

Reflections on a Catholic Education Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA



Emily Carlson '14
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

Since attending a Lasallian high school, I am more aware of social justice issues and more involved in community service. I am fully involved in my school community and enjoy the sense of family a Lasallian education creates. Because of Justin-Siena's emphasis on social justice and community, I applied to colleges based on the service opportunities available to me and searched for medium-sized schools that would allow me to make many connections but also have close, personal relationships with my peers and professors. After interacting with teachers at Justin-Siena and hearing their stories, I am interested in pursuing a Lasallian college or becoming a part of the Lasallian Volunteers to help communities and mentor students. The Lasallian education does not only concentrate on academics, but strives for a holistic education. Students develop character through learning about and employing the [Five Core Principles](#) and are fully prepared to serve and lead in an ever-changing world.



Christin Estes '14
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

Being in a Lasallian Catholic School has impacted my life. I have learned what it is like to be a part of a Christ-centered community. I have learned the value of serving and really getting involved in the community as well. With everything that my school offers, I have really appreciated all of the opportunities I have been given and really got to take the time to get involved. By doing so, I have been able to learn a lot about myself through this process. What I find very unique about Lasallian education is the value of being appreciative towards what I have. I am so blessed to be going to this school. Being here has allowed me to be prepared to serve and to lead in an ever-changing world. I have been able to challenge myself and become a better and stronger leader through every struggle that has come my way. My life at a Lasallian school is much different from a school that does not have these faith-based values. Faith plays a major role in my education. In every class, we take time to remember the presence of God. Through my high school experience, I have been able to learn and experience my own personal spiritual journey. Most of the people here have a strong faith based background, which allow me and other students to be around those who have similar faiths. This allows us all to have a strong connection and appreciation for the same values. Essentially, a Lasallian Catholic school has majorly affected me to become the person that I am today.



Max Risch '14
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

I am not Catholic, but I do attend a Catholic high school. As a freshman, I had no concept of what “being a Catholic” even meant. I attended progressive elementary and middle schools filled with atheists and agnostics. Religion played no role in my upbringing. Starting high school, the dramatic shift was overwhelming. I had to pray before every class, attend Mass once a month, and take a mandatory religion class every year. It was weird. I could not wrap my head around the idea of religion. But that did not inhibit my growing curiosity. I listened to my religion teachers, interrogated my peers, and acquired an interest in Catholicism. Last year, I felt my efforts qualified me to serve as the student body’s Director of Faith Development. I didn’t think I would win the election. Regardless of my affiliation, the community at Justin-Siena trusted me with their faith. In all honesty, I am grateful for my Catholic school experience. My peers and teachers alike are amiable; my community is accepting; and Catholicism is intriguing. You could say I lucked out in a variety of ways.



Genny Say '14
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

After spending time with my friends that attend other private and public high schools, I have grown to realize that the [Lasallian core principles](#) are what really make my high school experience unique. Because of the Lasallian values we live by, such as concern for the poor and social justice, I have had the opportunity to attend a VENAVER and build houses in New Orleans. I do not have any other friends who have service trips like the ones I am able to take part in. The opportunity to have so many options to get involved with service has taught me to really put myself out there and search for outside opportunities to serve others, as well as exposing me to the real need for service. Being that we are also a Catholic school, I am blessed to be in an environment that encourages me to deepen my faith and to not be afraid to live out my faith. The frequent Masses and liturgies, required religion classes, and yearly class retreats are all wonderful things that I take part in year round. Being constantly reminded of how my faith, academic, and social lives can all be emerged into one is very eye opening. With my faith playing an active role in my school environment, it grants me the strength to be a good example and be proud to live out my faith and morals. Everyday, my faith gives me the motivation to take the next step because it gives me hope and endurance to know that there will always be a good outcome at the end of the tunnel despite all the stress and hardships.



Emma Schulman '15
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

My experience at a Lasallian Catholic school has been nothing but a positive step forward on my life journey. I know looking forward in my life that I will always be grateful for the opportunity and inspiring education I had at a Catholic school. It is truly a privilege to go to a school where I can freely express myself while being introduced to such a diverse spectrum of new things. The thing that makes this experience so unique is the care and love that is sewn into the Catholic school experience. No one is left behind to struggle when the teachers are doing their rightful job as motivators. Being at a

Catholic school has provided me with so many amazing opportunities I never would be able to complete had I had been exposed to new ways or thinking or been pushed out my comfort zone. In my school life faith being a part of it has transferred into my daily life. It has strengthened and renewed my spirituality on a great deal of levels that has opened my eyes and heart to God.



Symone Williams '15
Justin-Siena High School, Napa, CA

Being part of a Lasallian school, and community is more than what is stated on the surface, it is a home, a family, and continuous love and support. I have come across many opportunities I feel I would not have experienced, if I were not at a private, Catholic, Lasallian school. I have grown more comfortable, close, and familiar in my faith, which will stay with me throughout my life. I am connected with alumni of Lasallian schools, benefiting me later on in life. I am blessed with a wonderful education and know it is something to keep special because not everyone is as fortunate. I have grown

closer with multiple people in my class through retreats and reflection days. I have learned how to persevere when the going gets rough, not only with my education but also in life. Also, because of this I have set the standards for myself high, and expect more of myself. In a Lasallian community you have supporters willing to go above and beyond for you, and will never be alone. A Lasallian community becomes apart of you, and will stay with you for life.

[See more Catholic Schools Week reflections >](#)