



Branches on the Vine

NEW CHESTERTON ACADEMY OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI TO OPEN THIS FALL

JANUARY 24-30, 2026

As the demand for Catholic education continues to grow, a new Catholic high school is planning to open its doors this fall in New Britain to serve families in central Connecticut.

Chesterton Academy of St. Francis of Assisi, a new high school, will be welcoming students to the existing school building on the St. Francis property at 30 Pendleton Road, New Britain. The school will open with students in grades nine and 10, adding grades 11 and 12 over the next two years.

“It’s very exciting, and it’s exciting to Father Michael Casey,” says Andrew Blaski, the new headmaster, who was hired to start hiring and admissions.

The school will be part of the Chesterton Schools Network, a national organization founded in Minnesota that has developed curriculum for its more than 70 private Catholic liberal arts schools in the country.

The Chesterton Academy of St. Francis of Assisi will also be a parish school, part of St. Francis of Assisi Church, under Father Casey and the Archdiocese of Hartford.

“Most Chesterton Schools are independent Catholic schools, but as conversations progressed Archbishop Christopher J. Coyne decided to make it a parish school, which I think is wonderful,” Blaski says. “There’s a whole host of support from the Superintendent of Schools Valerie Mara, use of the parish school building, the help of parish staff, and the daily Mass will be available to us.”

What sets this Catholic high school apart from others in the archdiocese, he says, is a broad classical liberal arts education that is integrated and historically based. It will transport students back to the ancient world of Greece and Rome, through the Medieval period, through the High Middle Ages and the Renaissance, to the Modern World.

Andrew Blaski, Ph.D., is the headmaster of Chesterton Academy of St. Francis of Assisi, a new regional Catholic high school set to open in New Britain.
PHOTO COURTESY CHESTERTON ACADEMY



Following the Chesterton Academy model, this classical education will teach grammar, logic and rhetoric, as well as music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy.

In the humanities, students will be challenged to read primary sources from Western civilization, such as the works of Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Shakespeare and Chaucer. “There’s a heavy reliance on the great works of Western civilization. We want our students to have exposure to the great masters,” Blaski says, and “an ability to penetrate dense and difficult ideas.”

They’ll also learn through the Socratic seminar style of teaching, which emphasizes discussion and conversation, preparing students for college-level learning.

Math and science courses will employ modern textbooks but also focus on sparking wonder and an understanding of the created world, Blaski notes. The visual arts, art history, music, drama and choir will complement their education.

The Catholic faith, central to the school’s mission, will be celebrated through the daily Mass and a focus on the sacramental life and the human virtues. Students will read the Catechism, the New Testament, and learn Latin and Spanish.

Tuition will be \$9,000 a year, affordable for a Catholic school, according to Blaski, and financial assistance may be available.

The school is planning to hold a series of public information sessions so interested parents can learn more about its offerings and how to enroll. A virtual information session will be held on Tues., Jan. 27 at 7 p.m., followed by an in-person information session at the school building on Sun., Feb. 1 at 1 p.m.

Chesterton Academy is currently accepting applications. To apply or learn more, interested families should visit chestertonsfa.org or call Andrew Blaski at 860.348.3455.

-Story by Shelley Wolf



Upcoming Events

The Vocation of Caregiving: The Challenge of Presence

Day Retreat for Caregivers
Saturday, January 31, 2026
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



During this day of retreat, we will explore the Caregiving Journey, the choices we make and the personal costs to us. We will discuss The Good Samaritan, the daughter of Jairus, and Mary and Martha, all as models of caregivers. We will include time for discussion, quiet reflection, the opportunity for conversation with trained counselors, and sharing with one another.

Offering: \$75, includes lunch

Visit www.holyfamilyretreat.org to register or learn more



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FEBRUARY 26TH, 2026 6:30-8PM

MARCH 26TH, 2026 6:30-8PM

APRIL 23RD, 2026 6:30-8PM

QUESTIONS? CONTACT SR COLLEEN AT 860-368-0826

ALL MEETINGS HELD AT THE AVILA HOUSE - 183 CHURCH STREET, NEWINGTON, CT

Word of God Sunday

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