

# THE CRUSADER TIMES

News from The Atonement Academy --- Vol. 2019-2020. No. 38, May 14, 2020

"Whenever I go to the chapel, I put myself in the presence of our good Lord, and I say to Him, 'Lord, here I am. Tell me what You would have me do.' If He gives me some task, I am content and I thank Him. If He gives me nothing, I still thank Him since I do not deserve to receive anything more than that. And then, I tell God everything that is in my heart. I tell Him about my pains and my joys, and then I listen. If you listen, God will also speak to you, for with the good Lord, you have to both speak and listen. God always speaks to you when you approach Him plainly and simply."

— St. Catherine Laboure

Crusaders are looking forward to the day when they can once again visit the chapel or the church to speak and listen to the Lord during each school day. Until then, we must continue to pray for each other often and wherever we are!



*Light filters through stained glass at the back of the Sacred Heart Chapel.*

## A Letter from Mr. Watson

Dear Academy Family,

Only two short weeks lie between us and the end of the most eventful school year in recent memory. While I don't know all that your family has faced and may continue to face, all the signs suggest that, as a community, The Atonement Academy has come through this trial stronger, more unified, and better prepared to meet future challenges.

Our growth as a community is well represented by our rising ninth graders, pictured below. This cohort of 18 (16 returning students and two new admissions) will enter the Academy's celebrated Upper School ([Niche.com](#); [The Cardinal Newman Society](#)) this fall as the Class of 2024. Among them are the five recipients of this year's Upper School Scholarship, which consists of \$2,500 annually. This year's awardees are Carlos Alvarez, Lauren Dietert-Deschenes,

Karolina Garza, Hannah John, and William Jones. Congratulations; we are excited to witness you and your class's leadership in the student body over the next four years.

Stay steady, Crusaders. Our Lady of The Atonement--pray for us!

Your servant,

Matthew David Watson  
Head of School  
The Atonement Academy

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### Weekly Office Hours (via Zoom)

Atonement teachers will continue offering Zoom office hours as an opportunity for students and their parents to check in with teachers and ask questions about work assigned for the week. Teachers will send a link to each student or family for each week's meeting. Student attendance at these meetings is entirely optional. As a reminder, the teachers' office hours are listed below.

#### Monday

1:00 p.m. - Lozano and Pyle  
1:30 p.m. - Fitzgerald  
2:00 p.m. - M. Kennedy  
2:30 p.m. - Weems  
3:00 p.m. - Garza  
3:30 p.m. - Czech

#### Tuesday

1:00 p.m. - Adian  
1:30 p.m. - Chude  
2:00 p.m. - Gray  
2:30 p.m. - Sister MM  
3:00 p.m. - Markovetz  
3:30 p.m. - Mataya

#### Wednesday

1:00 p.m. - Taylor  
1:30 p.m. - B. Kennedy  
2:00 p.m. - Lenahan  
2:30 p.m. - Otten  
3:00 p.m. - Szyszkiewicz  
3:30 p.m. - White

#### Thursday

1:00 p.m. - Creech  
1:30 p.m. - Lamascus  
2:00 p.m. - Oliveros  
2:30 p.m. - MS Athletics  
3:00 p.m. - US Athletics  
3:30 p.m. - Librarian

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### 2020-21 SUPPLY LISTS

The 2020-21 Supply Lists for PreK-3 through Grade 12 are now posted on the school website. The Supply Lists may be found on the "Forms & Documents" tab at [theatonementacademy.org](http://theatonementacademy.org). Here is a [link](#) that will take you to the Middle & Upper School list, and this [link](#) will take you to the list for the Lower School. In addition, there is a separate list [here](#) for the PreK-3 and PreK-4.

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### No Lower School Remote Learning Assignments on Memorial Day, Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>

In observance of the Memorial Day holiday, Lower School will not have their

normally scheduled remote learning assignments on Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> and will resume remote learning on Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>. As the Middle and Upper School are unaffected by the holiday, they will have their normally scheduled assignments on Tuesday and Thursday.

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## **BOOK & UNIFORM EXCHANGE**

This year, our traditional Atonement Uniform and Book Exchange will be held on Thursday, June 11. To accommodate all families, we will be holding the event 7:00-9:00 a.m. and 7:00-9:00 p.m. More details about this event will be coming soon!

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## **JOINING ATONEMENT'S UPPER SCHOOL THIS FALL!**

We have a wonderful group of our own eighth graders already enrolled for their freshman year at The Atonement Academy. Congratulations Crusaders--and we look forward to seeing you in your blazers in August!

*(\*Denotes The Atonement Academy \$2500 Scholarship Recipient)*



Carlos Alvarez\*



Frank Campos



Michael Cantu



Lauren Dietert-Deschenes\*



Carlos Flores



Karolina Garza\*



Nathan Groh



Noah Gulick



Hannah John\*



William Jones\*



Isabella MacFadden



Madelline Magallanes



Merrick Skeens



Isabel Spiller



Gabriel Wendtland



Mason Wendtland

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## NATIONAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE SELECTS FRESHMAN MARK LANE

Freshman scholar Mark Lane was invited to represent The Atonement Academy at the 2020 National Student Leadership Conference (NSLC). NSLC courses are held on the campuses of major



universities, including Duke, Harvard, McGill, Rice, Vanderbilt, and Yale.

Mark chose the Architecture program at Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois to work closely with professors of architecture, design, and structural engineering.

Scheduled trips and tours included renowned architecture and construction firms, the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio, the Navy Pier, and the Magnificent Mile. Due to the coronavirus emergency,

Mark will attend the 2021 Summer Conference.

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## WHAT CRUSADER TEACHERS ARE SAYING...

### Mrs. Maria Kennedy:

My first grade class has truly embraced the Crusader name during this remote learning. In addition to their regular routine, they have zealously engaged in daily AR reading with a class average of 31 minutes of reading per day. Together they have taken 258 tests and have read a total of 586,775 words in just six weeks! Because of their hard work and diligence, the average book level jumped to 3.2 this week! You make me proud, Crusaders!

### Mrs. Kristie Weems:

In addition to the setbacks and changes that developed during this remote learning time, the 2nd Grade Class faced a personal hardship when the dates of their Confession, First Communion, and Confirmation were rescheduled to mid June. Despite this, the Second Grade Class have continued to vigorously practice the procedure of making a Confession with the gracious assistance of their families. In addition to studiously completing their daily assignments, they are eagerly reviewing each sacrament they will receive this year as they anticipate their special day.

### Mrs. Autumn Taylor:

The entire class has made great strides this year, and I would like to acknowledge Tomas Spiller for his huge improvement in penmanship. Tomas has gone from very often writing illegible letters to writing perfectly formed and spaced letters which make his handwriting a pleasure to read, even on a computer screen.

### Miss Bridget Kennedy:

The 6th grade class has been tackling the daunting task of writing a five paragraph persuasive essay, and the maturity with which they have approached this assignment during remote learning has been nothing short of exceptional! The students have impressed me with their creativity so far, and I'm looking forward to reading their final drafts, which they're working on right now!

### Mrs. Audrey Lenahan:

I have received several emails from my Philosophy II students, telling me how

much they are enjoying St. Augustine's *Confessions*, discussing it over family dinner and even reading it during their free time. It is inspiring to see these students spending their increased leisure time in a spirit of contemplation and in the pursuit of wisdom.

Mr. John Markovetz:

Middle and Upper Geometry scholars have demonstrated exceptional problem-solving skills and attention to detail on their tests, quizzes, and homework during our period of remote learning. Their work has been exceptionally neat and precise, showing each step of their calculations as they work toward the solution of each problem. Their efforts have demonstrated exceptional mastery of the material this quarter.

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## ATHLETICS UPDATE FROM COACH VIDAL

As we near the end of the academic school year, please be aware of the following upcoming activities from the Athletics Department:

--This week a letter will be going out to all incoming 9th-12th families in regards to TAPPS and the process of our two-year alignment.

--On Monday May 18th, we will mail Athletic Banquet award certificates to all the recipients who were nominated by their coaching staff. We will also include this in the Crusader Times on Thursday, May 21st, as community-wide recognition.

--On Friday May 22nd, we will release our Summer Camp program to all families for you to begin registering for our camps.

--Fall Sport Schedules for Middle School Football, Upper School Football, and Middle School Volleyball, and Upper School Volleyball are finalized and posted on the school's website under "Athletics." Middle and Upper School Cross-Country schedules are being worked on as we speak.

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## SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

### **Maria Garza**

*Headed to Texas Tech University*

Favorite Scripture:

Phillipians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Favorite Memory:

"All the times I sing for Mass. After weeks of preparing the music, we sing for our Lord and the congregation, which is such an incredible experience. In the music, I hear God's voice; in music, the Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts however we need it most. I love the feeling of singing my heart out, knowing that the listeners are

connecting with the Lord in profound and unique ways. This memory is how my love for music was born, and I am so grateful to be able to continue singing for Mass after graduation!"



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**Juan Pedro Garza**

*Headed to The University of Texas at San Antonio*

Favorite Scripture:

John 11:35 "Jesus wept." (I love the show of humanity from an all-powerful being. The emotion shows His genuine love for us.)

Favorite Memory:

"Going to the March for Life 2019 in DC was definitely one of the most powerful experiences I've had. Hearing all of the testimonies was gutting, but it helped me understand the importance of the Pro-Life movement, Not to mention all the important people I met, and even getting to send a message to St. Gianna Molla's daughter."



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**Olivia Kisgen**

*Headed to Texas A&M University*

Favorite Scripture:

Phillipians 4:13: "I can do all things

through Christ who strengthens me."

Favorite Memory:

"My freshman year soccer tournament when we went to Houston. My brothers were still playing in high school then, and their team won first place! We had pizza and celebrated at the hotel."



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**Lily Moore**

*Headed to the University of Dallas*

Favorite Scripture:

Jeremiah 29:11 -- "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Favorite Memory:

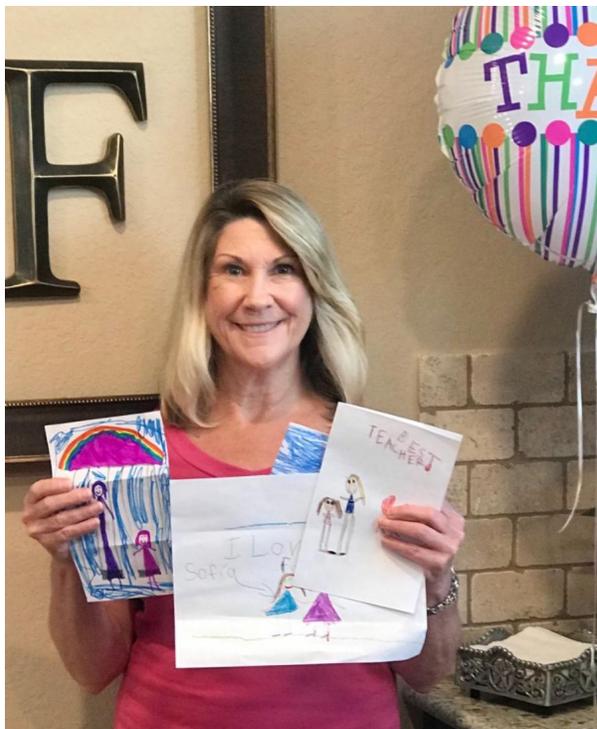
The New York choir trip to perform in Carnegie Hall.



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**FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Mrs. Tina Fitzgerald**

We have a great faculty: knowledgeable, talented, and dedicated--both to our Catholic faith as well as to the education of our Crusaders. We began last week spotlighting a faculty member in the Crusader Times. We asked them a few questions and here are their responses.



*--What do you teach?*

In 26 year's of teaching, this is my first year teaching Kindergarten and I LOVE IT!

*--What you most appreciate about teaching at The Atonement Academy?*

I am blessed to teach in an environment that allows me to practice and model Catholic teachings, morals, ethics, and virtues. I love that we are able to allow our students to grow in faith, hope, and love, as well as help them develop critical thinking skills. Today's world is sadly not allowing these and what a shame. I am able to be a part of this for my students, and I take this responsibility seriously. No matter how great one becomes, without God, they have nothing. I also

love that my colleagues and administration continue to push me to be the best I can be; I think we all do this for each other.

*--What you look forward to in the 2020-2021 school year?*

God willing, I want to physically be in school interacting personally with my students. I cannot wait to hug ALL of my students; past and present! For me, there is no greater joy than to be around my students watching them learn and grow each day. I miss their laughs and giggles, as well as their sheer excitement and joy in learning.

*--Tell us a bit about yourself!*

I have two beautiful children of whom both will graduate this year. My son graduated last Thursday from Texas A&M and will begin working in June. My daughter will graduate in June from high school and attend Texas Tech in the fall. I love to cook and bake. I enjoy working out and taking long walks. I'm very social, so I don't miss many Buncos, book clubs, Bible studies, or gatherings with friends. I am currently reading *The First Emma*, historical fiction about the woman for whom San Antonio's Hotel Emma is named. Camille Di Maio is the author and she and her family used to live in San Antonio and were very active in the Catholic community. In addition, I read anything about the Saints' lives; I am so fascinated by their real stories and how all of us can become saints. I am active at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Boerne and lead the rosary every Monday live on their Facebook page.

*--Something you wish we had asked?*

In my younger years, God gifted me with a singing voice as a second soprano. I earned a spot with a Christian musical group, and we gave four local concerts a year and spent two weeks on the road each summer, traveling the United States on chartered buses, singing at a variety of venues, some of the most memorable of which were St. Patrick's Cathedral and Carnegie Hall. I made the Virginia All State choir all four years of high school, and my junior and senior years was in Virginia's had a top choir, Honor's Choir, normally for seniors only. This choir allowed me to get noticed by a top director, who was asked by Former President Reagan, to form a travel choir to accompany him on his European Tour. That was

an experience of a lifetime and one I will never forget. Yes, President Reagan was as great as they say. In addition to all of this, I have sung for the Washington Nationals, The National Symphony Orchestra, and at the University of Sorbonne in Paris where I was featured for having perfect pitch. But the one experience that most surprises people is that I was a back-up singer for Barry Manilow. I have loved his music since I was in elementary school, and to sing for him was a dream come true. His back up singer had strep throat, and he needed someone to audition and be ready in three days. My parents still talk about seeing me on stage with one of my favorite performers.

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Brittany Weems



After graduating from The Atonement Academy in 2009, I went on to spend four years at the University of Notre Dame, where I graduated with a double major in Spanish and Pre-Med. I then returned to San Antonio to study at UT Health Science Center San Antonio and graduated with an MD in 2017.

I'm now completing my last weeks of residency training in El Paso, specializing in Emergency Medicine, and look forward to graduating this June as a full-fledged attending physician. My time since graduation has been studded with triumphs and tragedies, including international medical work and education, a mass shooting, and the current COVID-19 pandemic--while, on the less serious side, I've

also been entertaining diverse hobbies from baking and jiu jitsu to competitive punning and Dungeons & Dragons.

I've been blessed with friends, family, and a job I love, and I can't wait to see what comes next!

*Dr. Weems is the daughter of Atonement teacher Kristie Weems and her husband, John.*

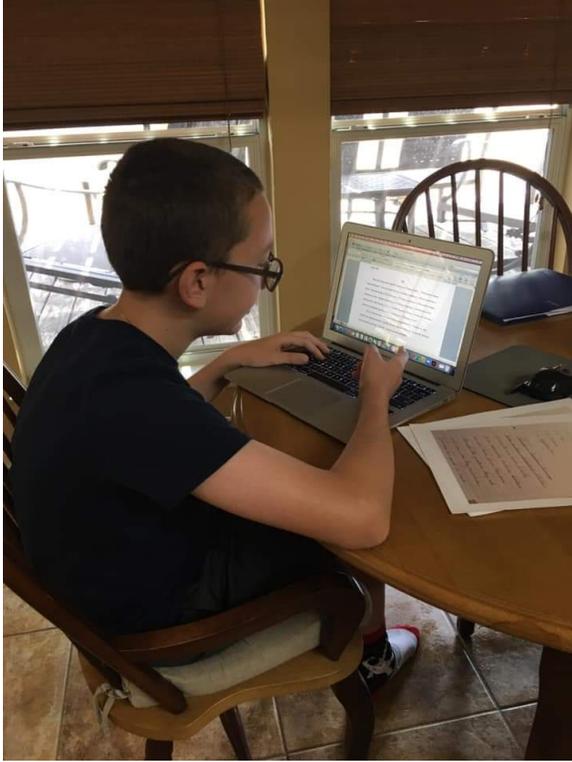


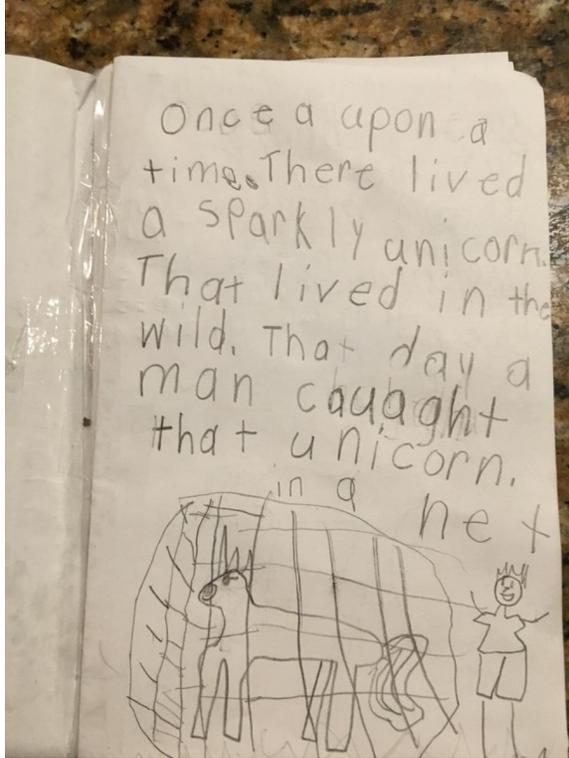
## SCENES FROM YOUR HOME CAMPUS



Send in your photos (and observations) of your "Stay at Home" life these days so that we can share them with each other! We will post them in the weekly newsletter to keep faces and places familiar sights until we are together again on campus! Please send your observations and images to Mrs. Havel at [mhavel@atonementonline.com](mailto:mhavel@atonementonline.com). (We will share these with Mrs. Powell and the yearbook staff to be sure that, in every way, 2019-2020 is a year to remember!)







Sixth grader Lucas Sanchez wears his uniform for his weekly Zoom meeting with Miss Kennedy.

Evan Landry is working on an essay for his English class.

Our students are enjoying insects and animals! Depicted are kindergartner Sofia Essex with a big bug and 4th grader Theodora Galvez with her pet bunny.

Getting daily exercise on their bikes are the Garza-Rivera boys, Sebastian and Aaron, with their little sister.

Laney Campbell's grandma came over and taught her how to make cinnamon rolls

Mrs. Weem's Isaiah Casey, Catherine Giltner, and Quinn Monaghan showed their participation in the class's "Tie Dye Day"!

Kindergarten scholar Frances Ku shared a story book she is writing. Great work, Franny!

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# STAY HOME

**COVID 19**  
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

## STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information: [dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus](https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus)

# STAY HOME

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15415 Red Robin Road  
San Antonio, TX 78255

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