CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK
January 25-31, 2015
“Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service”

The theme for National Catholic Schools Week 2015 is “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.” The theme encompasses several concepts that are at the heart of Catholic education. First, schools are communities — communities of faith, where children are openly taught about God, where God is worshiped regularly, and where students and faculty put their faith into practice on a daily basis. Secondly, Catholic schools exist to pass on knowledge—not just the practical knowledge of content like reading, writing, and math, but also knowledge of God and truth, which defines our spiritual heritage as Catholics. And finally, Catholic schools are communities of service—places where helping one another and aiding the needy are the way of living life.

Schools across the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will be celebrating their success by honoring students, faculty and staff, parents, volunteers and local leaders during Catholic Schools Week. The highlight of the week is the annual Mass celebrated by Archbishop Joseph Tobin on Tuesday, January 27, with representatives from each diocesan school.

HIGH SCHOOL RELIGION CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FINALIZED

A dramatic expansion and re-sequencing of content in our thirteen Catholic high school religion courses has been completed in guideline form and is being phased in throughout southern and central Indiana communities within the Archdiocese featuring at least one Catholic secondary school. The guiding document, Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines for Use in Catholic High Schools, is available on the Faith Formation page of the OCE website (see Curriculum Guidelines, School Religion, High School).

Archbishop Tobin’s letter promulgating these content requirements points out their usefulness in seeing to it that “young people not only know our Catholic faith but also consider its beauty in light of the Person of Jesus Christ.” Our archbishop notes “the great divide of our time—the rupture between the Gospel and daily life”, expressing his hope that these revised guidelines will help catechists “bridge that gap by God’s grace.”

A revision of our guidelines was needed in part due to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops taking initiative to establish a national framework for Catholic high school religion.

This effort was in principle requested by textbook publishers and has since shaped the content of major resources used to teach the Faith in our secondary schools. Please pray for the successful implementation of Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines for Use in Catholic High Schools and especially their underlying goal: making and forming disciples of Jesus Christ in accordance with His command (cf. Matt 28:16-20).
Congratulations!

**CHUCK WEISENBACH HONORED BY INPEA**

Chuck Weisenbach, principal of Roncalli High School, Indianapolis, was honored by the Indiana Non-Public Education Association (INPEA) with the Outstanding Leadership Award at their October conference. Chuck is in his twentieth year as principal at Roncalli and served on the INPEA Board of Directors for 10 years, two of those years as president.

**ED TINDER HONORED BY YOUTH ORGANIZATION**

Ed Tinder, archdiocesan Director of CYO, was the recipient of the 2014 National Catholic Youth Ministry Award at the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry on December 4, 2014 in San Antonio, TX. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM) recognized him for his outstanding and significant contribution to youth ministry in the particular area of athletics, camping, and outdoor ministry. During Tinder’s 34 years of service, he has become widely recognized by youth and adults alike as a person who works diligently to keep Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) programs and philosophies uniquely Catholic.

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**Accountability and Success**

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis and its schools are off to another busy and exciting school year. As we prepare for the 2015-2016 school year we must look back at the growth and success we have achieved in the past.

Total enrollment in archdiocesan schools has grown to nearly 24,000 students. Of these students almost 7,000 receive tuition assistance from the Choice Scholarship program, a growth of more than 40% compared to the prior year. Additionally, 59 archdiocesan elementary and high schools received either an A or B from the Indiana accountability grades – that’s nearly 90% of our schools!

Each of the archdiocesan schools participates in the annual ISTEP+ testing of students. The ISTEP+ test is based on Indiana’s Academic Standards and includes grades 3-8 for English/Language Arts and Mathematics, grades 3 and 6 for Science and grades 5 and 7 for Social Studies. For both the English/Language Arts and Math portions of the test, over 90% of archdiocesan students attained a passing score for 2014 compared to just over 80% of students in the area public schools.

These achievements continue to support the archdiocese’s claim that the longer students are engaged in our schools the more successful they are. Additionally, we expect each of these figures to continue to increase in the 2015-2016 school year – a true testament to the "We Did It, We Did It!"

Submitted by Kevin Sullivan, Camp Co-Director, Camp Rancho Framasa

These are the words that echo through the trees of CYO Camp Rancho Framasa. They are words that make a camp staffer’s heart swell with joy. This is the reason we choose this profession. While working in the middle of the forest and having “archery” and “games” listed on one’s daily schedule are fantastic perks – they are moments of growth that keep us here. When a group of twelve seventh graders, who spent the last twenty minutes bickering over whose fault it was, finally overcomes the team challenge they faced, hug each other and yell the words, “We did it!” we light up. When an adult, who has been terrified of heights her whole life, climbs forty feet in the air, crosses a wire because she trusted the team of people supporting her, climbs down and gives a high five saying, “We did it!” we are overwhelmed with the ways God works in peoples’ lives. When the three high school students finally get their paddles to work in sync to maneuver their canoe over our pond and say “I can’t believe we did it!” we are in awe of the many forms that learning finds the hardest-to-reach teenager. And when the “too cool” eighth graders do a silent solo walk reflecting on God’s presence in their lives and whisper, “I experienced God in a way I hadn’t ever before” we know why we’re here. We are here because we believe in the power of Catholic education—not just in the school and church walls—but also among our hills and trees. We love partnering with teachers, youth ministers, and principals to provide experiences that grow our Catholic community. Together, we are better, and we are honored we get to stand with all of you saying, “We did it!” We have helped our students experience Christ.

CYO Camp Rancho Framasa is located in the beautiful hills of Brown County. They offer leadership, science, history, recreation, community building, and faith programs for all ages – youth and adults all year-round. For more information, visit their website at www.campranchoframasa.org
ICYC 2014: WHERE IS MY HEART ANCHORED?

In his message to the youth who gathered last year at World Youth Day in Rio De Janeiro, Pope Francis exhorted and challenged the young people who were gathered there on pilgrimage:

“...The Church needs you, your enthusiasm, your creativity and the joy that is so characteristic of you! [Jesus] promised: ‘I am with you always’ (Mt 28:20). And this is also true for us! Jesus does not leave us alone, he never leaves you alone! He always accompanies you.”

Despite being a year and many miles removed from the celebration in Rio, the fire and spirit of Pope Francis was very much alive here in Central and Southern Indiana as youth, youth ministers and many others accompanied one another to make the pilgrimage to the Indianapolis Catholic Youth Conference (ICYC) held at Marian University on November 2, 2014.

Keynote Speaker Ansel Augustine shared some of his life story, including some of the personal struggles he overcame to find Christ in his life. But Christ, he remarked, never left him (or us):

“The Bible reminds us that wherever two or more are gathered in my name, [God is] there... God is home.” No where was this more evident than at the end of his talk when Augustine invited those who were experiencing their own struggles to the floor. The shuffle and scuffle of feet faded into the background as Augustine invited those remaining in the stands to extend their hands in prayer over them. In that moment, Echo Apprentice Angie Pometto observed, “I definitely experienced God’s love in my heart, and I know the teens did as well.”

It was a wonderful summary moment of the day. No difference of background or circumstance could divide those gathered. The community stood together in blessing, a testament that Christ’s love always accompanies us and invites us home to Him.

~ Submitted by Scott Boyle, Echo Apprentice, Roncalli High School and Nativity Parish

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How do schools continue to improve instruction? By looking at data. This is exactly what more than twenty schools did for three days in early November in order to increase student achievement and to help teachers teach better. The Office of Catholic Education, in partnership with A+ Educators, provided professional development by hosting Daniel Venables and Cari Begin from the Center of Authentic PLCs. Venables and Begin presented The Grapple Institute, an intensive three-day training which taught teachers and administrators a systematic approach to look at and respond to student data. Teams of teachers from each school learned how macrodata often reflects student performance on end-of-year tests or other high stakes assessments, but in order to get a clearer sense of what is happening as our students learn it’s important to look closely at the microdata. Generally speaking, the usefulness of data is proportionate to the frequency with which it’s collected. “Most teachers have never been trained to look at data meaningfully, or in a way that forces them to draw connections between learning gaps and the way they are delivering material,” says Venables. “At some point, it’s vital that we link our instruction to the gaps we are seeing in kids.”

OCE PLAYS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN SERVING BURMESE REFUGEES

When Br. Moises Gutierrez, archdiocesan Director of Intercultural Ministry, approached the Office of Catholic Education asking for collaboration in providing pastoral leadership formation for a group of refugees from Burma, our answer was one word: “Yes!” That was the start of detailed planning for the Burmese Pastoral Formation Program, nearing completion of its initial phase after starting last April.

A group of Burmese refugees approached Br. Moises asking for training that would help them play a larger role in their parish, to take on more initiative, leadership and responsibility for their faith life while sharing their gifts and talents with the broader parish community. Archdiocesan Director of Catechesis, Ken Ogorek, worked with Br. Moises to produce a course of studies for an institute that would provide participants with an engaging overview of the Faith as well as focus on human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation.

Ken did the lion’s share of the teaching in this initial effort to provide an institute of this sort for the growing Burmese refugee community in the Archdiocese—in part due to the desire to respond to a need in a timely manner at a time of year when many potential teachers already had calendars full of commitments for the program year. The Office of Catholic Education continues to support missionary discipleship, fruitful partnerships, unity in diversity and effective stewardship by collaborating with various Archdiocesan offices in serving families who’ve lived in Indiana for sixty years—or for six months!

An article describing the Burmese Pastoral Formation Program appeared recently in The Criterion; it is available at this address: www.archindy.org/criterion/local/2014/09-05/burmese.html
PAREs ENHANCE MINISTRY WITH FAMILIES, RCIA ADAPTED FOR CHILDREN

At a recent OCE business meeting for parish administrators of religious education (PAREs) Catholic education leaders deepened their knowledge in several key areas. Given our focus on serving families, the topic of Serving Families Today and Beyond was timely and addressed well by a speaker who offered a presentation on Saint John Paul II’s exhortation On the Family—including discussion and application to parish catechetical ministry.

Because so many parents are bringing to our program older children who have not celebrated First Holy Communion and, in some cases, have not been baptized, the topic of Christian initiation for children offered an opportunity to learn and share best practices regarding this area of Church life. Rev. Patrick J. Beidelman STL, Executive Director, Secretariat for Spiritual Life & Worship facilitated this presentation and discussion, with several PAREs remarking how appreciated and helpful this part of the agenda was to them.

Professional and spiritual development of Catholic education leaders remains a high priority for our Office. PARE Business meetings—occurring approximately quarterly—provide a great opportunity for OCE staff to serve those who work so hard serving God’s people in our 134 parishes.

Erin Jeffries, Coordinator of Ministry to Persons with Special Needs, had the opportunity to be part of a TED style presentation focusing on “embracing culture” during the Indiana Conference for Catechetical Leadership (ICCL) in November. ICCL is a statewide collaborative body of professional lay men and women who exercise a catechetical leadership role in a parish or Catholic school setting. In addition to a personal testimony regarding her own sister and her family’s experience of inclusion in the Church, Erin spoke about three “marks” of an inclusive parish. The first is a contagious atmosphere of welcome that starts with the leadership. A second mark is that welcoming and inclusion is about building relationships, seeing and getting to know others as individuals, each with their own unique strengths and weakness. A third mark is that of creativity and cooperation—seeking and trying different solutions, and working with other nearby parishes if needed. The presentation sparked good conversations, and was a great opportunity to build awareness of some simple things parishes can do to encourage full and active participation for these members of their community!

Erin can be reached at ejeffries@archindy.org.

Substance Abuse Ministry WORKSHOP

In November 2014, Youth Ministry and Pro-Life & Family Life Ministry offered an opportunity to archdiocesan parish and school personnel to attend a workshop on Substance Abuse Ministry. According to the 2009 National Study on Drugs and Health, eleven million American adolescents and young adults need help with drug and alcohol problems.

The workshop presenters included: Mary Martin from the National Catholic Council on Addictions; Nancy Beals with Drug Free Marion County; Susan Day (Regional Relationship Manager), Mindy Miller (Supervisor) and Brad Trolson (Recovery Coach) from Fairbanks; and several recovering high school students from Hope Academy/Fairbanks in Indianapolis. Susan Day and Mindy Miller provided education on the signs and potential causes of addiction, and some very helpful advice on how to assist a struggling teen. Beals offered many local resources while Trolson and several of the teens in recovery offered a very honest and open panel discussion. As part of the recovery program, the youth are asked to present to various groups about their addictions in order to educate people from their community.

For further information, please check our website in 2015 for a developing Pastoral Care webpage to access resources.

SAVE THE DATE! 15TH ANNUAL SPRED DINNER DANCE

“SPRED Safari: Going Wild for SPRED!”
March 14, 2015 • 6:00-11:00PM
The Marten House Hotel and Lilly Conference Center
1801 West 86th Street, Indianapolis, IN

For information, contact Erin Jeffries at ejeffries@archindy.org
Providence Cristo Rey High School Partners with 78 Businesses to Offer On-the-Job Learning

Stories from both employers and students best describe the Providence Cristo Rey model. Founded in 2006, Providence Cristo Rey offers a faith-based college preparatory curriculum that integrates a work experience into the lives of each of its students. Sponsored by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Providence Cristo Rey is part of a network of schools throughout the country collectively educating 7,400 students with an average family income of $35,000 or less. In Indianapolis, Providence Cristo Rey partners with 78 corporations — including such notable companies as Allison Transmission, Eli Lilly, Eskenazi Health, and Citizens Energy. Additionally, since its first graduating class of 2010, all Providence Cristo Rey seniors have been accepted to college.

This is our third year of partnering with PCRHS for the corporate work study program. I am very excited to be starting my second year as a supervisor with our student, Israel Adams. In all honesty, I was not convinced initially that I had time to add this new responsibility to my busy schedule. However, after much thought and gentle guidance from God, I realized that was just exactly what I needed to do. I am truly blessed to work for a company that allows me to devote time to such a great cause. The investment of time that I am able to give to Israel, I am certain will be well worth every minute of it for his future. In the business world where we find ourselves “too busy,” we just need to realize we are not “too busy” to give of our time to these students. — Tricia Everhart, MJ Insurance, Inc.

Jasmine Perez, 19, a 2014 graduate of Providence Cristo Rey High School and a freshman at Marian University where she studies psychology writes:

I wanted an atmosphere where college was expected of students and they were pushed and guided toward that goal. Through my work at NIPSCO and St. Vincent Health, I learned the importance of commitment to my job and that my work does make a difference.

Jasmine is the first of three to attend Providence Cristo Rey High School. Her sister Lizeth is a senior and her sister Marisol is a freshman.

The families at Central Catholic have long desired playground equipment for their children to enjoy during recess. Principal Kelly England, and Good Shepherd parishioner Bernie Price decided that it was time to do something about it. With several other supporters from Good Shepherd Parish and the blessing of pastor Fr. William M. Williams, Bernie launched a “Howl at the Moon” fundraiser designed to raise money for playground equipment. What these dedicated individuals did not know was that new friendships were being formed that would make this dream a reality.

Fr. Tim Scully, University of Notre Dame, introduced Gina Fleming, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to Dan O’Melveny, Executive Director of the J.F. Shea Foundation. The Shea family owns and operates a fourth-generation construction company located on the west coast that likes to partner with Catholic schools in areas where they work. Currently, Shea Kewitt Joint Venture is doing robust tunneling work in Indianapolis. Mr. O’Melveny learned a bit about the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and after sharing with the Shea family, the decision was made to fund $50,000 toward a playground at Central Catholic School!

This incredible donation, along with $5000 raised by the Good Shepherd community, led to the construction of a playground for all at Central Catholic and Good Shepherd Parish to enjoy. What an incredible gift for young people to experience, and what a wonderful story of generosity and commitment to Catholic education this contribution provides! A formal dedication will take place this spring, and all from the parish and school community as well as those from the Shea Kewitt Joint Venture will be invited to attend. On behalf of all children and staff at Central Catholic, special thanks to Mr. O’Melveny and the Shea Kewitt Joint Venture and to the parishioners of Good Shepherd!

Golf Fore Faith Sixth Annual Outing!

Monday, May 11, 2015 ~ Crooked Stick Golf Club

Imagine playing the course that hosted the top layers in the world at the 2012 BMW FedEx Championship! Registration information is available online at: www.archindy.org/golfforefaith or contact Margaret Hendricks at Mhendricks@archindy.org or at 317.441.8956
2015 RESOLUTIONS

Like many around the world, I glided through a beautiful Advent season and continue to celebrate the promise of our Lord and Savior. As Christians stare 2015 in the face, I picture Jesus sitting with His close friends and discussing resolutions for the New Year. Would the focus be on shedding a few pounds to feel more comfortable in their garments? Would it be to find a balance between workload, children’s extra-curricular events, and family time? Would Jesus’ early disciples talk about doing a better job of budgeting and preparing for a secure financial future? Perhaps the challenges the apostles faced are similar to those we face today. It is in that vein that I share with you my New Year’s resolutions:

EAT HEALTHY. Yes, I need to omit cafffeinated drinks and fattening foods from my diet, but this “healthy eating” is quite different. I shall feed more on Scripture and the teachings of the Catechism in an effort to better understand and defend my faith, but also to draw closer to God in all possible ways. This will serve as sustenance, nourishing the soul for the work involved in Catholic education and faith formation.

GET FIT. EXERCISE. Beyond treadmills and weight training, I shall exercise my right to stand up for our faith in areas of politics and policy. I shall enhance my flexibility at bending to the needs of those who are suffering and those who are less fortunate. I shall push myself to joyfully practice my faith through the sacraments – Holy Eucharist, Reconciliation, prayer for those called to Holy Orders, and my own daily celebration of Matrimony.

CREATE BALANCE. No yoga mats needed here! Instead, I must carve out time for more reflective, more intentional prayer. In doing so, other daily tasks and responsibilities will make more sense and become easier to prioritize. I shall balance my role as wife, mother, sister, friend and employee by surrounding myself with others who are also committed to similar “resolutions” for healthy Christian living. And I shall rely upon these same individuals to hold e accountable as God does whenever I falter.

My responsibility – and that of all of us called to serve – is to feast on the menu options laid out at the Lord’s table, exercise our hearts, minds, bodies and souls for the hope of salvation, and create balance with a continual focus on God and His amazing grace. Won’t you eat healthy, exercise, and find balance with me?

God Bless,

Gina Kunz Fleming
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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