



# IMMACULATE HEART CENTRAL SCHOOL

Published on *Immaculate Heart Central* (<https://www.ihcschool.org>)

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## Mission, Belief, Vision <sup>[1]</sup>

### Mission

*IHC is a faith community whose mission is to  
provide a quality Catholic and secular education,  
to cultivate holiness based on the love and imitation of Christ,  
and to form responsible citizens whose Christian values will transform the world.*



## **Vision**

*To be a premier Pre-Kindergarten to 12th-grade Catholic school system, welcome to all, which provides a unique educational alternative to the families of Greater Watertown, and which fosters academic excellence, Christian virtues, leadership, and a lifelong commitment to family, community, country, and God.*



# Beliefs

## **We believe that God is in all things.**

*As Catholics, we have a sacramental worldview. Sacramentals are visible signs of God's invisible presence in the world. We see God - and respond to God - through ordinary life; through the world and the people in it. We believe that God mediates Himself to us and we encounter God's presence and grace coming to meet us through the ordinary of life, through our minds and bodies, through our works and efforts, in the depth of our own being and through our relationships with others, through the events and experiences that come our way, through all forms of human art and creativity, through nature and the whole created order, through everything and anything of human life (Thomas Groome). Because God is in all things - including every corner of the world, every person living and dead, every bit of history, every cellular organism, every poem, every figure of speech in a foreign language - the more we learn about the world and the people in it, the more we learn about God. Indeed, the more we learn, the closer we grow to God, and so we value education as a way to draw closer to God. As a result of this belief in finding God in all things, we come to see the process of education not merely as the accumulation of cognitive skills and knowledge, but rather as an integral part of our salvation journey itself. Because we believe God is in all things, we believe education is a process of sanctification.*

## **We believe that we are created in the image of God with unique gifts**

*Everyone is uniquely made in God's image and likeness and is endowed with gifts and talents that no one else has. Every single human being, no matter how much the image of God is marred by sin, or illness, or weakness, or age, or any other disability, still has the status of being in God's image and therefore must be treated with the dignity and respect that is due to God's image-bearer. This has profound implications for our conduct toward others. It means that people of every race deserve equal dignity and rights. It means that elderly people and children yet born deserve full protection and honor as human beings. We are called to develop our gifts and talents in ourselves and in one another, never to waste them. Jesus' parable of the talents is justification for this belief. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will grow rich; but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away (Matthew 25:29). Students at Immaculate Heart Central look to honor God's gifts by excelling, to the best of their ability, in academics, arts, athletics, service, charity, prayer, or anything else God calls them to do.*

## **We believe that we love the God we cannot see by loving the neighbor we can**

*God made us not in isolation but for each other in community. Our creation story tells us that one person alone is not good; only when God created a partner for the first human did God look upon what He had wrought and deem it good. We are made for each other, and in the Gospel, the Lord, in the person of Jesus Christ, articulates this truth when He shares the greatest commandment - that our purpose in life is to love one another as He has loved us.*

*Not only are we made for each other, but we see in one another the hand of God at work. We see the presence of the Lord, the love of Jesus Christ at work in our lives through each other. If we believe that we are all made by God, then every person we encounter is shot through with God's goodness. We must, therefore, treat every individual with the dignity and respect that we would accord the Lord himself. As educators, we must assume that every child we teach comes to us wholly good and from God. Every child we form is capable of tremendous growth and change. Each of us is capable of absolute excellence. If God is in us, we are capable of greatness. Because we believe that each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, we see each of our failings as a reflection of the Paschal Mystery, and we embrace opportunities to fall so that we might rise up and overcome challenges.*

## **We believe that excellence happens on purpose**

*Immaculate Heart Central did not spring up overnight, nor was it brought forth by accident. It was due to the belief, persistence, and hard work of the Sisters of St. Joseph dating back to the 1880s, as well as many other priests, religious, and laypersons whose intentional work made IHC what it is today. We believe that our common language, common root beliefs, a shared sense of purpose, a core set of values, and a clear handbook of operating norms that are aligned with beliefs move IHC a little closer toward accomplishing its mission. Excellence happens, not because of chance or by simply showing up, but because people, supported by the grace of God, have intentionally willed it into existence. In light of the Paschal Mystery, we see obstacles as opportunities, as aids and effects of the gentle and loving Providence of God.*

*Sometimes success does happen by accident, but it cannot be sustained that way. Because we believe excellence happens on purpose, we persist through tough times, and we do ordinary things extraordinarily well, not for our glory, but for the glory of God.*

## **We believe that we are always learning**

*In Matthew's gospel (22:37), Jesus says the greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. One cannot know more about God without loving Him more. In other words, when someone discovers a truth about God, the only reaction is to love Him more. While we can never fully wrap our minds around who God is, we welcome the mysteries of God, for:*

*?A Mystery, in short, is an invitation to the mind. For it means that there is an inexhaustible well of Truth from which the mind may drink and drink again in the certainty that the well will never run dry, that there will always be water for the mind's thirst.? (Frank Sheed).*

*Every person, created in God's image and likeness, is capable of learning in his or her own unique way. It is our challenge to continuously learn not only who God is but also the wonder of his creation. It is our challenge to foster in every person a desire to come to know God more, his revelation in creation, and his presence in salvation history, a challenge that will only end when we see God face to face. Until that time, we recognize that it is incumbent upon us to understand that we are always in the process of learning.*







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