CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: A+ FOR AMERICA

During the observance of Catholic Schools Week 2011 (January 30-February 5) we celebrate the value of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and across the nation. We focus on the gift that Catholic education provides to America’s young people and its contributions to our Church, our communities and our country.

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2011 celebrates the fact that Catholic schools add value to the nation. With their traditionally high academic standards and high graduation rates supported by strong moral values, Catholic schools and their graduates make a significant contribution to American Society. Our schools are definitely a “plus” for America and the A+ in the logo further underscores their academic leadership.

Articles inside this edition of The Good Word from the Office of Catholic Education help to underscore and document the A+ contributions of our Catholic schools. Our high school graduation rate is 97.6 percent. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of schools in the archdiocese earned rankings in the top two performance categories among all accredited public and non-public schools in Indiana. Our Lady of the Greenwood School became the 26th school in the archdiocese to receive a national Blue Ribbon – the 32nd Blue Ribbon earned by our schools — more than any other (arch) diocese in the nation.

Please celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2011 with us!

Our Lady of the Greenwood Honored With Blue Ribbon in Washington DC

Kent Clady, Principal, and Mary Schultz, Eighth Grade Teacher, at Our Lady of the Greenwood School, Greenwood are shown recently in Washington, DC, where they received the National Blue Ribbon for the school from the U.S. Department of Education.

Welcome Bishop-Designate Coyne!

Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, OSB, announced on January 14, that the Holy Father had designated Rev. Christopher J. Coyne as auxiliary bishop of Indianapolis. Bishop-designate Coyne, 52, is a native of Woburn, Mass., a northern suburb of Boston.

Archbishop Daniel will ordain the new auxiliary bishop during a Mass of Episcopal Ordination on March 2 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. Details of the Mass are pending.
Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults in Prison

For I was hungry and you gave me food, ... in prison and you visited me. (Matt 25:35 - 36)

It is sometimes difficult to understand how someone could break the law and even harder to feel compassion for those who do. And yet our Lord asks us to do just that.

At the Indiana Women’s Prison, a small group of people are sharing the love of Christ with inmates through adult faith formation and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.

About a year ago, the women’s prison was moved to the corrections facility on Girl’s School Road in Indianapolis. The inmate population went from under 200 to over 600 and the prison ministry had a new challenge trying to respond to the needs of such a large group. Deacon Dan Collier and volunteer Laura Kazlas, working with other volunteers under the supervision of Fr. Dave Lawler, responded enthusiastically.

At the end of their first retreat last August, a woman was baptized after receiving instruction on the Catholic Faith from lay leaders and clergy in the previous months. As a celebration of this event, the west-side Catholic churches sponsored an ice cream social for the whole population of inmates. This sparked the interest of other prisoners as they encountered the conversion and joy of their fellow inmates who had participated.

As a response to growing interest, the volunteers started an RCIA process with the women. There are now four women preparing for Baptism, three candidates for Confirmation and eight preparing to come into full communion with the Catholic Church. There are also about an equal number of Catholics who attend sessions to grow in their faith and, in some cases, sponsor those in RCIA.

What makes this ministry unique? According to volunteer Laura Kazlas, the answer may be surprising: It is the joy and gratitude of the prisoners and a sense of holiness among them. Those prisoners who choose to participate have already experienced a conversion and are quite devout in their faith.

The west side Catholic parishes have continued to donate time and resources to the prison, including 250 Catholic books to the prison library. Currently there is a core volunteer group of approximately eight clergy, seven lay people and others who volunteer occasionally. For more information about this ministry, contact Peg McEvoy, Associate Director for Evangelization and Family Catechesis (pmcevoy@archindy.org).

Technology Shared and Shared Again

St. Mary School in North Vernon has been very fortunate in their dealings with the local public school system, and they make every effort to “pay it forward” by sharing their good fortune. Jennings County Schools Superintendent, Dr. Michael Bushong, included St. Mary in their Cadre I-II funding proposal, a federal technology competition grant for enhancing instruction through technology. All the schools in the county including St. Mary gathered to determine how the funds would be spent; all teachers received training, and St. Mary technology coordinator, Felicia Vogel, attended all committee meetings and training sessions.

Each classroom at St. Mary School now has an LCD projector with surround sound mounted on the ceiling. The school has a sufficient number of interactive “clickers” so that a full class can utilize these at the same time. The only cost to the school was the physical installation. However, the installation was completed entirely by the public school’s maintenance staff. There are multimedia projectors in grades 6-8, and “Mobi” units for all of the other classrooms. A Mobi is a portable interactive unit that allows a student to write on the device and have their work appear on the screen via the projector.

Once their new equipment was in place, St. Mary School sponsored an archdiocesan-wide “Technology Day” in November for interested schools. Attendees observed classes in which the technology was being utilized and visitors were able to experiment with the new technology as well. Principal, Franciscan Sister Joana Koors, knows that St. Mary School has been blessed, and the school is in turn making every effort to share those blessings with the community and with the archdiocese as a whole.

Second Annual Golf Fore Faith

Monday, May 9, 2011
Crooked Stick Golf Club

The Office of Catholic Education is hosting the second annual “Golf Fore Faith” outing at Crooked Stick Golf Club on Monday, May 9, 2011. This fundraising event is to support three important ministries in the archdiocese: A Promise To Keep (APTK) chastity program; SPRED, the Special Religious Education Development program and Youth Ministry programs. If you are interested in advertising your business as a sponsor, please contact Margaret Hendricks, Golf Fore Faith Committee Chair, at mhendricks@archindy.org or (317) 441-8956.
Saint Theodora Guérin 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 archdiocese who were nominated by their pastors, principals, colleagues and parents. The award recognizes teachers for the dedication and commitment to the Catholic teaching profession and to the students they serve. These teachers will be honored at the annual Saint Theodora Guérin Excellence in Education luncheon hosted by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein on February 23, 2011.

2010-2011 Guérin Honorees

Mary Rose Collins ~ Lumen Christi, Indianapolis
Lisa Hannon ~ St. Malachy, Brownsburg
Patty Maurer ~ St. Patrick, Terre Haute
Marsha Sander ~ Roncalli High School, Indianapolis
Stephany Tucker ~ St. Anthony, Clarksville

Also nominated as outstanding educators were:
Stephen Buell ~ St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis
Colleen Coleman ~ St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
Missy Cooper ~ St. Louis, Batesville
 Judy Cooper ~ Holy Family, New Albany
Teresa (Terry) Day ~ Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
Mary Martha Hoefling ~ St. Barnabas, Indianapolis
Eileen Hyvonen ~ St. Monica, Indianapolis
Colleen Johnston-Burdette ~ Pope John XXIII, Madison
Mary Karas ~ St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis
Julie Mennel ~ St. Therese/Little Flower, Indianapolis
Rebecca Stone ~ St. Mary, North Vernon
Karen Wagner ~ Christ the King, Indianapolis

Also recognized for dedication and service to Catholic education will be Sister Joanita Koors, OSF, principal at St. Mary School in North Vernon. Sister Joanita was selected by the Office of Catholic Education for her strong academic and spiritual leadership. Sister will receive national recognition as the Great Lakes NCEA Region 7 Robert J. Kealy Distinguished Principal awardee at the 2011 NCEA Convention in New Orleans on April 26. This award is presented annually to twelve principals in the United States by the Department of Elementary Schools of the National Catholic Educational Association.

Sr. Joanita Koors, OSF of Saint Mary’s School, North Vernon is congratulated by Fr. Jonathan Meyer after he announced that she had been named among the top 12 Catholic school principals in the nation.

(Plain Dealer-Sun.Com)

Archdiocesan Teachers Honored

Jacque Singleton (left), St. Anthony of Padua School, Clarksville, and Sr. Maureen Fallon, SP. (right), Providence Cristo Rey High School, Indianapolis, are shown with State Superintendent, Dr. Tony Bennett.

Jacque was honored as a finalist for Indiana Teacher of the Year, and Sr. Maureen and Amy Weigel, teacher at St. Louis School, Batesville (not present) were honored as semi-finalists at the recent Teacher of the Year Banquet. There were 10 finalists and 20 semi-finalists for the entire state. Congratulations!

March For Life

Before the sun rose on January 22, 2011, nearly 200 high school youth and their chaperones boarded buses after morning Mass and began the thirteen hour bus ride to Washington, D.C. They traveled with thousands of others to the nation’s capital to participate in the 37th annual March for Life on Monday, January 24. The annual event seeks to reverse the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion-on-demand in the United States.

For the past few years, the archdiocese has been well represented with a large numbers of youth, young adults, and chaperones attending and taking an enthusiastic stand for the unborn. This year was no exception. Youth Ministry in the Office of Catholic Education organized the trip for the first time and received strong interest from groups across the archdiocese that wanted to show their support for the pro-life cause and uphold Church teaching that human life is sacred from conception to natural death.

The logo for this year’s trip was designed a high school student from St. Monica parish in Indianapolis, Luz Benitez, and was based on Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.”
Get ready to **FIESTA!**
SPRED Dinner Dance ~ March 19

The 11th annual SPRED Dinner Dance is set for Saturday, March 19, 2011 at the Marten House Hotel and Lilly Conference Center on the campus of St. Vincent Hospital, Indianapolis. The Special Religious Education Development program (SPRED) is an endeavor of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to provide faith formation and religious development to persons with developmental disabilities and special needs. Over 100 children and adults around the archdiocese are served by SPRED groups. Our SPRED Dinner Dance is an opportunity for SPRED participants, volunteers, parents and supporters to gather in celebration while serving as the primary annual fund- raiser for SPRED efforts. Tickets are $50 per person for a Mexican style dinner followed by dancing to the music of DJ’s, Tony and Conne Opat. The evening will also feature a silent auction of more than 100 items and a raffle with a top prize of $500. For more information or to be sure you get an invitation please contact Ken Ogorek, Director of Catechesis, kogorek@archindy.org.

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**Called to Glory**
National Catholic Youth Conference
Indianapolis Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium ~ November 17-19, 2011

A National Celebration of Our Catholic Faith!
Featuring Master of Ceremonies, ValLimar Jansen and Keynote Speakers, Matt Patin and Mike Hart

- 25,000 expected attendees including youth, bishops, priests and religious
- **New this year** … Catholic Collegiate Conference
- Awesome Catholic musicians and music
- Inspiring Liturgies and prayer services

For more information go to:
www.archindy.org/ocene
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**Strategic Management and Development Program for Elementary Schools**

The Strategic Management and Development Project for Selected Elementary Schools (SMDP) began in August 2009. The project is funded by the schools and matching grants raised for this purpose in the Legacy for Our Mission capital campaign. There are 15 elementary schools and two small high schools participating in the second year of the program. SMDP is a four-year intensive consulting program with Catholic School Management, Inc. (CSM). It is designed to increase the ability of local school communities to market their schools for image, enrollment and resources in an increasingly competitive environment and a challenging economy.

In Year I, the schools concentrated on foundational documents – mission, vision, philosophy and profile of the grad at graduation, as well as comprehensive strategic planning. A second major focus was “enrollment management” – marketing, recruitment, admission and retention of students – a focus that will continue all four years. A special enrollment seminar was held in September 2009 and over 500 enthusiastic people attended from the schools.

Year II started with a seminar on comprehensive communication programs for the schools including: newsletters, annual reports, marketing materials, and use of electronic media to reach a new generation of parents and students.

In September over 100 representatives from the Catholic School Commissions of the SMDP schools attended special training sessions to help their commission develop an effective committee structure, to involve more people, and to better manage the institutional advancement of the school. One of the outcomes of the process is to empower and create ownership of lay governance bodies for the future of their school.

In the third year, the schools will learn about marketing the school for financial resources. Development or advancement techniques build upon the mission, vision and strategic plans of the school as well as proven communication strategies to effectively engage others in the mission of the school through their financial support. The training will help Catholic schools to reach beyond the parents and parishioners for sources of revenue.

In the fourth and final year the schools will learn to implement planned giving and endowment growth programs.

CSM Consultants hold tracking meetings at each school about every six weeks to provide guidance and to record progress of the local committees. They are accompanied on each visit by staff liaisons from the Office of Catholic Education or Office of Stewardship and Development who follow-up as necessary with the schools.

**The schools currently involved in the SMDP project are:**

- Holy Name, Beech Grove
- Holy Family, New Albany
- Holy Spirit, Indianapolis
- Nativity, Indianapolis
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis
- Prince of Peace Schools, Madison
- Seton Catholic Schools, Richmond
- St. Anthony, Clarksville
- St. Charles, Bloomington
- St. Christopher, Speedway
- St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis
- St. Lawrence, Indianapolis
- St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
- St. Therese (Little Flower), Indianapolis
- St. Vincent DePaul, Bedford

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Governance Changes in Two School “Systems”

Two sets of interparochial schools in the archdiocese have been reorganized as small school “systems” under new governance models during this school year. The Board of Directors for the Seton Catholic Schools, Inc., is the official name for the interparochial schools sponsored by the three parishes in Richmond, Holy Family, St. Mary and St. Andrew. The schools are St. Elizabeth Seton Elementary School and Seton Catholic High School which previously had a separate School Commission for the elementary and a Board of Directors for the high school. A new Board of Directors has been organized with a strong committee structure including committees for the elementary and high school.

The Board of Directors for the West Deanery Unified Schools, Inc. is the official name of a new school “system” that includes the former St. Gabriel the Archangel Elementary School, St. Michael the Archangel Elementary School and Cardinal Ritter High School. The elementary schools formerly had Parish School Commissions, but have been operating under a Unification Commission since the consolidation of the schools in August for the 2010-2011 school year. The West Deanery Study in 2009 recommended the system consolidation and the system arrangement with Cardinal Ritter and the Archbishop accepted the recommendations in February 2010. The new board will have planning sub-committees for the elementary and high school.

In both systems, the governance arrangements are designed to ensure that the schools will be able to market themselves and raise funds for enhanced programs on a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 basis. The high schools have a long experience with institutional advancement. The elementary schools should benefit from this experience and association with high school resources and programs, and, in turn, provide an enrollment source for the high schools. The names for the boards reflect the fact that all interparochial high schools in the archdiocese have been civilly incorporated under Indiana law.

2010 - 97.6% of High School Seniors in Archdiocese Graduate in Four Years

In the 11 Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for the 2009-2010 school year, 97.6 percent of the seniors graduated from high school in four years. For this same period, Indiana’s public school graduation rate was 84.1 percent. In addition, 9 of the 11 high schools reached 90 percent or more of their students graduating in four years, a goal at the forefront of Indiana Superintendent of Education, Dr. Tony Bennett’s vision, since he took office in January of 2009.

“We are proud of the work our students, parents, teachers and administrators in the Archdiocese are doing to maintain these graduation rates in our Catholic schools,” Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Dr. Ron Costello said. “We must recognize this level of excellence in our Catholic schools because too often it gets lost in the release of the results for the public schools.”

2010 State Graduation Rate Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>92 of 11 schools (83.6%) vs. 133 public schools (36%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89.9%</td>
<td>1 Catholic school (9%) vs. 161 public schools (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79.9%</td>
<td>1 Catholic school (9%) vs. 47 public schools (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69.9%</td>
<td>1 Catholic school (9%) vs. 47 public schools (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59.9%</td>
<td>8 public schools (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 50%</td>
<td>9 public schools (2%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

91 percent (10 of 11) schools in the Archdiocesan vs. 66 percent of public high schools met or exceeded the state average graduation rate.

State Accountability Rates Archdiocesan Progress

Dr. Ron Costello, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, recently praised the progress the schools are making under the state's accountability law. Public Law 221, Indiana's comprehensive accountability plan for K-12 schools, was passed by the Indiana Legislature in 1999 with broad bipartisan backing and the support of the business and education communities.

P.L. 221 places Indiana school corporations and accredited non-public schools into one of five categories based upon "performance" and "improvement" data from the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP+). Placements are based on the percentage of all students who pass English/language arts and mathematics tests (averaged across subjects and grade levels) and the improvement in the percentage of students passing the tests over time.

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of schools in the archdiocese (66) versus 46 percent of all Indiana public schools (868) earned the top two P.L. 221 categories while 1 percent of archdiocesan school (1) and 27 percent of all public schools (496) placed in the bottom two categories. Eighty-five percent of our schools rated in the top category, Exemplary Progress, with another 13% receiving a Commendable Progress rating. Roughly 1 percent of archdiocesan schools (1) versus 27 percent of all public schools (498) fell in the middle category, Academic Progress. Public schools placed in the lowest P.L. 221 category, "Academic Probation," are subject to interventions designed to provide the additional support needed to improve student achievement. Charter schools and accredited non-public schools are placed into categories but are exempt from consequences under the law. For more information on Public Law 221, including data for individual corporations and schools, visit www.doe.state.in.us/pl221.
Kindness and Catechesis

This time of the year was always a challenge for me, whether I was teacher, principal or parish religious education director. Christmas, along with most of my vacation days, were long gone and Lent loomed on the horizon. Unfortunately, this feeling sometimes translated into a lack of enthusiasm for my work. But, over the years I learned a simple remedy: become more active and deliberate in practicing kindness. For me, this invariably improves my service to others and my own spiritual growth.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* has many references to this virtue – kindness as a fruit of the Holy Spirit; kindness proper to God, to others and even to animals. It is well worth your time to prayerfully read these teachings. Another wonderful way to teach about this virtue is through a poem by Sam Levenson called, “Time Tested Beauty Secrets: “For attractive lips, speak words of kindness. For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people. For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry. For beautiful hair, let a child run his fingers through it once a day. For poise, walk with the knowledge you never walk alone.”

I think a very real, concrete application of the virtue of kindness can be seen in the life of Dorothy Day. In *Dorothy Day: A Radical Devotion*, author Robert Cole relates the first time he met her. She was sitting across from an inebriated, somewhat disfigured middle aged woman who was ranting without stop for a long time with only an occasional nod or question from Dorothy. Finally, the woman stopped talking for a moment and Dorothy asked the woman if she would allow an interruption. Dorothy then came over to Cole and politely asked, “Are you waiting to speak with one of us?” With those words, Mr. Cole relates that he immediately learned everything about the Catholic Worker Movement (p. xviii).

Filling all our catechetical efforts in schools and parishes with kindness serves to our own spiritual advantage as well. This is due, of course, to the fact that we always receive much more from our generous God than we can ever possibly give back. Or, as Mother Teresa would say, “True holiness consists in doing God’s will with a smile.”

*Pax et Bonum,*

Harry A. Plummer
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