquette, met in Seattle and have lived in various places. We moved to Marquette in 2020 and enrolled our sons, Max and Wilson, in FMCA, when our youngest was ready for the PreK Blue class. We were drawn to the school's small class sizes, individualized attention, and focus on faith formation.

One of the biggest joys we get by sending our boys to FMCA is seeing the excitement on their faces when they talk about any part of the school—what they learned each day, what the virtue of the month is, and how they or one of their friends showed that virtue, what they did on the playground or in music class or gym. They are genuinely happy to be at school. We love that we as parents are readily invited and encouraged to come into FMCA and participate in activities with our sons' classes. We

love that our boys feel like they are in an open and supportive learning environment where their teachers and classmates know them and help them grow. We ended up not baptizing the boys until this past July. Wilson came home one day in early first grade and said, "Why am I not baptized?" and of course, we had no answer. It was affirming to us to see what an impact Catholic teachings had on Maxwell and Wilson and how Wes and I have grown in our faith as we relearn Catholic teachings with Maxwell and Wilson.

We believe FMCA is a great choice for families because your family will be welcomed into the community, your children will be challenged academically and spiritually, and grow to be inquisitive and respectful. Max and Wilson are with their teachers the majority of their day and knowing that we can trust the FMCA teachers with the enormous responsibility of our children's education and spiritual and moral development to ensure they grow up as adults with a strong moral compass.

This made us want to contribute to the Teacher's Endowment Fund. We chose to do a monthly donation for the endowment because as the financial planners say if you put a small part of every paycheck aside toward your savings you don't realize it's gone but it adds up quickly. The amazing and dedicated staff at FMCA is what makes the school so great and we were excited to be able to support the fund for their salaries.



Join the Sramek's in supporting FMCA



Please meet Father Tom Merkel, Pastoral Delegate

Fr. Tom Merkel, a native of Iron Mountain, Michigan, has found his calling in the intersection of faith and education. His journey began with a childhood dream of becoming a garbage man, but it was his kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Covitz, who first suggested he might be well-suited for the priesthood.

Fr. Tom has been a dedicated member of the FMCA community, where he enjoys teaching theology and fostering a sense of faith and belonging. He fondly recalls the exhilarating volleyball match between the priests and teachers and the students last year (that he won).

Being part of the FMCA community has significantly impacted Fr. Tom's faith. He finds great hope for the future of the local churches in the enthusiasm and involvement of the young

families and children. He believes that FMCA plays a crucial role in supporting parents in their efforts to pass on the Catholic faith to their children.

Fr. Tom emphasizes the many benefits of FMCA, including its strong academic programs, welcoming community, and commitment to faith formation. "FMCA has great academics, it has great families to get to know, and most importantly FMCA helps hand on the faith of the Church. Please pray for our teachers, staff, and students that we can all grow closer to Christ!"



Father Marquette Catholic Academy

Only One Thing is Necessary

Newsletter | Fall 2024



Propelling Students into the Future

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION: CULTIVATING FAITH FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS



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Propelling Students into the Future

By Melissa Pillifant, Principal

At Father Marquette Catholic Academy, we help our students launch into a life of learning, thinking, serving, and leading! With everything we do centered on the person of Christ, our students go forth with a strong academic foundation that is built on the solid foundation of Christ and His Church. Catholic classical education is different because students are seen through the lens of who they are in God; everything is done with that in mind. Our students learn to listen to the words of Christ in Luke 5:4, “When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, ‘Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’” They know they can count on our Lord in everything, and that He provides in abundance. As it says in Isaiah 43:2, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you...” When our students leave here, they are propelled forward by a rigorous education and illuminated by the grace of God to do great things.

Melissa Pillifant



New Staff



A New Beginning: Finding Fulfillment

Hailey Anttila is enjoying her transition to FMCA as our 1st Grade teacher. She feels fulfilled and purposeful in her teaching role more than ever. Learning the curriculum and getting to know the students and families have been highlights of her time. She loves how connected and committed the families are at FMCA. The prayer intentions of the 1st graders, during their daily classroom prayers, is a special part of her day. She is delighted that “they ask to pray for themselves, their families, myself, and for each other.”



A Return to Faith

Joe Barry attended Bishop Baraga Central (which is now FMCA) when he was younger. He considered it a positive experience and jumped at the opportunity to work here as our middle school math teacher. He appreciates our staff and parents working hard to set high expectations. He enjoys weaving stories from the Bible into his instruction to illustrate how the narratives are similar to our present-day experiences. After teaching downstate for many years, teaching at FMCA affords him a way to more directly bring his faith experience into a learning environment.



The Maskart’s Witness to the “FMCA Advantage”

Hi, we are Matt and Tracy Maskart, parents of three children at various stages of their educational journeys. All three of our children attended Father Marquette Catholic Academy (FMCA) from Kindergarten onward. Claire, our eldest, is a senior at Marquette Senior High School; Owen is a freshman at the same school, and Garrett is currently in 7th grade at FMCA. Each of our children has experienced the unique benefits of FMCA, which has played a significant role in preparing them academically, spiritually, and socially for the next steps in their lives.

Claire, our senior, felt confident and well-prepared when she entered high school. FMCA gave her a strong academic foundation that allowed her to tackle challenging Advanced Placement courses from the start. Beyond academics, Claire has shared that the expectations and values instilled in her at FMCA has allowed her to take leadership initiatives at the high school.

Owen, as a freshman, is excelling in both academics and sports. His teachers at FMCA helped him develop a strong work ethic and a love for learning, which has carried over into his high school career. The smaller class sizes at FMCA allowed him to receive individualized



attention, and this helped Owen feel more confident in his abilities. He’s thriving academically, and on the sports field, he’s seen as a team player who leads by example. Owen is quick to point out how FMCA’s virtue program shaped his character. “The values we learned at FMCA have helped me stay focused and try to be a better person, even when things get tough.” Owen reflected.

Garrett is in 7th grade, and we continue to be impressed by the one-on-one support he receives from FMCA’s dedicated teachers. This personalized approach and the school’s nurturing environment allow him to grow at his own pace. FMCA’s classical education model and Catholic teachings have not only provided Garrett with social benefits but also given him the fortitude necessary to tackle learning challenges. He is already demonstrating a commitment to the Catholic values of kindness and compassion, which FMCA has consistently instilled in him.

When we ask our children what they remember most about FMCA, they all mention the close-knit community and the relationships they’ve built with teachers and peers. Claire reflects on her Father Marquette experience and concludes there is a “Father Marquette bond”, a sort of relationship that has only developed over years and years of learning together. The supportive atmosphere made learning enjoyable and reinforced the idea that they were part of something larger than themselves—a community that cares about their success in all aspects of life. Claire and Owen continue to communicate with past FMCA teachers, all who care about their academic successes in high school and beyond.

FMCA has left an indelible mark on our family. Over the years, we’ve watched our children grow into confident, capable, and faith-driven individuals, and we credit much of that to the foundation they received at FMCA. We are grateful for the role FMCA has played in their academic achievements, personal development, and spiritual growth, and we look forward to seeing how the school continues to shape the next generation.