

Although our initial goal was to brainstorm and formulate a distinct mission statement for our new Rhetoric School, what happened was more transformative than a statement. Providentially, one of us was studying the apostle Paul's letter to Colossae. Inspired, we decided to re-read it for ourselves, endeavor to understand it, and ultimately inform and express our prayers for our new school. What took place was an exercise in the trivium. The results are a beautiful and varied example in rhetoric...Please join in or pray with us...1. Read and re-read Colossians (Grammar) 2. Prayerfully endeavor to understand the meaning of it (Logic) 3. Formulate a prayer in faith to our Heavenly Father(Rhetoric)

Prayer #1

We give thanks to the Father, who has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, and forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1:13)

We give thanks for Christ for in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Col. 1:19)

We give thanks for the Holy Spirit for He will teach us all things and bring to our remembrance all that Christ has spoken to us. (John 14:26)

May we be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

May we be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy.

(Col. 1:9-11)

Prayer #2

(From Colossians and our Lord's Prayer)

Heavenly Father

Thank you for the gift of grace and peace that is ours in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are asking over and over again on behalf of each other that Christ would be revealed in our hearts and therefore our Rhetoric School. We ask that he be revealed in all of our subjects for *he is your image, the firstborn of all creation. For by Christ all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible-whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through Christ and for Christ.* We present ourselves, our abilities endowed by you, all subjects testifying about you, each family represented, each soul in each student to you. We are endeavoring to submit all things to you this day. *For you are before all things, in Christ you hold all things together.* Father, hold this school together if you will. We entrust the ministry of this school to you. Your will be done here. Thank you for holding us together and we ask in Christ name for you *to fill us with the knowledge of you so we can walk in a manner worthy of the gospel.* This is our daily bread. *We long to toil and struggle and proclaim Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom so that we may be a part of presenting each other mature in Christ. For this we toil, struggling with all of your energy that you powerfully work*

within us. Thank you for your Holy Spirit. We confess that we cannot do this in our own power. It is all vanity unless *you are preeminent. You are first in all things.* We do not want to be a school where there is learning but never understanding, make our hearts committed to the truth that *Christ is all* and give us confidence that *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in him.* Father, we ask for forgiveness for being so prone to place our confidence in people, places and philosophies other than Christ. Help us to forgive others as they do this. May we never be tempted to have an elitist, prideful attitude when viewing another school. Only humble gratitude for the wisdom of Christ we have been granted. May we pray for our city and schools and ask for your light to shine through your people in all places. We ask that in captivating our hearts and filling our souls with the knowledge of the gospel of Christ, *that you protect us from delusion and plausible arguments and from becoming captivated by any philosophy and empty deceit or human tradition.* May we never add judgments or requirements to the gospel. *They are no value in stopping the indulgences of our sin nature.* Please fill us, Father. For those of us in Christ, may we diligently *seek Christ and be filled with his word and teach and admonish one another in all wisdom. And whatever we do in word and deed, we do everything in the name of our Lord Jesus, giving thanks to our Father, in him.* Lord, this ministry is in tandem with precious families and local churches. Bless our families, hold them together, heal them, pour out your Spirit on them. We long to submit to one another and not be harsh. Forgive us and heal us as we fall short, I pray. *Whatever we do we want to work heartily for you, Lord, and not men.* Father, all of this is for your kingdom to come and for *a door to open for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ clearly.* We need your wisdom. We need huge amounts of encouragement. Encourage us in Christ and fill us up and may that pour out on each other and a desperately needy world. *May we fulfill the ministry that we have received in the Lord. Christ is all. Christ is first.* May Christ be the head of CCA. *Christ is your mystery revealed. Christ is in us.* Thank you, Father. You are the glorious Storyteller. Jesus Christ is the beautiful, perfect solution to the crisis of our lives and the whole world, our separation from you, Father. *Thank you for reconciling us through the blood of his cross back to you.* He is enough. He is our answer. In him we pray.

Prayer #3

Heavenly Father, you have created and ordered the universe. We thank you for the love you have shown us through your Son and for the role you have graciously given us to serve in your creation and ask that we may be **filled with the knowledge of your will, spiritual wisdom and understanding so that we may walk in a manner that is pleasing to you, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in knowledge (1:9-10).** As knowledge increases, we ask that love, patience, grace, humility and forgiveness abound in the name of your son, Jesus Christ. It is through Him that we partake in our heavenly citizenship. We ask that through the example of his perfect life and the gift of His humble sacrifice, our imperfect lives are transformed into agents of your Holy will. May we know and abide in the love of Christ who, **is before all things and in Him all things hold together (1:17).** We thank you for his perfect obedience to the point of death that grants us the freedom to know His love and to make it known to others in thought, word and deed. We pray for unity, constancy, and protection from the deceit of worldly temptations. Give us hearts that desire your truth, minds that seek it steadfastly, and mouths that proclaim it boldly. May you guide our efforts, as the richness of your word penetrates our hearts and minds as your spirit reveals our sin so that we obey **with sincerity of heart, as for you and not for men,** making us humble and thankful for the eternal grace and salvation of which we are made partakers through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

Prayer #4