

Why Choose Catholic Education

(Update)

Last year, when I was asked by my children's alma mater, Old Mission School, to write about why I chose a Catholic education for my children, I told you:

In 1994 when my first-born started at OMS Preschool at the Nativity Campus, there was no doubt in my mind about where my children would go to school. I went to Catholic school, as did my mother and grandmother. I was prepared for the excellent academics and the religious education that they would receive. I knew exactly why I was willing to pay for their education even in a community with good schools. What our family received was so much more.

Community service and being grateful are an important part of our family life. We believe that one should lift as one has been lifted. Old Mission School has lifted my children in their lives with the same heart, the same awareness, and the same well-balanced education that we hope we have modeled for our children at home. Old Mission School has made their lives a continuum of our home lives. Through their schooling, they have learned the importance of academic work for a future based on achievements. Often times, the academic motivation came from the success of their peers. They have learned that everything in life is a choice, a conscious and awakened effort. Yes, they have learned that life has a set of expectations. With God as a partner in their education, He has been allowed to be a visible part of their daily climb. They have learned to reach up and reach out at the same time.

OMS gave my daughters such a strong academic foundation that my oldest graduated with honors from Mission Prep and was accepted at 6 universities and colleges. Among them was Cal Poly, which had 33,352 first-time freshman apply for 3,501 places. Today, as my first-born is attending the Jesuit University of San Francisco, and as people go out of their way to acknowledge her kindness, my husband and I know that our choice gave both of our children opportunity. The tuition was a sacrifice that has paled in the glow of our children's growing accomplishments and satisfied lives. Thank you, OMS for carrying us all on your back. We have been blessed.

This year, in light of the economic turndown, we found another major benefit of a great Catholic education. My oldest daughter received a generous merit scholarship to USF because of the good grades and instruction that she received through her Catholic education. While adjusting to college can take its toll academically on freshmen, she was able to maintain her grades and easily requalify for her merit scholarship during her first semester of college. Her written communication skills established in grammar school at OMS and continued at MCP, have been a major part in her academic success. She has become known as the go-to person on her floor for editing students' papers. Her effective study and organizational skills, we attribute to the years of habits she developed to succeed at Old Mission School and at Mission College Prep. Would we spend our money this way again? You better believe it! We still are; my youngest has two more years at MCP.

Gratefully yours,

Mary Hwass-Hay