



The **ACES** Club

Our Monthly Newsletter: August 2023

President's Report

Dear friends and subscribers,

Welcome to the August edition of the ACES newsletter!

I would firstly like to begin by thanking Dr Kevin Donnelly from the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne for organising the second seminar dedicated to the advancement of classical education in Australia. Building on from the first seminar that was held in Melbourne last year, the venue chosen for this year's seminar was Campion College in Sydney. Parents, teachers, academics and educationalists from across Australia discussed both the opportunities and challenges that are faced in establishing classical schools. A few members of the ACES Executive Committee were also in attendance. Dr Donnelly has kindly shared with ACES a link to all the recordings. I strongly encourage each of you to watch and listen to these sessions. The link to the seminar can be found [here](#).



ACES enthusiastically supports these types of seminars and is hopeful that in the coming years overseas experts and leaders in classical education, particularly from America, can also attend and speak to large audiences. We remain optimistic that in 2024 international experts will visit our shores and further inspire us all to continue with our noble work and new projects! Such continued dialogue encourages us that the groundswell for classical learning is growing in Australia, as well as providing

significant opportunities for exchanging ideas, developing networks, and developing skills and knowledge.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate the important work that is being conducted by *Via Classica*, which is an Australian organisation committed to supporting parents who wish to classically home-school their children. More recently they have launched their second book in the Australian Progymnasmata series and also their new Australian history series. Elizabeth Matheson and her team are doing extraordinary work in the vital area of curriculum development and are expanding the number of home-schooling subjects online. For further information regarding these new resources, please visit their [website](#).

I am also very proud to announce that ACES, in association with Adrienne Freas from *Beautiful Teaching* in the US, will be launching our first online book club. The book that will be studied and has been mentioned in previous newsletters is called "Awakening Wonder: A Classical Guide to Truth, Goodness and Beauty" written by Stephen Turly. Adrienne, who has run some excellent professional development for Australian teachers and parents, will be leading this book club. Sarah Flynn O'Dea from *Logos Australis* is offering a 20% discount to anyone who wishes to purchase this book from her online store. There is a cap of 20 participants and places are filling quite quickly. To register, please email ACES, and to purchase book at a discounted price please visit [Logos Australis](#). The promo code to enter at checkout is: **awakewon1**. Please note that there are currently limited copies of this book available, however, more copies are on the way and will be arriving some time this month. A link to the online book club will be sent early in October to those who register, so there is plenty of time to purchase and read this excellent book. Provisional dates for book club are 14 and 28 October from 9:00am till 10:30am (AEDT).

ACES will be offering another immersion course in conjunction with *Beautiful Teaching* on 7 October 7. It is called "Teaching History Classically". The presenter will be Mark Signorelli, who presently serves as Headmaster at *Lumen Gentium Academy* and writes at his own site called [The Classical Corner](#). During the session, Mark will discuss the importance of storytelling in the presentation of historical content and all participants will complete a history lesson together. The cost is only \$30. Please email ACES to register for this course.

The ACES Executive Committee has finalised its three-year strategic plan. One of the goal statements is to create a K-12 classical curriculum based on the Australian standards that can be used in any school or other educational setting, such as home-schools, across Australia. If any teachers or individuals with experience and skills in curriculum development are interested in joining the *ACCT* (Australian Classical Curriculum Team), please email ACES before September 1. Without a solid curriculum it will become very difficult to create and sustain new classical schools that will open.

Finally, I would like to conclude with some thoughts. The classical education movement has clearly begun in Australia. In the last five months I have received many emails from principals and parents wishing to know more about classical

education. New classical schools will be opening next year and beyond 2024. Australians are slowly coming to the realisation that education is about human formation and is not solely utilitarian. Although the movement is not as strong as in America, there are signs that the pendulum is swinging against progressive education. As I've said on previous occasions, the work and effort of each person will make a difference. Whether it be reading a book about classical education, attending a seminar, attending a book club, watching and sharing YouTube videos, writing a short article, responding to newspaper articles about education, creating a lesson plan, utilising the principles of classical pedagogy in your classroom or at home, sooner or later the word will get around about classical education. Use your gifts and talents to further this noble cause! Support ACES as there is a huge amount of work to be done that cannot be left to a few individuals. This movement is not about any particular person or persons. It is above that. It's about creating a better and more noble Australia. It's about creating future generations of students who will flourish as humans grounded on sound principles of what it means to be human and want to excel even further. You and I are sowing seeds. The fruits will come very soon!

As always, feel free to get in touch if you would like to be involved or have any questions: contact@classicaleducation.org.au.

Yours sincerely,

Kon Bouzikos
President of ACES

Articles of Interest

CLASSICAL EDUCATION AND CATHOLICISM

In this [article](#), Emeritus Professor Steven Schwartz outlines that there is no such thing as an exclusive relationship between Catholicism and classical education. He notes that while there has traditionally been a close association between classical learning and the Catholic faith, the pedagogy's principles and content are profitably open to schools from Protestant traditions, as well those of other religions or, indeed, even secular in orientation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CLASSICAL EDUCATION

In this [piece](#) (originally published in *The Catholic Weekly*), Dr Kevin Donnelly summarises the contributions made at the recent classical education seminar at Campion College. He notes:

What a classical, liberal/arts education provides is the ability to cope with adversity, a strong sense of what constitutes right and wrong and a commitment to the common good. As argued by Roger Scruton, such an education also passes on to future generations “an intellectual and artistic patrimony,” which involves the “accumulation of art, literature and humane reflection that has stood ‘the test of time’ and established a continuing tradition of reference and allusion among educated people.



Events like the recent classical education and schools seminar illustrate how, around Australia, parents, teachers and school leaders are starting small fires and ensuring there is hope and optimism for the future.

LIBERAL EDUCATION AND THE LIBERAL ARTS

Michael Connors, a postgraduate scholar with the Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation, discusses in this [article](#) the association between the liberal arts and liberal education, their points of connection and divergence. He examines each area of learning in detail before concluding that together they result "in a cultivation of the mind, an enculturation of the person, an understanding of oneself and society, and ultimately leads to a more human life".

EDUCATION AND THE ART OF THINKING

Jonathan Hili discusses the importance of classical education in grounding good thinking skills. He considers a number of modern social malaises as resulting directly from an inability to define concepts clearly, connect ideas, or logically follow through arguments in a sophisticated manner. This is largely the fault of a progressive system that values "educational theory" over the ability to think well. Read the article [here](#).



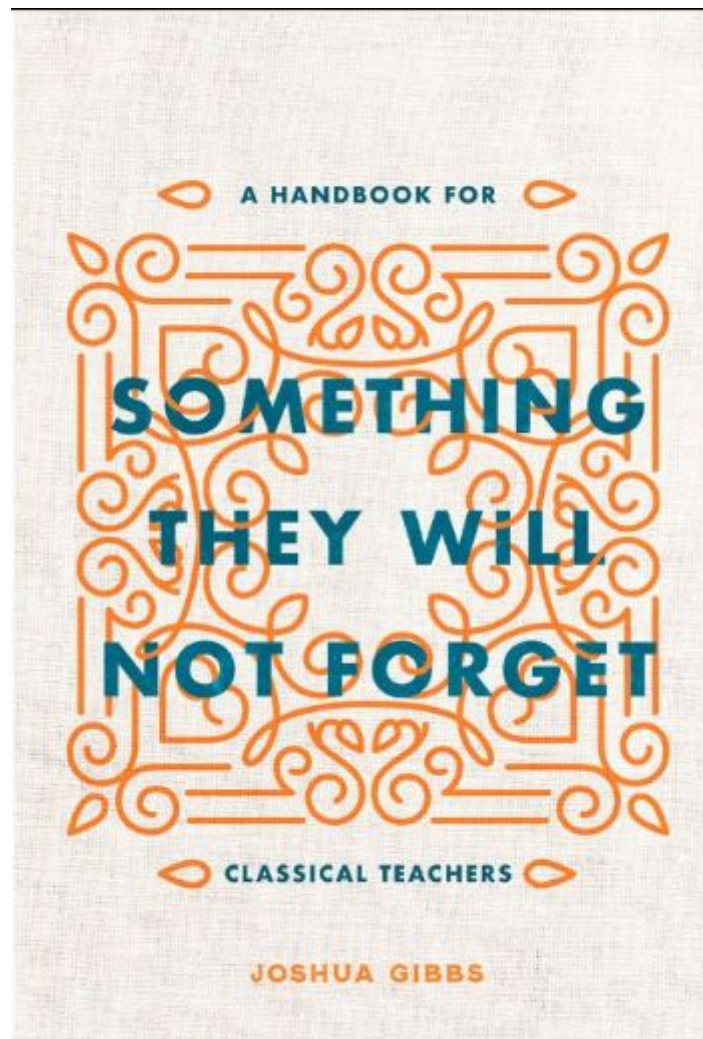
The National Symposium for Classical Education is designed to enrich our understanding of the classical, liberal arts in both the theoretical and practical dimensions of curriculum and pedagogy. Beginning with curated presentations from select scholars and practitioners, we provide school leaders and master teachers with some of the best thought on the subjects under consideration.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING

Action, Contemplation and the Liberal Arts

Which is superior: the life of action or contemplation? Join us for a conversation about the past and present of this question, which appears in Plato and the Fathers of the Church as well as in conversations today about the “value” of the liberal arts, paid meditation apps, and the promise of finding peace in “deep work”. Watch [here](#).

Books of Interest



Every teacher has suffered the demoralising realisation that most students quickly forget the content they are taught. Many sophomores, for example, could not pass a literature exam or history quiz which they aced during freshman year. While most teachers are too embarrassed to admit this, their students know it is true, which leads many students to think school is ultimately pointless. What is more, students know that most missed class periods can be made up with five minutes of homework, which leads them to believe that every hour-long class they attend is a fifty-five minute waste of time. This is not simply the state of American public schools, but many classical schools, as well.

But what if there was another way of conducting class? What if every class was vital, necessary, and worth going to? What if students no longer had to admit they couldn't remember much of the material they studied in previous years? What if teachers could make the most of all their class time, including the first five minutes, when students are chatty and their brains are still stuck in their last subject?

In *Something They Will Not Forget*, Joshua Gibbs deals masterfully with these concerns and enlightens readers on how to make lessons memorable and be remembered by students. The book can be purchased [here](#).

ACES Book Club

in association with

Beautiful Teaching

Join our free online bookclub!

On Saturday 14 and 28 October 2023, 9am-10:30am (AEDT), Adrienne

Freas will be facilitating a study of Stephen Turley's book on classical learning

"Awakening Wonder".

To register, please email ACES: contact@classicaleducation.org.au.

A cap of 20 participants applies, so be quick!

