



**F**ather Marquette Catholic Academy (FMCA) has a rich history, and its story is going strong. Here, we explore the school's growth and vibrant presence, guided by the insightful reflections of Monsignor Steber, who has witnessed its evolution firsthand.



### When did you start getting involved with the school?

I first got involved with Father Marquette Catholic Academy when I began my assignment as pastor of St. Peter Cathedral and St. Mary Mission in February of 2008. Bishop Sample met with me to discuss various areas of concern and goals to aim at for Father Marquette Catholic Academy. One of the general goals was to foster a clear Catholic identity at FMCA. We wanted a Catholic School that was truly Catholic in its teachings, teachers and staff, environment, liturgies, prayer, etc.

### How have you seen the school grow in current years?

I've seen FMCA grow in recent years with more unity and positive attitudes among staff, parents, and students –growing in fostering that Catholic Identity in all aspects of the school. Having the fine leadership of Principal Dr. Jessica Betz during her tenure was a blessing, and I trust that our current Principal, Melissa Pilifant, will pick up from that lead and bring her own gifts and leadership.

### What are your hopes for the future of the school?

I hope that FMCA will continue fostering an environment of vibrant, living Catholic faith with a solid classical curriculum for growth in virtues, finding the Lord in His truth, beauty, and goodness. As we say, recognizing that “one thing is necessary” –finding and following the Lord Jesus.

### If you were to share with a potential family why they should attend FMCA, what would you say?

I would just invite a potential family to consider how their children can benefit from an environment in which they will grow in knowing the Lord, knowing who they are, growing in truth, goodness, and beauty, developing their gifts with academic excellence, and also growing in virtue and as disciples of Christ to serve others in joy and true freedom.



Where Potential Takes Root  
BUILDING THE FOUNDATION FOR A SUCCESSFUL AND FULFILLING LIFE



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Living Waters of Faith:  
The Flourishing Spirit of FMCA

By Melissa Pillifant, Principal

Scripture tells us in Psalm 1:3 that a person who delights in our Lord is “like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” It is clear walking through the halls of Father Marquette Catholic Academy this Spring that our Lord is present—He is the source of that living water! There is a joy that radiates from our students and staff showing that our school is full of life and is prospering! FMCA is centered on the person of Jesus Christ—we delight in Him—which makes our mission different! Our work this year has helped our students grow and thrive in all areas of their lives, and for this, we are so very grateful!

Melissa Pillifant



St. Paul’s missionary journeys. Each week leading up to the event we gathered once a week to cover different study topics with the help of Fr. Matthew Chartier.

The day of the Religion Bee, the students were excited and nervous. We gathered at Holy Name Catholic High School in Escanaba and the competition began. It was clear the other teams were well prepared based on the number of questions answered correctly but Father Marquette stood their ground. The event started with a group competition where each team was asked a question and if answered correctly, earned a point. If the team answered incorrectly all other teams had a chance to steal that point. After the group competition, is the individual where the students are led to a classroom and take a multiple-choice written test to assess their individual knowledge. The top three scores from each team are added cumulatively and among those scores, each question answered correctly earned the team 0.25 points.

In the end, the Father Marquette Eagles 5/6 grade team took home the first-place trophy! Congratulations to Lucia Valenzuela, Giovanni Scibelli, Charlee Schlicht, Matthew McKnight, Ryan Henning, and all the students who participated! As their teacher, I am very proud of the hard work and dedication these students put in to achieve this award and we had a lot of fun doing it!

Matthew McKnight



The Religion Bee made me more excited to learn more about the faith because every evening at my house, my family got together and we quizzed each other on the questions and it was very fun. I also enjoyed Fridays when we practiced after school in Miss Paling’s room. Everyone in the religion bee got together including Fr. Matthew. Fr. Matthew and Miss Paling are amazing religion teachers. I thank them very much for teaching me. The Religion Bee was fun because I knew that there would be more kids my age who knew about the faith. We got to experience the Holy Name High School and that was amazing, too. I would encourage anyone who has the chance to do this sort of opportunity to join it.

Jessica Paling

The Religion Bee is similar to any quiz bowl event but based on knowledge of the Catholic faith! To participate, the students had to take a preliminary test to qualify for one of the teams. Father Marquette had two 5th/6th grade teams and one 7th/8th grade team. After making it onto a team, the students were given study materials consisting of over 200 questions and answers, specific study topics such as the virtues and events of the life of Christ, and studied maps of

