The Good Word from the Office of Catholic Education is published three times annually and shared with the following groups: Parish Administrators of Catholic Education, Catholic School Administrators, Pastors, Education Commission/Board Presidents and Friends of Catholic Education. Your contributions of ideas for stories and your comments are welcome.

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Shrinking Distances with Webcasting

Providing professional development for teachers and principals in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis can sometimes be difficult, given the distances between some of our schools and parishes, and the Catholic Center. In November, the archdiocese began to address this challenge using technology! Thus far, professional development opportunities have been provided for more than 1000 Catholic educators at a cost of less than $500!

The OCE Schools Team has begun using webcasting to provide professional development sessions. Teachers and principals at their schools are directed to a pre-determined website where they are able to view documents, PowerPoint presentations, videos and the speaker. They phone in to a toll-free number to access the audio portion. Participants can speak to one another and to the presenter, ask questions and be active learners during a presentation just as if they were onsite. Following the presentation, the presenter can e-mail handouts and provide additional information to those registered. Topics covered so far include the inclusion of students with special needs, better ways to teach vocabulary, and how to provide accommodations for students on standardized assessments.

The OCE Faith Formation Team is beginning to use the technology for their purposes as well. Both evangelization and youth ministry are planning webcasts for the convenience of their constituents. Youth ministers in New Albany will be able to easily communicate with those in Indianapolis or Richmond without the cost and inconvenience of travel.

In addition to travel costs, the time that is saved for all involved is significant. A one-hour meeting no longer needs to take two or three hours because the travel time is zero. Part-time workers can participate because they can log on from home or anywhere there is a computer with internet access. As one teacher said, “I feel more connected than I ever have to the rest of the archdiocese. This is great!”

The Office of Catholic Education is also using the technology to hold routine meetings with various groups. Again, the technology is saving both time and money – two valuable resources, while allowing the work to be accomplished more easily.

Face-to-face interaction is still very important and the new technology will not replace every meeting. When used appropriately, however, it is a good way to increase and improve overall communication and provide additional opportunities for our educational ministers to collaborate across the 14,000 square-mile archdiocese. It is one more way that we are able to be good stewards of our resources while working to better serve the people of God.

Catholic Schools Week
January 31 thru February 5

Catholic Schools Week is a time to celebrate the quality education and solid foundation in faith and academics that our students receive. This year’s theme reflects on the lasting value and commitment of Catholic education and its role in fostering the faith, knowledge, morals and discipline that prepare our youth for their future roles as committed citizens, productive employees and effective leaders. The Office of Catholic Education salutes our students, families, faculties, staff, volunteers and all who support Catholic education!
Celebrating Catholic School Values

The 14th annual Celebrating Catholic School Values Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards dinner was held on November 10, 2009 at the Indiana Convention Center. The keynote speaker was Bill Polian, President of the Indianapolis Colts, a Catholic school product and member of the Board of Directors of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies. Mr Polian told the audience of about 1000 people that they must make the same sacrifices that previous generations made to continue Catholic schools today. He also accepted the 2009 Community Service Award on behalf of the Colts for the team’s extraordinary impact on the Indianapolis and Indiana communities through their accomplishments on and off the football field. This year’s Career Achievement Honorees were five graduates of Catholic schools who have led lives that exemplify the values taught in Catholic education:

Oliver Jackson, St. Rita Parish
Bob and Elly McNamara, St. Luke Parish
Patricia (Pat) Cronin, Christ the King Parish
Charles "Chick" Lauck, St. Barnabas Parish

Susan Brock Williams of Purdue University served as chairperson for the event; Michael Eagan of Entheos Architects was the development chair; and Kathryn Brennan, New Albany, was the nominations committee chair. Platinum Partners at the $15,000 level included: The Indianapolis Colts, Milliman, Inc.; the Pfleger family; St. Vincent Health, and the Wilhelm family. We are grateful to our sponsors at all levels and to all of our volunteers. The event raised over $265,000 for need-based student financial aid to add to over $4 million raised through past events.

The evening also included a moving video tribute to the late Philip J. Wilhelm, a longtime volunteer and generous supporter of Catholic Schools who died on August 28, 2009. Phil was in the first group of Career Achievement Honorees in 1996 and served as chairperson for the event in 1999.

Serra Club ~ College Connection for Catholics

Serra International, a Catholic organization whose mission is to foster, affirm and promote vocations to ministry in the Catholic Church, is onto something! In 2007, the Serra Club USA Council initiated a program called the College Connector Program for Catholics designed to connect incoming college freshman with the Catholic presence on the college campuses they will attend. Over 10,000 college freshman have been welcomed in just the first two years of the program through this program. “Our hope is that these young people will meet other like-minded Catholics and grow in that faith community and that the church will influence their lives during these very important formative years,” said Homer Radford, Vice President of Vocations for the USA Council of Serra.

The connection begins when parishes and Catholic high schools supply the Serra Club with the names and addresses of their graduating seniors, along with the name and location of the school they plan to attend. Serra then sends the names of these students to the college campus ministry departments. From there, the campus ministers send out welcoming letters to the newcomers. On the other end, the local Serra Club prepares a packet for each student which has information about the Catholic community at the college he or she will be attending. They deliver these packets to the parishes and schools to be forwarded on to the freshmen. The parish or school may add a letter from the pastor, principal, youth or campus minister wishing the students well as they enter this new phase of their life and letting them know that they look forward to their return to their parish over their breaks.

We applaud the Serra Club of Indianapolis for their efforts in helping our young people continue their lives of faith during some of the most vulnerable years of their young lives. Parish youth ministers or campus ministers are invited take advantage of this program and begin now to prepare information about your seniors. The Serra Club will contact you in the spring! Go to www.serraus.org to learn more about the Serra Club and the College Connection for Catholics Program
Living Life Abundantly: The Bishop’s Bash

They came by the carload, and while parking spots filled fast, the chairs filled even faster, and more kept coming. It was an unexpected turnout, and it left organizers wondering, "Was there enough food? Were people filled?"

By the end of the evening, the answer was apparent. The 250 young adults who attended the first annual “Bishop's Bash” left filled with something other than earthly food – the grace of the Holy Spirit. The evening opened with the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, celebrated by our host for the evening, Archbishop Daniel Buechlein at his residence.

“I accepted the invitation to host the Bishop’s Bash because it was an opportunity to let young adults in the Archdiocese know that our Church values them and, indeed, needs their participation in our mission,” said Archbishop Daniel to the crowd.

Opportunities for young adults to become involved in ministry are flourishing; made apparent by the many groups who stepped forward to share information about their organizations. As the Archbishop observed, “The attendees mixed well considering it was a first time for several different groups and people of different cultures to gather.”

Karina Carbajal, a member of the Latino young adult group, shared her experience. "First of all, being invited was something I didn't expect. Meeting people who speak different languages was great, and to see that even when we do not speak the same language, we were united, that made my faith stronger."

Mission accomplished? The Bishop’s Bash was conceived to cultivate an atmosphere of unity among the young adults of the Archdiocese. Archbishop Buechlein stated, “I am confident that we will see more of our young adults who want to be part of the life of our local Church. The positive spirit of the young adults was encouraging and contagious... attentiveness at the Eucharist was impressive.”

It was impressive that so many were willing to share their faith and be shining examples of hope to a world so desperate for Life. Please pray for our young adults, and pray that events like the Bishop’s Bash will continue to grow and that more people will learn just what it means to “live life abundantly.”

By Missy Brassie

World Youth Day 2011
Madrid, Spain
August 13-22, 2011

Online registration now open for young adults ages 18-35 from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Lafayette

Spiritual Directors:
Fr. Rick Nagel and Fr. Joshua Janko

For more information please visit:
www.archindy.org/youngadult

The OCE Communication Team is constantly working to keep the OCE website, www.archindy.org/oce/, fresh and current. Team members are currently working to completely revamp the “Our Programs” section of the site, which provides brief descriptions of all OCE programs and services as well as links to pertinent information about each area. This area is aimed mainly at key OCE constituents: pastors, parish administrators of religious education, directors of youth ministry and school administrators. A larger project is to have “Public Pages” available for each ministry of the OCE aimed at parishioners, parents or others who visit the site. These pages are accessible from colorful buttons along the left side of the OCE main page.

Most of the public pages are now active, but the Catholic Schools, Faith Formation and SPRED Program pages are still works in progress. The entire website has been modified to allow direct changes to content by OCE team members. Past issues of The Good Word as well as other items of interest regarding Catholic education and faith formation are available in the “Public Archives” on the front page.
Interparochial High School Development/Advancement Audits

Matching grants have been offered to interparochial high schools throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to fund professional audits of the schools’ development/institutional advancement efforts. The grants were made possible from funds raised for this purpose in the recent Legacy for Our Mission campaign.

Most of the high schools’ advancement programs have become very sophisticated over the years not only in strategic planning, communicating a positive message about the schools, and attracting new enrollment, but also in raising significant operational and capital funding for the schools. Several of the schools have held multiple capital campaigns and all now have successful annual fund drives and alumni giving programs. So, the proposed audits are not necessarily about “fixing” things that are broken. Rather, the project is about obtaining benchmarks on where the high school development efforts stand at this time and comparing those efforts with others in Catholic schools around the country. Recommendations will be made regarding possible program adjustments, alternate approaches, current development trends and practices, etc.

The audits will be performed by development consultants from Catholic School Management, Inc. (CSM) during school year 2009-2010. CSM was involved in a very successful consultation with the interparochial high schools of the archdiocese in 1993-1997, which launched the schools’ first significant development efforts. It also resulted in administrative restructuring to include administrative teams and the president-principal model of administration. It also resulted in a restructuring of the former deanery boards into boards of directors acting as boards of limited jurisdiction within the Church. The most often mentioned benchmark of the earlier consultation program is that in 2001 the six interparochial high schools raised 556% of the amount they raised in the base year, 1993; and 336% with capital campaigns removed from the annual totals. We expect the benchmark for current efforts will be even more significant.

Although participation in the development/advancement audits is voluntary on the part of the schools, all interparochial high schools will be asked to provide benchmark data to the archdiocese on the current status of their development/advancement efforts.

The high schools participating in the Develop/Advancement Audit Program this year are:

- Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville;
- Cardinal Ritter High School, Indianapolis;
- Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis;
- Seton Catholic High School, Richmond.*

*The approach at Seton Catholic High School has been modified to provide for the specific needs of this, our newest and smallest high school.

Help the ACE Fellowship Help Catholic Schools

Crazy, maybe. Lazy, never. Many words can be used to describe our Catholic educators in Indianapolis, but lazy is certainly not one of them. And, neither is bored.

Already stretched thin, several area Catholic school principals, administrators, and teachers have taken on one more commitment. This time, the service is not even necessarily for their own schools. And, it is on Saturday.

The ACE (Alliance for Catholic Education) Fellowship Program was started in Indianapolis a little over two years ago. The group is funded by the University of Notre Dame and is made up primarily of current and former members of Notre Dame’s ACE Program, that places teachers in Catholic schools and the ACE Leadership program, that trains people for educational leadership in Catholic schools. Our mission is to keep Catholic education alive and well by strengthening each other and fellow Catholic educators emotionally, mentally, professionally, and spiritually while enhancing the physical appearance and morale of the schools.

The first year of our existence, the ACE Fellowship focused on St. Andrew/St. Rita Catholic Academy and provided four Saturday mornings of prayer, professional development, physical service, and fellowship. Last year, we broadened our focus and provided the same type of service to the six Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, and this year we are serving one school from each deanery just outside the inner-city. On Saturday, November 14, ten Catholic school lovers and promoters met at St. Roch Church, Indianapolis, for mass and breakfast and then spent the morning painting the main hallway in the school. Members of the St. Roch community joined in as well organizing and helping with the painting itself.

The next three service days are already scheduled: January 23, the Fellowship will be at St. Gabriel; February 20 at St. Joan of Arc; and, on April 17, at Little Flower from 9:00 a.m. until noon. We encourage anyone affiliated with these parishes or just Catholic schools, in general, to attend. We are calling on those of you with love and gratitude for Catholic schools and what they have done for the community. We are calling those of you who think “I couldn’t possibly have time,” but say “yes” anyway. We are especially calling those of you who prefer to spend your Saturday mornings doing service instead of sleeping, who would rather be busy than bored, and who might just be a little crazy, too.

Archdiocese of Indianapolis Hosts Interregional African American Catholic Evangelization Conference

Some 300 participants gathered for the Interregional African American Catholic Evangelization Conference at the Marriott Indianapolis November 13-15. Catholics from Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia and Indiana gathered to be re-energized for evangelization efforts in their local parishes. With vibrant liturgies and break-out sessions, participants were challenged to live out the theme of the Conference, “Continuing the Journey …Listening, Living and Sharing the Word.” Thanks to the Office of Multicultural Ministry for making this evangelization event possible in the archdiocese.
Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Awards

The Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award was created to honor exemplary teachers in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. This year the award will be presented to five teachers in the diocese who were nominated by their pastors, principals, colleagues and parents. The award recognizes teachers for their dedication and commitment to the Catholic teaching profession and the students they serve. These teachers will be honored at a luncheon hosted by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on February 16, 2010. To select five award winners, all names and identifying information was removed from the applications. Answers were read and scored on a rubric by the Office of Catholic Education. From this process five teachers were selected for 2009-2010. One honoree will be selected to represent the Archdiocese of Indianapolis at the April 2010 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The honorees for 2009-2010 are:

Sister Maureen Fallon S.P.
Chemistry-physics teacher at Providence Cristo Rey High School, Indianapolis

Mary Pat O’Connor
Science chairperson at Cardinal Ritter High School, Indianapolis

Patrice Payne
Resource teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas School, Indianapolis

Amy Weigel
Grade 4 teacher at St. Louis School, Batesville

Laura Williams
Grade 7-8 religion teacher at St. Barnabas School, Indianapolis

These five honorees were interviewed on November 11 by a group of past honorees to determine the archdiocesan representative for the NCEA Teaching Awards.

Also nominated for this award were the following great Catholic Educators:

Katie Schaffner – Bishop Chatard High School
Mary Briscoe – Holy Family School
Mary Jo Buckel – Holy Name School
Peggy Snook – Our Lady of Perpetual Help School
Jean Laskowski – Pope John XXIII School
Marilyn Miles – Roncalli High School
Lynne Evanczyk – Sacred Heart School
Theresa Schonhoff – St. Charles Borromeo School
Betsy Jeatran – St. Joan of Arc School
Beth Lewis – St. Malachi School
Amy Kinney – St. Pius X School
Estelle Britner – St. Rose of Lima School
Alison Boyle – St. Monica School

I sleep but my heart watches over this house which I have built.
~ Saint Theodora Guérin

Mark Your Calendars!

NCYC 2011 COMING TO INDIANAPOLIS November 17-19, 2011

Check Out NCYC 2011 on Facebook!
Catholic Schools: Dividends for Life

Happy New Year! As we begin yet another year, in fact, a new decade, I have reflected on where I have been, and what I feel still needs my attention. I call this my “personal portfolio,” just as one might have a business portfolio. I am called to take stock of my life. What dividends have I earned? Have I profited from my investments?

This year’s theme for Catholic Schools’ Week is “Catholic Schools: Dividends for Life.” When I first saw this theme my mind went immediately to my portfolio and I realized all the dividends that Catholic Schools have paid over the many years and how I am blessed by these today – with a totally different type of profit than a business portfolio.

There are four major qualities of Catholic education: faith, knowledge, discipline and morals that are important hallmarks of Catholic schools. These are qualities I have valued since the first grade at St. Patrick Grade School and when I graduated years later from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College. These gifts or dividends of Catholic education have become a part of who I am and what I do – my personal portfolio of what I have profited.

At the end of 2009 most news media listed the top ten stories of the year or even the decade. Our own Criterion did the same. In every case, these top stories caused me to pause and reflect on the hallmarks or dividends of Catholic education. The presence or absence of these qualities is not clearly stated in each instance, but is certainly implied. Because what we do or do not do reflects who we are and writes our story for the future.

I ask you to think about these great dividends and commit yourself to the continued support of our Catholic schools. Because, when we share these dividends with others in our community, the whole world benefits.

God bless,

Mickey

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