



Core Beliefs & Our Approach

Teaching, Learning, & Formation



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Core Beliefs

Purpose / Mission / Vision

Core Values

Statement of Faith

Statement of Christian Anthropology

Working Together in Good Faith

Core Beliefs

PURPOSE

Pacifica Christian is a liberal arts high school devoted to teaching young men and women to think critically and wisely, instilling heartfelt joy and interest in learning, while encouraging lives of faith, character, and service to the glory of God.

MISSION

- Teaching students to think and understand the world around them
- Equipping students to communicate effectively through the written and spoken word
- Stimulating heartfelt joy and interest in learning
- Encouraging students to live lives of faith, character, and service
- Creating an environment that fosters friendship and unity in Christ

It is from the perspective of Christian faith that we seek to establish men and women who *think and live well*.

VISION

Our vision is to provide a rigorous liberal arts college preparatory education for students from any neighborhood and background, taught by teachers who are:

- Passionate about Pacifica's purpose, mission, and vision
- Knowledgeable and accomplished in their field of study
- Well trained in the art of teaching
- Compassionate and excited about the students they teach
- Substantial in Christian faith, thought, and character

Our Head of School, administrative team, and teaching staff seek:

- To challenge students in both mind and heart, naturally and intentionally, integrating academics and Christian faith
- To partner with, yet not replace, the family and the church as we help shape students academically and spiritually
- To focus on higher level thinking skills marked by inquiry and rhetoric, encouraging the complementary values of conviction and curiosity
- To instill a joy and interest in learning for its own sake, viewing education as an end in itself, not a means to some other end
- To approach learning as a pursuit of objective truth, realizing that all truth is God's truth which allows for open, honest, and safe expression of all perspectives, thoughts, and ideas

CORE VALUES

- A college preparatory liberal arts education
- The integration of faith and learning
- Teaching that engages the heart and the mind
- A focus on inquiry and rhetoric
- A curriculum that is founded on the great conversation of Western Civilization
- All truth is God's truth
- A commitment to the values of conviction and compassion as complementary rather than competing values
- A commitment to truth, beauty, and goodness
- A school that doesn't replace but, comes alongside the family and church for the student's best education
- Deepening students in lives of faith that reflect the values of charity, grace, justice, freedom, duty, humility, courage, goodness, faithfulness, temperance, faith, and hope.

- Be a school for all neighborhoods
- An authentic, relational community that pursues grace and truth

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Pacifica community is firmly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition and is dedicated to the intentional formation of each student in his or her intellectual, moral, and spiritual life.

Pacifica fosters an environment in which every young man and woman, as image-bearers of God, are introduced to the universal truths and life-changing teachings of Jesus Christ, and are invited to follow Him. The unchanging moral teachings of scripture—consistent with the teachings of the church down the ages—guide and inform our learning and life together. The best environment for intentional formation occurs within trusting partnerships between parents and the school community. While we do not require families to profess the Christian faith, we do require ongoing support of our school's [mission and approach to teaching and learning from parents and students](#).

All Pacifica students and staff are required to take part in certain Christian traditions and attend various Christian events, including the weekly all-school chapel. Christians and non-Christians alike are expected to show respect for the Church's historic beliefs, traditions, and Christian moral teaching.

We Believe...

- The Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the final authority for Christian faith and practice.
- God exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and has revealed Himself to be perfect in love, righteous in all His ways, and Creator of all things.
- Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son. As true God and true man, He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, was crucified as a sacrifice for our sins, arose bodily from the dead, was seen by over 500 persons, and returned to heaven to prepare a place for us.
- Men and women were created in God's image, tempted by Satan, and rebelled against God. Through repentance and personal faith in Jesus Christ we are forgiven of our sins, reborn of the Holy Spirit, and become children of God.

- The Holy Spirit persuades us to repent of our sins and confess Jesus as Lord. He lives in us, teaches us, and enables us to live godly lives.
- The Church is the living Body of Christ on earth. Christ is its head and source of its life. The church body is composed of those who have received Him as Savior and Lord. The church exists to communicate God's good news to our world, to care for the growth and health of the body of Christ, and to celebrate the love and life of God.
- God's redemptive purpose will be consummated by the return of Christ to raise the dead, judge all people according to the deeds done in the body, and establish His glorious kingdom.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

The Pacifica community is firmly rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition and is dedicated to the intentional formation of each student in his or her intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. Pacifica fosters an environment in which every young man and woman, as image-bearers of God, are introduced to the universal truths and life-changing teachings of Jesus Christ, and are invited to follow Him. The unchanging moral teachings of scripture—consistent with the teachings of the church down the ages—guide and inform our learning and life together. The best environment for intentional formation occurs within trusting partnerships between parents and the school community. Therefore, ongoing support of our school's mission and approach to teaching and learning from parents and students is crucial for Pacifica's success in equipping young men and women for *lives of faith, character, and service, to the glory of God*.

Pacifica was founded to teach young people to think and live well, firmly rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in Scripture and upheld through church tradition. We believe that the best way for human beings to flourish is to act in accordance with these truths. For this reason, we are committed to presenting Christian moral teaching with fidelity, and we firmly adhere to this mission in all school endeavors. From this foundation our students learn to be more purposeful and courageous, are more joyful and committed—prepared for all that God offers in their lives.

All Pacifica students and staff are required to take part in certain Christian traditions and attend various Christian events, including the weekly all-school chapel. Christians and non-Christians alike are expected to show respect for the Church's historic beliefs

and traditions and refrain from behaviors that distract from or conflict with Christian moral teaching.

Some Examples of Christian Moral Teaching:

- All humans, as image-bearers of God, have inestimable value and dignity (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:6b; Psalm 139).
- We are obligated to one another—to love one another, encourage one another, pray for one another, forgive one another, not to cause one another to sin (Romans 12:10-13; Romans 15:1-3; Hebrews 10:24, 25).
- While we possess personal freedom to choose the good, we are not at liberty to exercise that freedom to the detriment of the individual or the whole—which is largely what living in community means (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 10:23, 24; Galatians 5:1, 13-15; Philippians 2:3, 4).
- We are pledged to reconciliation and restoration in disputes between members of the community; also to resolving disputes, if necessary, by means of a third party. (Matthew 18:15-22; 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8).
- We desire God’s best for others as well as ourselves, treating all with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love (Colossians 3:12), forgiving one another, as in Christ God forgave us (Ephesians 4:32)—in a word, doing to others what we would have them to do to us (Luke 6:31).
- We make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification (Romans 12:18; Romans 14:19); to think about “whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable—whatever is excellent or praiseworthy” (Philippians 4:8).
- All human life is of inestimable value and sacred in all stages, from conception to natural death. We are commanded by God to protect and defend human life regardless of its condition - pre-born babies, persons with physical or intellectual disabilities, the elderly, the sick, the suffering, and the dying. (Gen. 1:27, Ps. 139:13-16, 1 Cor. 6:19).
- God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. This reality is observed throughout the created world through natural law and biological anatomy. These two distinct, complementary sexes together mysteriously reflect the image of God. (Gen. 1:26-27, Matt. 19:4-6).

- Sexual intimacy is good. Scripture explicitly teaches that sexual intimacy is to occur only in marriage as a means of expressing the love and fidelity between husband and wife and participation in God's gift of procreation. The term "marriage" refers to the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive, and lifelong union. Living life according to God's plan for marriage is a good thing, while misusing sexuality through unchastity hurts us and leads us away from God. (Gen. 2:18-25, Matt. 19:4-6, 1 Cor. 6:9-20, Hebrews 13:4, Eph. 5:31-33, 5).
- We should avoid lying and stealing (plagiarism being a form of both), dishonesty, injustice, harassment, slander, gossip, vulgar or obscene language, blasphemy, drunkenness, and immodesty in dress or behavior (Exodus 20:7; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 3:26-29; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; James 2:1-13; Hebrews 13:5, 6).
- We should also especially avoid the less overt—but no less heinous—sins of pride, greed, covetousness, prejudice, hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and legalism, understood as the imposition of extra-biblical standards of behavior by one person or group upon another (Matthew 16:6; Matthew 23: 13-36; Acts 15:5-11).

It is neither practical nor possible to mention every attitude or behavior, encouraged or proscribed, in a document such as this. Those mentioned above are frequently mentioned in scripture and perhaps most harmful to the life of a community, particularly a community that is also a school, where adults exercise authority over, and so are responsible for the mentoring and nurturing of young people in their care. In any case, the policies, procedures, and expectations of the school will always seek to be consistent with a life worthy of a Christian living under the lordship of Christ and the authority of the Bible. For purposes of Pacifica's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Trustees, in consultation with the school's executive leadership, is our final interpretive authority on the Bible's application.

Having said all these things above, we acknowledge that the human experience is messy and complex. We understand that humans suffer moral failure as a result of sin. We are not expecting nor demanding perfection. No one is practiced at a skill or virtue at first. Failure can be a good thing, if students and adults embrace their failures as opportunities for learning, growth, and maturity. This is why we practice grace and truth (*gratia et veritas* as it says on our crest) in all things. We realize that all of us are marred by sin, no one is perfect, and everyone is in need of forgiveness and loving-kindness. Therefore, as we follow Christ (Matthew 11:29), we seek to be patient and long-suffering in our life together.

WORKING TOGETHER IN GOOD FAITH

At the foundation of a Pacifica education are our specific [Approach to Teaching and Learning](#), [Core Beliefs](#), and this Statement of Christian Anthropology, that inform our curriculum, instruction, and life together.

Our families and staff choose to join the Pacifica learning community because of their general agreement with the mission and this approach to learning and formation. At times, there may be disagreement with a particular approach or belief held by the school. On these occasions, we agree to uphold the mission ([Purpose, Vision, Statements of Faith](#)) and this Statement of Christian Anthropology, and [Approach to Teaching and Learning](#)) honestly, fairly, and in good faith, and our families agree not to work in opposition to these approaches or core beliefs.

Importantly, our students enjoy the freedom to civilly and contextually question, challenge, and explore ideas, within the classroom, that may not be in agreement with this document without academic or relational repercussion.



The Pacifica Continuum



The Pacifica Continuum

Pacifica is known as a Christ-centered, academically respected, and deeply relational community. Through an unwavering commitment to our mission and the excellent work of our founders, we have established a distinct identity in the landscape of high school education.

Learning to think and live well is a life-long journey. We approach education as a joy-instilling, freedom-producing adventure, and provide our graduates with a foundation for success in college, life, work, and faith. We call this journey the Pacifica Continuum.

To ensure the continuity of a Pacifica education for generations to come, we aligned our language with images that represent Pacifica's mission and vision.



The Pacifica Continuum

IT STARTS WITH **PURPOSE**

Pacifica Christian is a liberal arts high school, devoted to teaching young men and women to think critically and wisely, instilling heartfelt joy and interest in learning, while encouraging lives of faith, character, and service to the glory of God.



COMES TO LIFE IN **CULTURE**

We are intentional about every aspect of our shared life together, rooted in these six behaviors:

ASK GOOD QUESTIONS

The hopeful and humble first step in the quest toward truth.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

The vital need for every person's unique contribution to the conversation.

FAIL FORWARD

The encouragement to take risks and learn from mistakes as a key to growth.

ASSUME THE BEST

The willingness to listen, learn, and experience joy beyond our initial expectations.

PURSUE BALANCE

The commitment to work hard, play hard, and rest well.

ACT WITH CONVICTION AND COMPASSION

The courage to pursue the truth in the midst of conflict and to engage others with grace and love.



IS FORMED IN PRACTICE

Pacifica's approach to teaching and learning is grounded in these five beliefs:

THE LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES CULTIVATES HUMAN FLOURISHING

Liberal arts prepares the whole person for all of life. It teaches not just “what” to think, but also “how” to think. Having been properly trained, graduates will, over their lifetimes, be well positioned for faithful service at home, at church, in the marketplace, and in the wider world.

RELATIONSHIPS ANCHOR FORMATION

Relationships are central to a Pacifica education. Students learn the abundant and joyful life is marked by giving and receiving grace in community. At Pacifica, we know each other well, and are known. In community we learn, grow in faith, attend games and art exhibits, and live life together. These experiences allow personal growth as students begin to share their virtue with the larger world.

CURIOSITY DRIVES CONVERSATION

Curiosity is the desire to know before we are sure what we seek and is the beginning of all great adventures. Inspired this way, the mind jumps at the opportunity of finding the truth. Friendships form as seekers gather, courageous and hopeful to find. At Pacifica, curiosity means belonging and togetherness in the earnest journey to believe truth, do good, and behold beauty.

EDUCATION IS FULFILLED IN SERVICE

A Christian Liberal Arts education frees students to live lives of self-giving service to others. It is not enough to learn information. Thinking and living well requires knowledge of the world and formation in the practice of hospitality: using one's gifts for the good of others in all areas of life.

LEARNING BLOOMS IN CONNECTED AND DYNAMIC SPACES

Learning blooms at Pacifica by connecting technology and the best proven instructional methodologies and curriculum with a space that encourages active participation and engagement with other students, faculty, and the entire school program.



AND RESULTS IN **THE PACIFICA PERSON**

We measure success by the students' development in academics, arts, athletics, service, and the character of their lives after they graduate Pacifica.

Our goal is for each student to be a...

CONTRIBUTOR



One who offers who they are and what they have to purposes beyond themselves.

THINKER



One who seeks to find the truth at all times and in all places.

CREATOR



One who uses what they have been given to make good and beautiful things.

INTEGRATED DISCIPLE



One who pursues wholeness of personal and communal life through virtue grounded in Christ.

CONNECTOR



One who engages, inspires, and provokes others through reasoned word and wise action.

ETHICAL-DECISION MAKER



One whose thoughts and actions are consistently rooted in what is good.



The Classroom Experience

The Core

Harkness Table &
Discussion-Based Learning

The Classroom Experience

THE CORE

In order to prepare students for a flourishing life, all students at Pacifica take our core curriculum classes. Not unlike Columbia University's core curriculum, Pacifica's core classes serve to mitigate against the hyper-specialization and mere career preparation so prevalent in many contemporary academic institutions. The Pacifica Core introduces students to the great human tradition of value. This tradition, which reaches back at least to Aristotle, insists that the best education is one that produces good human beings. It claims that reason and revelation tell us what human persons are for, and raises doubts that one can flourish merely by being technically sophisticated. The result is that students who complete the Pacifica Core will not only be skilled in their disciplines, but also, and more importantly, capable of rationally judging the uses to which they put the things they are making by asking and wisely answering difficult questions:

- Is this good for humans?
- Will it add human value to our world?
- Does it honor God?
- What are its downstream impacts?

The Pacifica Core is grounded in broad historical study and practice of virtue and theology. Students not only learn about texts, but rather from them. All students will take four years of history, theology, and English, based upon readings from the ancient world all the way down the years to the contemporary moment. In doing so, they will avoid the "chronological snobbery" that would merely perpetuate the naive and blinkered mistakes of their own day by engaging them in conversation with the wisdom of the past from cultures and times not their own. What's more, they will do this work not only in conversation with great books, but also around tables in discussions with their peers and in mentoring relationships with faculty and staff who are moral and spiritual exemplars and from whom they will learn proper emotional responses. The reason for this methodology is simple: it is not enough merely to know what is right; one must also be formed to love what is right, and to love things rightly. Indeed, every student takes the Core because a moral compass is something that has to be formed in a community of faith through good company, mentoring friendships, the cultivation of habits, and service to others.

The Pacifica Core thus acknowledges that all things stand in relation to other things, and so lays the foundation for inquiry as a quest for timeless objective truth which engages the imagination, the reason, and the will toward humane ends. At the same time it warns that humans freed from all moral constraints will become enslaved to their physical impulses. To say as much is to acknowledge that the primary goal of education is not preparation for employment or civic participation, or even the ongoing existence of the species. Those are secondary byproducts of a good education. A good education is rather one that establishes a core of personal freedom and moral conviction that produces a well-ordered human being who can thrive in any context by rationally utilizing their gifts in service to the world and in accordance with the objective moral law. Students who take the Pacifica Core to heart will have the opportunity to become those kinds of people—people who know the good and love the good, and so have the courage to act upon the good when the choice is put before them. This is why we teach the Pacifica Core.

Jacques Maritain once said,

“Education is an art, and an especially difficult one. Yet it belongs by its nature to the sphere of ethics and practical wisdom. Education is an ethical art (or rather a practical wisdom in which a determinate art is embodied). Now every art is a dynamic trend toward an object to be achieved, which is the aim of this art. There is no art without ends; art’s very vitality is the energy with which it tends toward its end.”

The Pacifica Core is that art by which we aim students toward their end as fully flourishing human beings created by God for the purpose of wholeness in Christ who is their only true and abundant life.

THE PACIFICA CORE

9TH GRADE	10TH GRADE	11TH GRADE	12TH GRADE
Ancient World History (Old Testament)	Medieval World History II (New Testament)	European Ethics & Politics	U.S. History (We The People & Civics)
Ancient World Literature	World Literature & Composition	British Literature (The History of the English Bible)	American Literature
			Faith & Culture Seminar (Theology, Philosophy, Economics, & Civics)

HARKNESS TABLE & DISCUSSION-BASED LEARNING

A discussion is a mini-quest for truth with reference to a common text, where the truth is something unknown, but discoverable. We are not building the truth, we are searching for it together. The truth is something “out there” that we have to find as a group. A discussion is thus full of adventure, twists and turns, ups and downs, false paths, and epiphanies. Beliefs (not just feelings) are shared out into the room and made vulnerable to our table-mate’s scrutiny and criticism, so that those beliefs may be changed, further refined, and/or solidified. There is therefore no place for naive dogmatism, skepticism, or relativism in a good discussion, because a good discussion assumes that truth is something we can approach and even obtain; that if we look for it we can find it. And yet, a good discussion recognizes that while truth can be known, it is also difficult to know given our fallenness and finitude, as well as our locatedness in particular cultures and times. Discussion participants therefore must approach discussions with humility, recognizing our need for community and the wisdom of the past in order to know the truth.

In a Pacifica discussion, the text is the teacher, and the teacher is the facilitator of the discussion about the text. A good teacher models humility and discipleship to the text, as well as confidence of belief in objective truth, and a willingness to pursue continued growth and learning. A well-led discussion will accordingly affirm the inherent value of every human individual, respect their need to grow and develop as a person in process, and will be engaged in discourse with charity and without anxiety, trusting that God is the one primarily and ultimately responsible for student growth and development.

Students at Pacifica are encouraged and trained to be who they are, say what they think, and to love one another. They are trained to understand that they are not reducible to their ideas, that their honest thoughts matter, that they are not always right, and that they ought to stick to the question at hand and the text at hand.

It is this environment and this pedagogy that grounds all our learning, and it is one of the many things that makes our school unique.



Approach to Teaching & Learning

Thinking Well

Living Well

Life Together

Approach To Teaching & Learning

At Pacifica Christian High School, we teach our students to think and live well. We do this by providing a college-preparatory, liberal arts education for students from all backgrounds and neighborhoods.

Engaging students' minds to think well and shaping their hearts prepares them to enjoy an abundant life. Thinking and living well is about making connections—both intellectual and relational. It provides students with a fuller understanding of what it means to be human and provides them the freedom to find their place in God's created world.

Our students are free to live out their stories, fully becoming who God desires them to be. We provide students with opportunities that will change them for the better—by challenging and maturing them. We desire our students to be more purposeful and courageous, more joyful and committed—prepared for all that God offers in their lives.

Learning to think and live well is a life-long process. But both the process—or even adventure—and the outcome produce joy. As such, we view a good education as an end unto itself. At the same time, a Pacifica education provides tangible benefits, like preparation for college, career, family, and service to the church and community. By approaching education as a joy-instilling, freedom-producing journey, we provide our graduates with a foundation for success in college, life, work, and faith.

THINKING WELL

Thinking well does not simply benefit the individual, it benefits the world. Students are not only attempting to grow in knowledge, but to renew their minds to see more clearly, act more justly, and love more lavishly.

LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Historically, the liberal arts did not merely prepare students for careers—though they are remarkably suited to do that. They were subjects free people enjoyed spending time learning. Study, discussion, debate, and learning produced joy and revealed new areas of interest. In learning to read, write, calculate, and think, the liberal arts freed students to know both their world and themselves. Following in the liberal arts tradition, proper study at Pacifica helps our students find their places in God's

unfolding story and become ready for all that life and God have to offer. The liberal arts actually makes us more human and provides freedom from the world's confusion: we learn how to think for ourselves, make important connections, and understand God's, and our, place in the larger story.

CHRISTIAN FAITH

We teach our students how to read the whole Bible—from Creation to Christ's return. We take them through a study of the Christian church's history and teachings. They learn not just about the Bible's teaching and Church history, but also the impact those things have had on our society. This culminates in their being able to understand and apply a Christian worldview to contemporary problems and situations—to think Christianly. After four years, our students see God, themselves, and the world differently—and more accurately.

All of our staff members are committed to the Christian faith. They are prepared to demonstrate the role Christian beliefs and practices have in a full understanding of life and the world. We do not teach that there is a conflict between science and Scripture, belief and intellect, vocation and Christian calling.

Equally important, our staff model lives of Christian faith. They do not simply teach the text, they live a life of faith in front of their students. In chapel, Advisory Groups, travel programs, co-curricular events, and conversations outside of class, students learn how to apply their Christian faith to their lives in the world by being mentored.

FAITH & LEARNING

Throughout Pacifica's curriculum, we allow both secular and sacred texts to speak for themselves. Learning to trust that it is God who has “put wisdom in our inward parts, and gives understanding to our minds.” At the same time, we reflect on the biblical narrative. In that way, our students discover two things simultaneously: important works of human creation down the ages and how they fit into God's larger story of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation. For example, we study Church history, the works of William Shakespeare, the intricacies of the human genome, and the varying political philosophies of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. We take time to pursue truth by faith-seeking-understanding, showing how these subjects can help a person better experience the fullness of God's Kingdom. In short, we integrate faith with learning. This integrated approach is the foundation from which we explore.

WESTERN CIVILIZATION

We have founded our curriculum upon the Western tradition. We rely heavily on primary texts, letting students engage directly with history's greatest authors and thinkers. From ancient civilizations to the Renaissance to the founding of the United States of America, Pacifica engages its students in the "Great Conversation." Students learn to understand our civilization's great debates and to enter that discussion for themselves. This approach provides them with a foundation from which they can explore, understand, and critique societal movements, scientists, artists, mathematicians, philosophers, and writers from any era or culture, including our own.

CULTIVATION OF HUMAN FLOURISHING

Because God created mankind in His image and tasked mankind with stewardship of the earth, and because humanity's chief end "is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever," we believe that the dignity of humans as image-bearers of God must be preserved in our affairs. The cultivation of human flourishing requires an ordered liberty in our society, in civic life, and in the marketplace. We believe that the free and virtuous society represents the best-known forum for human economic-flourishing, and the development of mankind's creative and entrepreneurial gifts.

As citizens of the United States, we value and celebrate our distinctive cultural traditions and principles which resulted from our Declaration of Independence, our Constitution, our Bill of Rights, and the other documents which spelled out in remarkable clarity a new way of living and flourishing together. These include allowing men and women to pursue truth, beauty, and goodness, the freedom to express divergent views, the freedom to choose and practice their religious faith as they see fit, to conduct business with essential freedom, and to recognize that all of this requires liberty, justice, equality, and personal responsibility ordered to virtuous ends.

GRACE & TRUTH

Pacifica's school culture emanates from the pursuit of grace and truth in all relationships. We believe the truth sets students free. They are free to know God, themselves, and their world. We also want Pacifica students to be intellectually honest and truthful with one another, their teachers, and the texts they study. The more truthful they are, the more they can grow in knowledge and character and the more the Pacifica community grows together. At the same time, we seek and display God's grace when encountering truth. We want the fullness of God's grace in all our relationships: extending compassion, understanding, longsuffering, and forgiveness to others. According to John's Gospel, the Father's gift to mankind is Jesus, a man who integrated grace and truth in all he did. That is the example we seek to follow – by God's grace – in shaping Pacifica's culture and each of its students.

CONVICTION & COMPASSION

All truth is God's truth. Thus, we can freely explore the past 2,500 years of human thought and experience with great confidence that we will discover truth in scripture and in revelation from our created world. We know faith and reason are complementary and that the pursuits of the mind and the passions of the heart work together to free us to think and live well in all areas of life.

We are not intimidated by truth; rather we build the courage to say that one thing is right and another wrong. That one thing is beautiful and another ugly. That one thing is good and another bad. This is conviction. And so, we direct our students to “dwell on whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise.”

But we teach that the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty should be done with compassion and grace. Convictions need not alienate students from those with whom they disagree; indeed, disagreement can actually draw them closer as scholars and friends, and closer to the truth—if handled with grace. Our students' curiosity and their love for people work to keep them engaged in conversations that matter, with people who matter. Like Aristotle, we teach them to entertain a thought without accepting it, and like Jesus, we teach them to love their image-bearing neighbor, no matter how different they may be.

“Grace and truth,” as well as “conviction and compassion,” may seem at odds. But at Pacifica, we teach and demonstrate they must be held together in order both to think well and to live well.

JOY IN LEARNING

We seek joy in learning through it all! Students learn what it is to be human in God's world. The more they know about how to live life—according to God's plan—the more they can live well. Living well produces joy. And growing in wisdom and knowledge provides joy over a lifetime.

LIVING WELL

People do not live well by accident. They are taught. They are taught by their parents, friends, church, community, and God. Pacifica plays a role in this process. High school is an incredibly formative period in anyone's life, so Pacifica takes its role very seriously. Teaching students to live well not only changes how students understand the world, but empowers them to experience abundant and joyful lives. Pacifica wants students to take what they learn and unite it with their faith. We provide adult examples of living this way. Our staff engages students not merely in their studies, but also in the deeper questions they face and the decisions they make.

Of course we want our students to learn the material, but we also want to prepare them to thrive in life. These can, and should, work together. In addition to academics, Pacifica emphasizes critical elements of living well:

JOY IN LIFE

We believe our faith offers us freedom, an “abundant life,” and the “fullness of joy”—whether during triumphs or setbacks. Therefore, we want our students to be free to experience abundant and joyful lives. We encourage students to live out their stories, fully becoming who God desires them to be. We provide students with opportunities that will change them for the better—both inside and outside the classroom. We want to challenge them and see them mature, to have them learn to “consider it all joy” when they encounter various trials. As they recognize their freedom to act in accordance with virtue, they realize they too can have abundant and joyful lives. This makes them live with more purpose, make courageous decisions, and strengthen their commitments to God. As they learn—in both mind and heart—that for the faithful, all things work together for good, they become prepared for all that life and God have to offer.

NOT A SQUARE INCH

Just as all truth is God's truth, we trust that everything God created is sacred unto Him: “For all the earth is Mine”, says the Lord. Therefore, we want to learn why all things are important to God—and to live accordingly. We teach that all parts of life, not just time at church or in school, matter to God. It is with this understanding that we want our students to pursue learning, relationships, careers, and life. We want students filled with courage and not afraid to engage the world with Christian beliefs. We invite them into an abundant, joyful life by showing them that each moment, every place, and all circumstances offer something of what is true, beautiful, and good.

PRACTICING VIRTUE

These circumstances give them a chance to live more virtuously: to live well. But this is not simply taught and learned. They must practice virtue, both in life's momentous decisions, as well as in the seemingly smaller matters. Living virtuously requires far more than memorizing a list of character traits—therefore, we want students to form habits of applying faith and truth to how they live. Each decision matters and will shape them for the better, or worse. C.S. Lewis held the same view: “Good and evil both increase at compound interest.” This is why we want students to learn that the decisions they make on a daily basis are of infinite importance as to who they become.

We become what we daily practice. Because of this truth, we teach students to daily practice the virtues. How, and what, students practice—faith, hope, love, courage, prudence, endurance, temperance, justice, or even music, soccer, math, or languages—shapes who they become. All habits have either a positive or negative impact on students' daily lives. Therefore, we want them to practice the right things, virtuous things, in order that they might become virtuous people, by God's grace.

GOOD DECISION MAKERS

Practicing the right things, however, requires students to make good decisions. Often, long-term good decisions are at odds with the world around them. We understand that students will experience triumph and disappointment as they practice making decisions about increasingly complex choices and situations. Coming alongside the home and the church, we extend grace and truth in these moments, helping our students to better recognize the wisdom that leads to flourishing in life and our choices. At Pacifica, students experience support, encouragement, and love as they mature into young adulthood. We want to help equip them to live in a way that puts them in a position to thrive in all parts of life, well beyond graduation. Living well at Pacifica is not simply about following the rules, but learning to make good decisions throughout life, grounded in God's view of the human person. By following Paul's exhortation to “put on Christ.”

LEARNING FROM FAILURE

Students who try new things must experience failure. They must feel free to do so, or they will not take proper risks. No one is perfect at a skill at first. We think failure can be a good thing, but only if students are taught to use their failures as opportunities for growth and maturity. We want them to learn to find the significance of each experience. We want them to celebrate their successes as well as to learn from failures to make them more moldable and adaptable for God's purposes in their lives.

OUR LIVES AS INVITATIONS INTO CHARACTER FORMATION

They say that “character is caught, not taught.” In other words, developing our character is not simply something we can learn in a classroom. We gain our character in large part by coming to know and emulate people we admire, and then adopting and practicing their beliefs and characteristics. Pacifica students become part of a healthy and attractive Christian community, identifying with staff who model Christian faith and leadership. In addition, the staff teach students about the central role the Christian faith has in the very subjects they study.

LIFE TOGETHER

Thinking and living well is done in community. Pacifica encourages students to live abundant and joyful lives, marked by giving and receiving grace. They work hard, play hard, and take risks.

High school students—and most people—desire to have meaningful relationships, to know and to be known. Having fun together, participating in extracurricular activities, and spending time with friends are all parts of a Pacifica education. These transformative experiences allow students to grow personally as they begin to live out the truth and grace they’ve learned in our ever-changing world.

We come alongside each family, engaging in conversations about life and faith, while modeling lives marked by joy. We design campus-life events with these goals in mind. Fun-filled opportunities—such as the Annual All-School Retreat, the Spring Dance, Bring the Rain, and Spirit Days—give students a chance to try new things, make friends, connect with teachers, create lasting memories, and become people who value community.

OUR PEOPLE

Our people are the core of our high-quality education. These men and women seek to educate, lead, challenge, encourage, and set examples of faith, character, and service for each student. Curriculum and programs alone do not teach young people to think and live well. That goal requires a complete educational experience in relationship with adults of faith who themselves develop disciplines, encourage curiosity, equip students to achieve success, and inspire a love for learning. Our staff are moral and Christian exemplars.

FAMILY, CHURCH & SCHOOL

Pacifica alone does not teach students to think and live well. We partner with families and churches. It is a great privilege to come alongside parents and local churches to encourage our students' faith. Understanding our important role as a school, our primary focus is education. We spend most of our time helping students master the school's graduation requirements. A good school, however, cares for more. We care about students' spiritual and social lives. These areas greatly inform a complete education. At Pacifica, we seek to partner with, not replace, the church and the family, whose functions are complementary to, yet distinct from, a school's. We are keenly aware that our primary role is to educate students, but we are equally aware that we are not their only educators. While we teach the gospel, we recognize that it is God who ultimately brings about belief, and so we never grade students on the basis of what they do or do not believe.