



TRUTH IN THE STATE OF TRANSMISSION

The Soul of Education



The 2023 Chesterton Schools Network Summit

[**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In our last issue, we reported on the annual Chesterton Conference, but we waited till this issue to talk about the conference before the conference: The amazing CSN Summit. About 300 people from over 50 schools gathered for three days of talks and seminars and workshops. And now we will hear from some of those who attended.]

AS A NEW headmaster, and as one new to the Chesterton Schools Network entirely, there were numerous things that I thought needed to be done or led in certain ways that would be ideal for the flourishing of the school. I hadn't, however, heard the network talk about such things in the lead-up to the conference or in any of the preparations I was given by the board. I knew not if I should talk about these ideas or just get on with them as obvious points of improvement or even just to forget about them as too *avant garde* (or more aptly: outdated!). To my astonishment, not only did I hear these same ideas from other member schools, but these ideas were themselves being preached from the pulpit by the network representatives. It sure filled me with joy to know that Chesterton Academies are truly on the same page.

JEREMY DUO

Headmaster, Chesterton Academy of Fort Worth

I EXPERIENCED the sheer quiet power (there's a Chesterton paradox for you) occurring behind the scenes of all the schools. Chesterton quipped that the last great act of rebellion was to be Orthodox, and that "there never was anything so perilous or so exciting as orthodoxy." I excitedly felt like a thief in the night, a soldier strategizing with his troops in the war against Modernism, not using the modern educational guns of sparkles and vogue untried methods, but with the quiet but penetrating sword of orthodoxy.

ZACH SUMMERS

Headmaster, Chesterton Academy of St. Margaret Clitherow Knoxville, Tennessee

OUR ACADEMY began six years ago in Mount Angel, a small rural town in Oregon. We have 55 students this year, and the appeal of the school draws families from about a fifty-mile radius. My experience with this school has shown me that there is something special about the Chesterton Academy, but it was only through the conference that I truly discovered what I was a part of. Chesterton is not just a school, it is a movement. More than that, it is an educational revolution, and one I believe is being led by the Holy Spirit.

I have read (in awe) stories about saints who founded multiple schools or orphanages or hospitals, wondering how they could do so much so quickly, only to realize that it is singularly the Spirit who can move so swiftly through the heart of the Church. Looking around at the hundreds of other Chestertonians at the conference, I realized for the first time that I was not just reading about some movement of the Spirit from the past but was part of that movement right now. My advice to any reader considering founding a Chesterton Academy near you? Join the revolution.

DR. RYAN MAINARD

Board President,
Chesterton Academy
of the Willamette Valley

MY OBSERVATIONS from the CSN Summit? Three things: the remarkable growth of the network and (as a consequence) the conference; the commitment to mission; and the joy among all who attended. What an honor it was to be part of the conference!

DR. PAMELA PATNODE

Program Director for Certificate
in Catholic School Leadership,
The Saint Paul Seminary

THIS WASN'T just a bunch of people looking for a networking opportunity. This was an array of various, brilliant minds who wanted to connect their fields of knowledge to the ultimate point of learning: the discovery and worship of the Truth, Who loves us and gave His life for us. The conference was packed with prayer and study, and many hours well into the night were nourished with deep discussions of theology. It was a magnificent experience.

JACK RYAN

Faculty, Chesterton
Academy of Saint Louis

Fr. Joseph Johnson, CSN Chaplain, offers a meditation on forming the souls of students.

IT WAS ASTONISHING really, and yet what would I have expected from a group who follows the example of G.K. Chesterton?

LISA WILLIAMS

Founding Board Member, Stella Maris
Chesterton Academy
San Clemente, California

THE ANNUAL SUMMIT – just like the CSN curriculum itself – can only be described as a journey of the mind and soul. The seminars delved into the various facets of Chesterton Classical Education. The conference compelled those present to reflect on life and literature. The Chesterton schools are quietly reclaiming the hearts of educators and education and planting the seeds of Beauty, Truth, Goodness, and Hope. We journey through centuries of thought, leading us here and now today. We are faced with a choice: what legacy will we leave behind us as we journey through our brief life?

IVANA QUADRELLI

Faculty, Chesterton Academy of St. Joseph
Dayton, Ohio





WHO WOULD voluntarily take a week out of their summer vacation and willingly sign themselves up for an indoor academic conference? Who in their right mind would do such a thing? Well, I would, and in fact, I did do such a thing – alongside numerous other faculty and staff of various Chesterton Academies across the country. Attending the CSN Summit as a first-timer, I came into the conference week expecting to leave logistically informed and prepared (which, thankfully, I was); but I also left having been inspired, fueled, and ready to embark upon the exciting adventure of the year ahead!

ANNA REGNIER

Faculty, Chesterton Academy
of the St. Croix Valley
Stillwater, Minnesota

THE MASSES and the gathering of people of faith confirmed and reinforced my vocation as a teacher at Chesterton Academy of Sacramento. Also, I was impressed by the dedication and professionalism of the different network schools. The whole venture, the food, and individual breakout sessions were well planned and well done.

JEFFREY E. SCUDDER

Faculty, Chesterton Academy of Sacramento

FOR MY TEAM, the CSN Summit brought immense encouragement and clarity of purpose. Even more than the practical takeaways, from resources and connections to colleagues around the country, the power of the reverent daily Mass, paired with plenary talks on themes that hit close to home, brought into focus for us all what matters the most. All who attended came away with a stronger shared sense of purpose, and for myself, a greater urgency to bring the full faculty along in future years.

THOMAS THOITS

Headmaster, Chesterton
Academy of Annapolis

◀ *Dr. Joshua Russell
(center) gathers a ring
of school leaders.*

FAITH, FRIENDSHIP, and formation all in a few days! I have attended the Chesterton Schools Network Summit for the last 5 years and look forward to the upcoming year. Our staff, faculty, and board enjoy fellowship with old friends, making new ones and – best part – face challenges together, share lessons

*Greg Billion runs a
Socratic seminar on
Plato's Republic.*



learned, and enjoy each school's success! Attending this conference is a must for everyone involved with Chesterton Schools.

AZIN CLEARY

Co-Founder and Executive Director,
Chesterton Academy of Annapolis

FOR ME, the Chesterton Conference was an “Ephphatha” experience. Just like the Lord “opened up” the ears of the deaf man, the Conference opened me up to how best to bring the Lord to all my students in all the disciplines I teach.

JOSE LUCAS BADUE

Faculty, Chesterton Academy of Annapolis

THE JOY and levity of Chesterton came through in a big way. I left wanting to return with our entire faculty next year. There will be something for everyone.

ADAM DICKERSON

Headmaster, Martin Saints
Classical High School
Oreland, Pennsylvania

AS A FIRST-TIME attendee working to open a Chesterton Academy in August of 2024, and a lifelong Catholic, I have never been part of a conference where everyone I came in contact with was so incredibly



Patrick Lechner is a fountain of wisdom in discussing how to teach literature.

excited, joyful, and a true, intentional disciple of Jesus Christ. It was incredibly beautiful and edifying to witness and left me energized, humbled, and hopeful for the future of our beautiful and universal Church!

ERIKA HAYES

Board Chair, Chesterton
Academy of St. Joan of Arc
Muncie, Indiana

THIS YEAR'S CSN Summit exceeded all expectations, from insights shared by keynote speakers to updates and unveilings of new and enhanced resources cultivated by the Chesterton Schools Network. Adding to this were the strategic break out sessions, where the Summit organizers miraculously pivoted to add extra hours in the day to include ‘part two’ sessions (at the request of many!) so as to continue the discussions and future planning. Round it out with incredible networking opportunities, meals, and evening socials shared in deep, forward-thinking discussions and laughs with fellow leaders, educators, and boards. This could not have been achieved without the Holy Spirit.

◀ *Laura Ahlquist
inspires the
drama circle.*

ASHLEY MCBRIDE TAYLOR

Board Chair, Chesterton Academy
of St. Benedict Columbus, Ohio