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August 1, 2018

Mr. Steven Hemler
Catholic Apologetics Institute of North America
P.O. Box 2125
Culpeper, VA 22701

Dear Mr. Hemler:

I want to take this opportunity to state how much my eighth grade biology students enjoyed your presentations about evolution and creation, the Catholic Church's understanding of the Genesis creation stories, and the scientific evidence of God's existence. I believe that it is extremely important for students to be exposed to the Church's teachings about science and learn that science and faith are not mutually exclusive. As children enter their teenage years, many begin to question their faith. I believe your presentations gave them information that will be critical to their continued growth in faith and that without such information, many students will follow a more secular path through their lives.

Your presentations were very appropriate for upper middle school students. My eighth graders were challenged to analyze their beliefs about evolution and consider the evidence for theistic versus atheistic evolution. They also showed great interest in your presentation about the evidence for the existence of God. As a follow-up to your visit, they wrote an essay to defend their beliefs as to whether or not God is behind the evolutionary process. Their responses showed that they were able to understand the material you presented and that they were challenged to think in ways that many had not done before. A number of the students also incorporated information about the existence of God into their essays.

Thanks again for sharing your faith talks with my students at Saint Patrick Catholic School. We truly appreciated this wonderful educational opportunity. I believe it will motivate many of my students to reflect more deeply about their faith and hopefully strengthen that faith as they prepare to enter the more secular worlds of high school and college.

Sincerely,

Richard Strauss, Ed.D.

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