



# St. Mary's Academy

ST. ALBANS, VERMONT

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Why are you opening this school?**

*We wish to offer children a high-quality education in a safe, Christ-centered atmosphere that respects Christian values and honors the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Further, we hope that by helping educate a new generation of Christians to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16), we will strengthen our parishes and help rebuild Christian culture in the larger community. We have been greatly encouraged by the response to our Winter 2023 survey, which indicates a very solid base of families in our community who are eager for such a school.*

### **What is the Mission of St. Mary's Academy?**

*We believe that "the soul of education is the education of the soul" (Pope Pius XI). Our goal is to educate children in the truest and fullest sense by giving them tools of learning needed to read, write, speak and think well, and by fostering wonder and love for all that is genuinely true, good, and beautiful, so that they might understand themselves and their world in the light of the truth and acquire the character to live happy and integrated lives in the service of God and others.*

### **How many grades will you have?**

*We will start with Grades K-4 and grow annually until we become a full K-8 school.*

### **What kind of curriculum will be offered?**

*We will use a classical curriculum, based on the traditional concept of a liberal arts education. Our primary curriculum provider will be [Memoria Press](#).*

### **What is a Classical Curriculum?**

*Classical education depends on a three-part process of training the mind known as the "trivium," a time-honored model which makes use of the developmental stages of the child. In this model, teachers help children to see all subjects as part of the human story, from language to mathematics, history to science. The focus is not simply on conveying information, but also on cultivating each child's intellectual faculties, including the ability to observe, to listen, to remember, to make connections, to speculate, to calculate, to persuade and to love that which is worthy of loving. Our core curriculum will include language arts, history, science, math, Latin, and religion. Our enrichment curriculum will include art, choral music, instrumental music, P.E. and French.*

### **Are you accredited?**

*We will be affiliated with the [Institute for Catholic Liberal Education](#) and [the Classical Latin School Association](#). We can seek accreditation once we are fully functioning.*

### **Where will the school be?**

*We will be at 36 Fairfield Street, across the street from St. Mary's Church.*

### **What is your expected enrollment?**

*Our target is to start the first year with 40-60 children in grades K-4. Our recent survey indicates this is a realistic target. Our target class size per grade is 16-18.*

### **When will you begin enrolling students?**

*We will roll out the early admissions process in early 2024.*

### **What will tuition be?**

*Tuition in year one will be \$9300*

### **Will there be discounts for multiple children from a family?**

*Yes! Second and subsequent children in a family will receive a 10% discount.*

**What about financial aid?**

*Our long term goal is to create a tuition assistance and scholarship fund that will allow us to maintain the financial sustainability of the school while also striving to ensure St. Mary's Academy is within reach for all those eligible students and families who embrace our classical, Catholic mission and model. We expect to use a third-party system to determine financial aid eligibility.*

**Will children wear uniforms?**

*Yes.*

**What will the schedule be?**

*The school day will start at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. for grades K-4. Details are still being worked out.*

**Will there be before/after school daycare?**

*This is not currently being considered. However, we are open to working with parents to make the building available for an earlier drop-off time in the morning to help accommodate parents' work schedules if a workable parent co-op plan is proposed. At this time such a plan would be at the initiative of parents and the discretion of the school administration.*

**What about special-needs students?**

*Having a mild learning difference does not automatically disqualify a student from attending St. Mary's Academy. However our school is not currently equipped to support children who need IEPs for highly specialized academic or behavioral management needs. Questions about who might or might not fall under this umbrella will be dealt with sensitively and thoughtfully during the admissions process.*

**Will religious education be part of the curriculum?**

*Yes. Our curriculum is steeped in Christian principles, with Jesus Christ and the Gospel at the center of all we do. In addition, there will be daily lessons focused on Catholic catechetical instruction at each grade level.*

**Will you accept non-Catholics at your school?**

*Yes. We wouldn't be Catholics if didn't open our doors to people of all faiths or even no faith. The Catholic faith is central to the identity of the school and all students must attend weekly rosary and Mass, as well as participate in daily prayer moments and the theology curriculum. However, our philosophy is one of exposure to the faith, rather than one of imposition of the faith.*

**Is St. Mary's Academy affiliated with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington?**

*As you may know, Diocese is currently without a Bishop, so according to Canon Law, we will have to wait until a new Bishop is named to request formal affiliation with the Diocese as a Catholic School. However, we have shared our plans with the current leadership and have every reason to expect full support when that time comes.*

**I am interested in a teaching position. Are you hiring?**

*We expect to initiate a formal staff search in early Spring 2024, but feel free to [reach out to us](#) for more information.*

**Who is behind this effort?**

*St. Mary's Academy is a private, nonprofit school which will open as a recognized independent school in the State of Vermont. Steering Committee: Fr. Christopher Micale, Pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish; Caroline Leahy, Chair; Frank Calano; Tom Dowhan; Carrie Handy; Paula Johnson; Heather Smith, Sharon Trani. A number of additional volunteers participate on our Curriculum, Finance, Building, Budget and Fundraising Committees as well. This is truly a community effort!*

**How can I help?**

*We need volunteers! Please email us at [forthechildrenstalbans@gmail.com](mailto:forthechildrenstalbans@gmail.com) for a link to [our Sign+up Page](#) and we'll share a list of volunteer opportunities!*

*We also need donations to help us get up and running, and to supplement tuition income in order to meet our budget until we can become self-sustaining. Contact us via email for more information about our fundraising campaign.*

**Do you have a website?**

*Our website is still under construction, but be sure to mark this page: <https://stmarysacademyvt.org/>*

**Updated 11/13/23**