

## From the Desk of Miss Wilber

October 30, 2020

As we approach the end of October and the end of the first quarter, I find myself amazed at how much learning we have done in these two months. I am in the process of collecting our monthly classroom updates from the teachers, which you will all have the pleasure of reading in our monthly newsletter next week. Seeing their summaries and writing my own has drawn my attention to how productive and wonder-filled the start of our school year has been.

I think both teachers and students came back from our stint of remote learning with a deeper hunger for knowledge and greater commitment to achievement and success. I hear conversations happening about many of my favorite books; *My Father's Dragon*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Hobbit*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, the *Gospel of Matthew*, C.S. Lewis' *Great Divorce*, Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*, as well as books I have not yet had the pleasure of reading; *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, *Metamorphoses*, *Hamlet*, Dante's *Inferno*. The students are picking up speed in their math classes, producing colorful creative artwork for the walls of our school building, and exploring with their senses and their minds the awesomeness of the celestial sphere (the great dome of the sky) in science class.

For science this year the whole school is covering topics within the categories of earth science and astronomy. It's very special to have students of all ages studying the same information and ideas. In my science classes we recently learned the terms celestial (from Latin "caelus" meaning "the heavens") and terrestrial (from Latin "terra" meaning "earth"). Thanks to their Latin studies, they were able to determine the meanings of these words themselves. Celestial is a term referring to things of the heavens, of the sky. Terrestrial is a term referring to things of earth. Sometimes these terms are used to refer to the things above and the things below. Ancient astronomers saw the celestial as above, beyond, higher. They were in awe of the objects in the sky and their motions. They believed there were profound truths there that were bigger and more important than the truths that could be found here on Earth.

One of the amazing consequences of the Copernican discovery that the Earth is not the center of the universe but rather an object like the wandering stars (the planets) which revolve around the Sun instead is that it means the Earth is not in a lower place, beneath all that is in the sky. No, the Earth's place is among the celestial objects instead. In fact, it has a *special* place among them: Earth sustains life. Life – a powerful word to reflect on and bring to prayer, especially in the coming week as we celebrate the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls (Sunday and Monday) and cast votes on Tuesday.

Inspired by this overarching school science exploration, we had the students turn many of our hallway ceiling tiles into visuals of the constellations. When you walk down the main hallway, you can see over 20 different constellations above you. While admiring them a few days ago, I realized the parents may not even know about this yet (since you are not entering the school building as in the past). I have included some pictures for you to see for yourselves. Enjoy!

Sincerely,  
Miss Wilber

*“The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”  
Psalm 19:1*