



The ACADEMY of Classical Christian Studies

Dear Academy Families,

I was reminded this week of a verse from Holy Scripture as offered from my own Presiding Bishop, in remarks given on behalf of the 25th anniversary of the Murrah Bombing:

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, ***for love is strong as death***, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, ***the very flame of the Lord***.

That passage is lifted from Song of Solomon chapter 8, and it comes to mind now because of my experience of love in this community over the last eight weeks. I have a front-row seat to charity, charity, charity (the older word for Christian love). I have observed Academy families quietly and anonymously covering the tuition payments of other families who've been suddenly left jobless. I have observed teachers throwing Zoom parties for their students and going above and beyond the call of duty as otherwise prescribed by their principals. I have watched with wonder at unannounced 'porch drops' of food, gifts, books, and surprises from one family to another to encourage the spirits of those figuring out week 5 of quarantine. I've had email after email from parents offering their prayers and support as we enter yet another week of unprecedented unknowns and clinging only to the grace of God. The spirit of unity that has come over this sacred trust (otherwise known as a school) is a testament to the glorious movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Thanks be to God. Can you imagine educating your students towards all that is True, Good, and Beautiful with any other group of people? Your love, dear friends, is ***the very flame of the Lord***.

Let me transition to the concerns at hand. Your students have transitioned to a way of education previously unknown to them with grace upon grace. We are proud of you. We are proud of your students. They have done SO WELL. To that end, we want to cut them a break. Let's end school on May 15th, rather than require those final three days from them: May 18, 19, and 20. Our Teachers are working with Principals and Chairs even now to finish well, finish strong, but finish in a reasonable way—with finals and all the rest being carefully and appropriately adjusted. Our snow days more than accommodate this edit.

With only two weeks, then, beyond our already announced GriffinsLive! end-date of May 1st, let's go ahead and extend that to the 15th for the safety and security of our families and students. To say it again: ***GriffinsLive! will continue through the last day of school on May 15th***. God bless our teachers, professors, parents, and students for maintaining a rich spirit of inquiry, festivity, and grace through all of the adjustments and iterations of this new model. We plan to schedule some kind of voluntary summer gathering for all parents and students this summer if/when the Shelter in Place guidelines are lifted. We would love to see everyone!!

As you've no doubt wondered, our board and administration have long since begun planning every possible contingency for next year. With epidemiologists now speculating every conceivable viral outcome in the coming months, it is wise that we all consider the possibility of a (temporary) return to *GriffinsLive!* at some point next school year, in keeping with any Shelter in Place restrictions once again being enacted. Some say it

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will not happen. Others say it will happen for 4-6 weeks. Only God knows. Regardless, we are doing a full audit of the *GriffinsLive!* experience, ensuring that any future iteration would benefit from the very best technology platforms, booklists, and blueprints. We also recognize that financial concerns are on the minds of many, and so we are carefully reviewing the appropriate and equitable tuition levels for any of several different scenarios.

Beginning your prayerful patience once again, we request it only for the greater good of every student. We make better decisions as we understand more fully the decisions of our governmental authorities to whom we are beholden. We seek your good, and the good of your students. Our mission is unchanged, our delivery slightly altered, and our faith unswerving.

May God surround you with a peace that the world could never have given,

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