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St. Theophan the Recluse



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Dear Faithful of Holy Cross,

In the words above St. Theophan simply explains the Church’s view of education: It is a most Holy Work! Throughout the centuries it has been the Church that has shaped the educational environment for the people of God. This realization has been the motivation for the establishment of St. John of Kronstadt Orthodox School within our parish life. As a pastor I would like to see every child in our parish enrolled in the school. Our Parish Council is united in our commitment to help in any way possible to make that financially feasible for every family. We want every child to have such an educational opportunity regardless of financial ability.

I do not think there is a more pressing issue for our families than the educational environment of their children. Especially in our time it is critical. Please take the time to read the rest of St. Theophan’s statement on education below. Then would you please, prayerfully consider enrolling your child in this most holy work?

St. Theophan on Education:

“Let instruction be so arranged that it will be evident what is the main point and what is secondary. This idea is easiest to imprint through a division of the objects of study and the time for them. **Let the study of faith be considered the chief thing. Let the best time be assigned to works of piety, and in case of conflict let them take the first place over learning.** Let approval be given not only for success in learning, but likewise for faith and good behavior. **In general, one must**

so dispose the mind of pupils that they do not lose the conviction that our chief work is the pleasing of God and that learning is a secondary quality, something incidental, which is good only during the present life. This is why it should not at all be placed so high and in such an attractive form that it will occupy all one's attention and absorb all one's concern. ***There is nothing more poisonous or ruinous for the spirit of Christian life than such learning and an exclusive concern for it.*** It casts one straight into coldness and then can keep one forever in it, and sometimes it also adds to this, immoral life, if there are conditions which are favorable for this."

"The second thing to which attention should be given is the spirit of the instruction or of the attitude towards the objects of study. ***It should be placed as an unfailing law that every kind of learning which is taught to a Christian should be penetrated with Christian principles and, more precisely, Orthodox ones.*** Every branch of learning is capable of this approach, and it will be a true kind of learning only when this condition is fulfilled. Christian principles are true beyond doubt. Therefore, without any doubting, make them the general measuring stick of truth. ***It is a most dangerous error among us that subjects of learning are taught without attention to the true faith; one allows oneself freethinking and even lying under the supposition that faith and learning are two spheres which are quite distinct.***"

From *The Path to Salvation* by St. Theophan the Recluse

May God help us and save us and our children.

With love in Christ,

forgive,

Fr. Joseph+

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