

# Personal, Vibrant, Active Faith

Mrs. Iva Nell Rhea | Middle School Principal



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Children change remarkably between ages 11-14. Certainly, the most obvious change is physical, but there is important growth that is not so easily ascertained. One aspect that is particularly challenging to measure and quantify is spiritual growth. As boys and girls move through the middle school years, they move from holding to the values and beliefs of their parents to either accepting or rejecting those faith systems on a personal level. CCS teachers, and particularly Bible teachers, have the mission of making God's Word and the Christian faith alive and enticing to students, many of whom have been hearing Bible stories since infancy and attending CCS since kindergarten. How does a Bible teacher help move a young student to a personal faith, a vibrant faith, an active faith?

Lubega Frankio, currently teaching eighth graders, has been teaching Bible at CCS for 12 years. These 14-year-olds are not an easy audience: they can quickly sense a fake or hypocrite, and they can point out inconsistencies and illogical conclusions from across a football field. Yet Mr. Frankio uses his vast knowledge of the Bible and apologetics to move his students from a rudimentary understanding of how faith impacts choices to evaluating worldviews presented in current culture, diverse populations and academia. Mr. Frankio sees his eighth graders nearly every day. On days when his roof leaks, they are watching. When he gets only four hours sleep, students are asking, "Are you for real?" When a family member is sick, and the medicine is not covered by insurance, students are waiting to see cracks in the armor of his Christian faith. Even through difficult times, Mr. Frankio consistently ministers to his students.

An eighth-grade mother writes about Mr. Frankio's impact on her children, "Regardless of the trials and tribulations he was experiencing, my child noted that he was always smiling and giving God glory. My child was impressed that even though bad things were happening, Mr. Frankio was still happy. I asked, "Why do you think that is true?" which led to a discussion about how even during bad times, GOD can be our



source of JOY if we let Him. What an awesome witness Mr. Frankio is for the kids and a great example for letting GOD dictate our JOY, and not our circumstances."

Another CCS family reflects on the impact that Mr. Frankio has made on their family, "Just like many CCS families, we appreciate the integration of biblical values into each course our children take, but it is the advanced biblical learning on the secondary level that has truly made a lasting impression on our family. We have enjoyed having family conversations based on our child's lessons from Mr. Frankio's Bible class. Teaching our children to understand and defend their Christian faith on a deeper level is one of the primary reasons our children attend CCS."

Eighth graders describe their teacher as wise, a good listener, smart and a deep thinker. Andrew Bezner says, "Mr. Frankio has expanded my knowledge about what goes on in the world." Jacob Moran comments, "He gives me different points of view about how to look at a situation." Cody Andrus adds, "Mr. Frankio prepares us to combat ideas that attack Christianity."

God is faithful to surround our middle school students with godly role models who invest their lives in partnering with Christian families to rear a new generation of Warriors for the Kingdom.