

## From the Desk of Miss Wilber

February 5, 2021

We are officially over halfway through the school year. In my science classes, that means moving away from our astronomy study to a more focused study of the Earth itself. While I am looking forward to all we still get to learn this year, I am sad to conclude our astronomy-focused portion of the year. Astronomy is one of the seven main classical subjects; grammar, logic, rhetoric (the trivium) and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (the quadrivium). I realize that astronomy is on the list of classical subjects, because it is a truly human activity. Humans look to the heavens.

We look up and desire to know and understand the sky above us. This in and of itself distinguishes us from animals, but it goes beyond that. This astronomical wonder points to a general sense of wonder in us, a desire to know and understand that which is “above” and “beyond” us. It is our desire to understand the world in which we live and our place in it. It is the “why am I here?” we all find our hearts craving to know.

I have had the pleasure to spend much of my time in the past several months on the human activity of astronomy in particular, but the rest of the classical subjects are just as human. Grammar and arithmetic show how humans work to fit things together in an ordered way. Logic, rhetoric, and geometry show how humans work to make sense of things and use facts and reason to establish new facts that we can depend on. Music shows how humans use number and order to create beauty. All these elements reveal why so many parents around the country are choosing a classical education for their children.

Last week we celebrated this choice during National School Choice Week. This year our theme for the week was “The Importance and Joy of Reading Great Books”. I think that the value of great books is further evidence of our natural search for knowledge and understanding, for meaning in our human existence, for the source of objective truth beyond our own emotions and opinions. Great works of history seek to learn from the past for the sake of a better future. Great works of literature seek to tell timeless stories that resonate with people through the ages because of the deeper realities contained within them. Great works of philosophy seek to use human reason to form logical arguments that teach us what is true and what is not. Through the truth and beauty found in these great books, we help them to be free to live truly human lives. “*Libertas per veritatem et pulchritudinem*” (“*freedom through truth and beauty*”), as our school motto asserts.

It is at this point in the year that we look ahead to the upcoming school year. We ask the current faculty members and families whether they plan to return for next year. We promote the school in the hopes of welcoming new families to our community. With this on my mind, I realize how much I believe in classical education and in our school specifically. Our curriculum is rich in content and purpose. Our faculty is highly qualified and self-giving individuals. Our students are great young people that inspire hope for the future. Our work here is challenging but so important. If you agree, please help us to spread the word about the value of classical education and the opportunity for students today to experience it at New England Classical Academy here in Claremont, NH.

Sincerely,  
Miss Wilber