

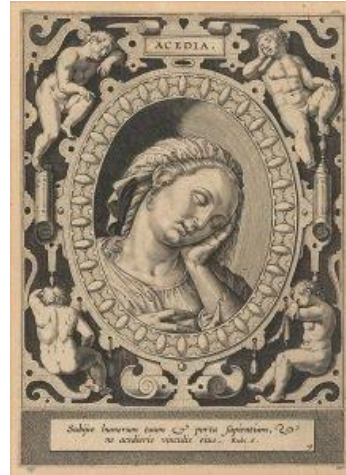
Teaching the Great Books with Josh Gibbs

Lesson 9: Students Afflicted with Acedia or Ennui

Outline:

“...the sin that believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, hates nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die.”

Dorothy Sayers



“Who are we teaching?”

- Philosophical Anthropology
 - What does it mean to be a human being in Classical Christian Education?
 - What defines the student in Classical Christian Education?
- High school teachers are instructing teenagers.
 - What is the teenage position in the world? Are there any possibilities for moral despair?

Acedia is a kind of “spiritual disease”

- Acedia: negligence and apathy mixed with moral despair

Why do students suffer from acedia?

- People do not generally depend a whole lot on the lives of students
 - Students are untethered (they are rarely committed to God or a spouse).
- Students are often crushed under the weight of sin.
- Students are not taught theological truth.

Often, the chief reason or motivation for goodness in the ethical life is concern and care for others, who are depending on me.

The cultivation of virtue is necessary for a Classical Christian Education!

- Christian piety as consisting of fasting, praying, and alms-giving
 - Acedia is a lassitude and despair that overwhelms spiritual work.