

# ST. URSULA VILLA

## OUR URSULINE HERITAGE: THE SPIRIT OF ANGELA MERICI



ST. URSULA VILLA



# *Mission Statement*

St. Ursula Villa, a coeducational Catholic elementary school in the Ursuline tradition, nurtures the whole child, fosters academic excellence, and instills a Christ-centered commitment to society.

## *Beliefs Statement*

The Ursulines of Cincinnati, the Board of Trustees, staff, parents, and students of St. Ursula Villa are committed to the core values of an Ursuline education.

- ◆ We believe that the primary teachers of children are their parents, with whom the school collaborates to help the students develop their God-given talents.
- ◆ We believe in the integration of Catholic truths and values through example, service, openness, and optimism.

- ◆ We believe that daily prayer is important.
- ◆ We believe in every student's capacity to achieve and that instruction should be differentiated to address individual learning styles.
- ◆ We believe in the value of diversity which challenges students to recognize and respect the beliefs and customs of all people.
- ◆ We believe in educating the whole person by promoting the

spiritual, moral, physical, creative, and intellectual development of each student in a Catholic environment.

- ◆ We believe in teaching and cultivating the self-discipline skills that allow one to act with responsibility and integrity within society.
- ◆ We believe in providing a safe and nurturing environment in order to promote student learning.


## INTRODUCTION

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With a long history as the only Ursuline Catholic elementary school in Greater Cincinnati, St. Ursula Villa provides a unique educational experience based on the legacy of St. Angela Merici. We are grateful to the Ursulines of Cincinnati who have embedded the visionary spirit of St. Angela into the life blood of St. Ursula Villa over the last hundred years. All that we are, and all that we aspire to be, rests on this rich and vibrant foundation.

The enduring commitment of the St. Ursula Villa faculty and staff, Board of Trustees, and parent community to the core values of an Ursuline education described in this booklet demonstrates that our identity remains aligned with our proud heritage as an Ursuline school.

I invite you to peruse the pages within to learn how these nine characteristics of an Ursuline education become more than words and are truly integrated into the culture of this remarkable school and into the lives of our children.



Polly Duplace  
Principal

## THE CHRIST-CENTERED SPIRIT OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI AS A GUIDING FACTOR IN THE SCHOOL

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ participate in religious instruction and formation at all age levels.
- ◆ celebrate class and all school prayer services and liturgies including the Feast Days of Saint Angela and Saint Ursula.
- ◆ participate in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati's certification program for catechists.
- ◆ focus on *The Christ-Centered Spirit of Saint Angela* at the second grade level.

*Each day at the Villa begins with a prayer, but the dialogue continues all day long as we strive to incorporate Angela's Christ-centered spirit in each task of our day, whether it be religion classes, service projects, liturgy and prayer services or the kind, encouraging words that pass among the members of the Villa community. Saint Angela Merici and her Christ-centered spirit are alive and well at St. Ursula Villa.*

– Jane McCarthy, Intermediate Teacher



*Be it known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school. He is the unseen but ever present teacher in its classes. He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students.*



## RECOGNITION OF THE DIGNITY AND GIFTS OF ALL STUDENTS

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ proclaim the uniqueness of each student as a child of God.
- ◆ recognize that weaknesses are opportunities for growth.
- ◆ provide student leadership opportunities.
- ◆ participate in Everybody Counts and Fine Arts Day.
- ◆ focus on *Recognition of the Dignity and Gifts of All Students* at the sixth grade level.

*As teachers, we are provided a special opportunity to witness and appreciate each child's uniqueness as God has intended. On a daily basis we get to see God's children in situations where they grow socially, emotionally, academically, and spiritually. We are all blessed with the rewards seen from the growth and successes of all children.*

– Marty Beaver, Intermediate Teacher



*Love your students equally, and do not prefer one more than another, because they are all children of God. And you do not know what He wants to make of them. For how do you know that those who seem to you to be the least and lowest are not to become the most generous and most pleasing to His Majesty? (Eighth Counsel of Saint Angela Merici)*

## EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE PERSON

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ encourage continuous growth – physically, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and creatively.
- ◆ employ instructional and assessment methods that allow every child to learn and demonstrate progress.
- ◆ provide diverse opportunities for participation in extra-curricular activities in the arts, sports, academic and social clubs, scouting, service, and summer camps.
- ◆ provide guidance and counseling services.
- ◆ focus on *Emphasis on the Development of the Whole Person* at the third grade level.

*Starting in the Early Childhood Program, students experience a broad range of engaging, hands-on, and worthwhile activities in a comfortable and nurturing environment where they are invited to learn and grow. The development of the whole child is fostered through physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual learning avenues and is an important part of St. Ursula Villa's Ursuline heritage.*

- Lisa Wolfer, Early Childhood Director



*Be concerned and careful to know and understand the behavior of your students and to be aware of their needs, both spiritual and temporal. And yourselves provide for these to the best of your ability, if it is possible. (Fourth Counsel)*

## COMMITMENT TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ encourage a spirit of Christian service in daily life at the Villa.
- ◆ serve the needs of those less fortunate in the Cincinnati and world communities—Peanut Butter and Jelly Days, Giving Tree, food and clothing collections, and mission support.
- ◆ involve parents in volunteer service to the school community.
- ◆ recognize outstanding student service at liturgies twice yearly.
- ◆ focus on *Commitment to Christian Service* at the eighth grade level.

*A Villa education includes a core element of service which helps build a conscious awareness of gratitude and responsibility. Our students are often found serving one another within the Villa community, going out into the neighborhoods of our city to discover the immeasurable ways they can make a difference, and have even made contributions across continents. It is in this service to others that our children truly learn that they are called to be leaders both within their families and in their world.*

- Jeanne Feldkamp, Past and Current Parent



*Learn from our Lord Jesus Christ, who while in this world could say, “I have been in your midst not as one who is served, but as one who serves”. (First Counsel)*



# EXPRESSIONS OF OUR URSULINE IDENTITY

Banners illustrating the nine characteristics of an Ursuline education were designed and produced by St. Ursula Villa students in the Arts Fund and Villa Parents Organization, the beautifully quilted and embellished banners are a visual representation of Ursuline



*The Christ-Centered Spirit Of Saint Angela Merici As A Guiding Factor In The School*



*Emphasis On The Development Of The Whole Person*



*Commitment To Christian Service*



*Emphasis On The Dignity And Gifts Of All Students*



Kindergarten through eighth grade and Artist-in-Residence Pat Statzer. Generously funded through the Gino DiMario Fine Arts Endowment and the life at St. Ursula Villa and are proudly displayed in the school's main lobby.



*Personal Care  
For The Individual*



*On Diversity  
The School*



*Academic Excellence  
In All Subjects*



*Spirit of Optimism  
And Openness*



*Strong Family Spirit  
Within The School*



## EMPHASIS ON DIVERSITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ welcome all students and their families to the Villa community.
- ◆ celebrate the diversity of God's creation in all of its forms.
- ◆ participate in the Girls Hope and EdChoice programs.
- ◆ study world cultures across the curriculum and emphasize the contributions of minorities in history.
- ◆ focus on *Emphasis on Diversity within the School* at the seventh grade level.

*Diversity within a school is not necessarily visible to the eye. At St. Ursula Villa, we foster diversity by welcoming and working with all of God's children. The importance of every unique quality is emphasized daily. Throughout all grades' curricula, we strive to cultivate appreciation of differences within the school and outside our community as well.*

– Andrea Moeder, Junior High Teacher



*Look at human mothers. Even if they had a thousand sons and daughters, they would have them all firmly fixed in their hearts, each and every one, for that is how love works. It even seems that the more children they have, the greater is their love and caring for each one of them. (Second Legacy)*



## PERSONAL CARE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ encourage and support a strong partnership of teachers and parents for the care of each child.
- ◆ provide a campus minister and school chaplain.
- ◆ identify and accommodate special needs of children.
- ◆ provide service and support of learning specialists, school nurse, and school counselor.
- ◆ encourage healthy lifestyle habits.
- ◆ focus on *Personal Care for the Individual* at the kindergarten level.

*Our Villa community is strengthened through the holistic nurturing of each individual student. The staff consistently finds new ways to cultivate every child's talents while encouraging them through their challenges. Our small class size allows us the privilege of a more individualized relationship with the children entrusted to our care. Children arrive as toddlers and leave ready to take on the world!*

- Jeannine Blatt, Nurse



*I ask you to take into account, having each and every one deeply fixed in your hearts and minds, and not just their names, but their backgrounds and character, and everything concerning them. (Second Legacy)*

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN ALL SUBJECTS

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ create and sustain a curriculum committed to a wide variety of educational experiences.
- ◆ maintain high expectations that are developmentally appropriate for students at every age.
- ◆ promote teacher collaboration at all levels and in all subject areas.
- ◆ emphasize the acquisition of problem solving, thinking, organizational, and life skills.
- ◆ focus on *Academic Excellence in All Subjects* at the fifth grade level.

*Academic excellence is achieved over time. It begins with the firm foundation of the home, in stories and songs, stargazing and counting rhymes. At school, skills are practiced and mastered with great diligence. Knowledge and insight are acquired. Finally, students communicate ideas, explore new concepts, and discover the wonders of God's creation with confidence.*

– Kathy Finkbeiner, Primary Teacher



*Never cease to cultivate this vine, which has been entrusted to you. After that, leave the rest to God to work wonders at the time which God finds best. (Eighth Counsel)*

## SPRIT OF OPTIMISM AND OPENNESS

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ maintain an open door policy – students, administrators, parents, and colleagues.
- ◆ focus on the positive, even in challenging times.
- ◆ sustain a classroom atmosphere of encouragement and support.
- ◆ involve staff and students in a continuous positive process of self-evaluation.
- ◆ focus on *Spirit of Optimism and Openness* at the fourth grade level.

*Being open and having a spirit of optimism is knowing God has a divine calling for your life, believing you are exactly where God wants you to be, doing exactly what God wants you to do! It is living in the moment certain that God has His eye on you.*

– Kathy Krieger, School Secretary



*I have this undaunted and firm faith and hope in the infinite, divine Goodness, that not only will we easily overcome all dangers and adversities, but we will conquer them, and with great glory and jubilation. (Prologue to the Rule)*

## STRONG FAMILY SPIRIT WITHIN THE SCHOOL

At St. Ursula Villa, we

- ◆ celebrate family liturgies, school Masses, and prayer services.
- ◆ include parents in the implementation of Discipline With Purpose.
- ◆ communicate between school and home via conferences, e-mail, Wednesday Folder, school website, and Edline.
- ◆ welcome families on Grandparents and Special Friends, and Parent Visit Days.
- ◆ focus on *Strong Family Spirit within the School* at the first grade level.

*In our eight years at the Villa, we have met many wonderful families whom we now call friends. We enjoy attending a variety of community events throughout the year. First Communion was one of the most memorable. We not only celebrated our own daughter's First Communion, but also shared the joy of all the Villa families that participated. It is occasions such as this that build fellowship and strengthen the Villa community.*

– The Stettler Family



*Be united with one another by the bonds of charity, esteeming, aiding, and supporting one another in Jesus Christ...See, then, how important this union and harmony; for that reason, long for it, embrace it, and hold on to it with all your strength. (Last Counsel)*



*Strive to be faithful to that which God has called you.*

- Saint Angela Merici



We are grateful to the Ursuline Identity Committee  
for their vision and guidance.



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