EXCELLENCE AWARD

Theresa Bedel, parish administrator of religious education at Holy Family parish in Oldenburg, is the recipient of the ninth annual Excellence in Catechesis Award from the Office of Catholic Education. Mickey Lentz, OCE Executive Director, presented the award to Theresa by at the annual spring meeting of faith formation administrators on May 4, at Camp Rancho Framasa. The award recognizes Theresa’s twenty-eight years of dedicated service to religious education in her parish, the Batesville deanery and the archdiocese.

Nominated for the award by Franciscan Father John Turnbull, pastor, and the catechists and staff of Holy Family parish, Theresa’s work was also affirmed by her colleagues in ministry throughout the Batesville deanery. Theresa’s knowledge of the Catholic faith and ability to share it with others, her kind and generous spirit, her organizational and leadership skills, and her creative and collaborative work style make her, according to the parish secretary Janie Obermeyer, “the ‘center cog’ in the wheel of religious education.” Catechists, including Franciscan Sr. Marie Schroeder, first recipient of the Excellence in Catechesis Award in 1995, are grateful for the support they receive from their DRE and the opportunities she provides for their continuing formation. Both parents and catechists expressed their appreciation that Theresa’s “door is always open to everyone.” Born in nearby Hamburg, Theresa has lived in Oldenburg all her married life. Theresa and her husband, Larry Bedel, have three adult children and four grandchildren. Theresa, a graduate of Immaculate Conception Academy (now Oldenburg Academy), attended Marian College and earned a Certificate in Pastoral Theology from Loyola University in New Orleans. Theresa is a member of the Archdiocesan Council for Educational Excellence and is a past officer of the Association of Parish Administrators of Religious Education of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. All of us at OCE congratulate Theresa Bedel for her accomplishments in advancing the ministry of faith formation and religious education and wish her continued success in the years to come.
OCE WEBSITE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The new OCE website (www.archindy.org/oce/) is now 99 percent operational. News, events and downloadable material are available at OCE Home and for every one of Our Programs listed. The weekly E-notes, attachments and other messages to administrators can be found in the Member Area of OCE Home and “public” postings and back issues of this newsletter are posted in the Good Word Archive. Users can locate information about any school or parish in the archdiocese on the Our Schools and Parishes pages. Parents and teachers can review the curriculum standards for religion and secular subjects on the Curriculum pages. Information about all OCE events will be posted on the Calendar of Events and major events will show as a scrolling display at the bottom of OCE Home. You can view OCE staff profiles and pictures in About Us, and look at OCE-related web links or send e-mail to us on the Contact Us page. Teacher and administrator applicants can now view job openings and apply for positions online under Come Work With Us.

Please Note: The Calendar of Events will not be fully operational until the master calendar dates have all determined this summer. Then, you will be able to register online to attend various events. The new website was made possible through Project EXCEED. It's your website – please use it!

MEMORIAL DAY HONOR ROLL OF THOSE WHO SERVE

Several of our Catholic schools and parishes have responded with names of their graduates who are serving, have served or are scheduled to serve in the US Armed Forces in one of the world’s hot spots. They deserve our thanks and our prayers.

John Wiley
Anthony Ransdell
Anthony Miele
Steven Broniarczyk
Nick Geswein
Brett Kyle
Richard Sorge
Anthony Rio
Garrett Greathouse
Tim Collins
Matthew Carlisle
Sean McQuillan
Bob Wheeler
Jeremy Crane
Tabor Seidl
Rachel Miller
Daryl Martis
Joe Hedges
David Speer
David Fries
Dawn Collins
Adam Thorne
Greg Gootee
Jeremy Webb
Matthew Hopper
Tony Rickey
Brandon Heironimus
Sean Henley
Dennis Henley
Bryan Henley
Ryan Flynn
Tyler Greathouse
Jim Parsch
Tim Tincher
Chad Smith
Samuel William
Charles Whitaker
David Slipher
Kevin Doyle
Chad Obermeyer
Jason Obermeyer
Cletus Suttman
St. Malachy School
St. Malachy School
St. Malachy School
St. Mary of the Knobs Parish
St. Lawrence Parish
St. Lawrence Parish
St. Lawrence Parish
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
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St. Vincent de Paul Parish
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
St. Mary’s Parish
St. Mark Parish
St. Mark Parish
Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish
St. Michael Parish
Holy Family Parish
Holy Family Parish
Holy Family Parish
Holy Family Parish
Brownsburg
Brownsburg
Brownsburg
Brownsburg
Floyds Knobs
Lawrenceburg
Lawrenceburg
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
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Bedford
Bedford
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Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Bedford
Mitchell
Indianapolis
Indianapolis
Greenwood
Greenfield
Oldenburg
Oldenburg
Oldenburg
Oldenburg

If you are planning for a year
Sow Rice

If you are planning for a decade
Plant Trees

If you are planning for a lifetime
Educate a Person

Anonymous
INDIANAPOLIS EDUCATORS PRESENT AT NCEA CONVENTION

Various educators from around the archdiocese gathered in Beantown recently to present at the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) 101st Annual Convention in Boston. Led by Mickey Lentz, executive director of Catholic education, five separate presentation teams shared their expertise with Catholic educators from around the country.

Each of the five presentations highlighted aspects of the great things happening in our schools around the archdiocese. Mickey was joined by Bernie Paradise, associate director of schools and urban education, and Connie Zittnan, principal of St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy, to showcase CARE – Careful and Responsible Endowments – part of the nationally recognized Selected Programs in Catholic Education (SPICE) program.

Barb Shuey, associate director of schools for the Network for Catholic School Excellence, shared the stage with Ron Costello, associate executive director for Catholic education and school improvement and director of Project EXCEED. They enlightened a large crowd of over a hundred Catholic educators about standards and accountability.

David Gervasio, business manager at Roncalli High School gave an outstanding presentation about business management for schools. And, Chad Trenshaw, a teacher at Cardinal Ritter High School addressed the topic of class Websites.

The Project EXCEED team collectively presented the initiatives that have developed as a result of the Lilly Endowment Inc. grant and other gifts from generous individuals and corporations. Mickey Lentz has said that being in Boston to witness the sharing of the good work being done here was a proud moment for her. In echoing that sentiment, Joe Peters, associate executive director, commented, “…the kind of innovations that we have been able to introduce recently are not even being considered in many other dioceses”. Joe is absolutely right when he says we are doing things that other Catholic schools and dioceses “can only dream about”.

CATHEDRAL RECEIVES AWARD

Cathedral High School was honored by Today’s Catholic Teacher magazine with the “Catholic Schools for Tomorrow Award for Innovations in Education” at the recent NCEA Convention in Boston. The private Catholic school on the northeast side of Indianapolis was chosen in the entry category, “Promoting Catholic Identity.” The award recognized the many ways that Cathedral promotes Catholic identity and sense of family in the school. It begins with the admissions process when seniors volunteer as peer counselors. “The Blessing” places the stamp of Catholic identity on various activities and is given to an individual or group being recognized at every school assembly. It is a sincere thank-you and congratulations from the Cathedral family. The school stops to pray daily with retired Catholic educator, Sr. Delores Nellis, (Franciscan Oldenburg). The prayers speak to the specific needs and accomplishments of students. These daily prayers speak to the essence of Catholic identity that permeates each day for the students and staff at Cathedral.

CRISTO REY GRANTS

The Office of Catholic Education has received two start-up grants to explore the possibility of an innovative small Catholic high school in Indianapolis. The first grant was from the Cassin Foundation and the second was from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The latest grant comes to OCE through the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis. CELL distributed $289,500 in grants to support the creation of seven small high schools “that will redefine secondary education in Indianapolis.” Those model schools are characterized by, among other things, autonomy of operation, shared decision-making among faculty, individualized instruction and a focus on the three R’s of Rigor, Relevance and Relationships. The grants to the archdiocese total $105,000.

“I cannot emphasize enough the significance of these new small high schools in terms of student achievement,” CELL Executive Director, Dr. Lynne Weisenbach said. “These schools are committed to radically different approaches to ensure that all students graduate and are not only prepared, but encouraged to pursue post-secondary education. Each school will need tremendous support and involvement from the community to achieve these goals.”

The specific model school being studied by the archdiocese is the Jesuit Cristo Rey Network model. The first of these schools was started in Chicago in 1996 and the small high schools are now found in several other American cities. Cristo Rey High Schools primarily serve students from low-income families in urban areas. The students are formed into work groups and each student from a group works one day per week in a professional environment and attends school on an extended schedule the other four days. The professional firm pays the student the wages of one full-time employee, and the student’s family pays a reduced tuition. The schools are college preparatory and are designed to reach a population that is usually not reached by other Catholic high schools. Since October 2003 a special task force has been studying the possibility of the school. The earliest the school would open is Fall 2005, and it would eventually have no more than 400 students.
NEW EVANGELIZATION COMMISSION

When Karen Oddi, Associate Director for Faith Formation, assumed the duties of evangelization coordinator for the archdiocese, she realized that she would be meeting with several different but inter-related evangelization leadership groups in addition to her ongoing involvement with adult faith formation, multicultural, and initiation groups.

She quickly determined that the time was right to put a new, single evangelization leadership structure into place in order to continue and build upon the work of the former coordinator, Jesuit Fr. Joe Folzenlogen. A new commission would bring together many more people, whose ideas, gifts and experience in the varied dimensions of Catholic evangelization would shape a future vision of evangelization for the archdiocese beyond the Disciples in Mission program that began in 2002. With the approval of Archbishop Buechlein, OCE Executive Director Mickey Lentz, and the archbishop’s management council, a new Evangelization Commission was formed and met for the first time in January. With a commitment to the three goals of Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States, published by the U.S. bishops in 1992, the commission will focus on strengthening adult faith formation (goal 1); fostering a climate of outreach and welcome in parishes and institutions (goal 2); and promoting gospel values and the dignity of the human person throughout society (goal 3). The first commissioned-sponsored event will be the second annual Small Christian Communities Convocation on October 2, 2004, at St. Bartholomew Church in Columbus.

The commission members include: David Bethuram, Susan Borcherts, Mark Braun, Sue Butwin, Dennis Cooper, Lisa Covington, Fr. Clem Davis, Dr. Philomena Dias, Janis Dopp, Jean Galanti, Charles Gardner, Sheila Gilbert, Providence Sr. Marilyn Herber, Bonnie Hicks, Judy Koch, Ann Tully, Pat Witt, Fran Young, and Tom Yost.

GREAT SPIRITS IN THE CENTER CITY

In July, several hundred students in grades K-8 in the Center City Catholic schools will be part of “Great Spirits,” an exciting three-week program that combines the best of summer camp with the best of summer school. Children from the participating Indianapolis schools (All Saints, Central Catholic, Holy Angels, Holy Cross, St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy, St. Joan of Arc, and St. Philip Neri) will attend the program at one of three destination schools – St. Joan of Arc, Holy Cross, or All Saints. Lunch and transportation will be provided. The camp is funded by the archdiocese’s 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, known as Project RELATES.

The theme of the Great Spirits program is “Aboriginal Cultures.” Student campers will have great fun while they learn about other peoples, other lands, and other eras at the three destination schools and at the Indianapolis Art Center, the Peace Learning Center, and the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indian and Western Art. Teachers and counselors who are part of the “Great Spirits” experience will help children learn basic and advanced skills to assist them with their classroom work and with the next ISTEP tests. Curriculum coordinators plan to weave the theme throughout all parts of the program day. Students might study a story about indigenous people in reading, analyze the curve of a boomerang’s flight in math, play a Native American game during recess and learn a tribal chant on the bus on the way to a field trip.

“This is the first time we have been able to combine strong academic instruction with the more traditional summer fun,” said Bernie Paradise, Associate Director of Schools for urban education. “I’m especially excited that we have been able to hire so many highly qualified teachers and staff people who can help our center city students meet and exceed grade level expectations.”

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

The ninth annual Celebrating Catholic School Values: Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards dinner will be held on Tuesday, October 27, 2004, in the Sagamore Ballroom at the Indiana Convention Center.

Please plan to reserve a table and bring your school, parish or business group to this premier event for showcasing Catholic schools and their products.

RETIREMENTS

We extend best wishes for a blessed retirement to:

Mike Amrhein, St. Louis Batesville
Sr. Dominica Doyle, OSF, St. Michael, Brookville
Robert Leonard, Aquinas Center, Clarksville
Jerry Wilkinson, Providence High School, Clarksville
Monsignor Francis Tuohy, Christ the King, Indianapolis
SACRED HEART SCHOOL
CLINTON, INDIANA

The Rev. Joseph Villa, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, in Clinton, Indiana, recently announced to parishioners and school staff his conclusion that the parish is no longer able to support the operation of its grade school (pre-K—5th grade). The school will be closed at the end of this school year. The decision had the support of both the parish council and the parish finance committee, Father Villa said.

He cited the continuing deteriorating economy in Vermillion County and the school’s low enrollment of 40 pupils as the two major factors that contributed to his decision.

He also told parishioners that he had discussed the situation with parish leadership officials and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. A number of options were explored, he said, including using the building as an early childhood development center that would serve Sacred Heart Parish and neighboring parishes. “However,” he said, “in my judgment, none of the options is viable.” A process for keeping the school open was started about five years ago, and despite this effort, enrollment has continued to decline.

In a letter granting Father Villa permission to close the school, Indianapolis Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein said that he realized how difficult the decision was. “Responding to your request [to close the school] is also difficult,” he said.

A PROMISE TO KEEP CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

“A Promise to Keep: God’s Gift of Human Sexuality” (APTK) has been serving the students in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis since 1994. The program, sponsored by St. Vincent Hospital, Indianapolis, promotes the virtue of chastity and sexual abstinence until marriage through a unique peer-mentoring approach. It is a preventive health model that affirms and empowers positive role models who are committed to a chaste lifestyle. APTK focuses strictly on virtues, values and character formation; not on physical development.

High school mentors are provided with a scripted “lesson plan” that they are required to prepare before they enter the sixth, seventh and eighth grade classrooms in Catholic schools and religious education programs. Trained adult coordinators work with the mentors to encourage the teens as well as to ensure that a consistent message is communicated.

2004 marks the tenth year for APTK. In those ten years APTK has grown from the original 125 teen mentors to more than 3,500 mentors who have taught the curriculum to more than 35,000 junior high-age adolescents. This school year about 400 peer mentors serve throughout the archdiocese. On April 22, Archbishop Daniel Buechlein, OSB, welcomed nearly 300 mentors to the Catholic Center for the Tenth Annual APTK Recognition Luncheon where he affirmed and encouraged them. He said, “I admire you so much for what you are doing. You are providing younger students with knowledge of our Church’s teachings and sharing experiences or life lessons you’ve encountered since you were in their shoes. We know they will hear your message.”

Last year, Archbishop Daniel delivered a scrapbook to Pope John Paul II highlighting the APTK program. The Pope responded in a letter with his prayers and an apostolic blessing upon the program. A framed copy of the Holy Fathers’ letter was given to each school represented at the luncheon. Also, at the luncheon, Corrie Conner from Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson’s Office, read a proclamation declaring April 22, 2004, as “A Promise to Keep Day” in the City.

The ultimate decision to abstain from sexual involvement rests with teenagers themselves. Therefore, their leadership in this counter-cultural movement is critical. The great deception of our times is that we are powerless in the face of ambiguity, relativism and the temptations of the media and culture. However, these young adults have embraced a ministry where they can make a difference. We commend them for it.

Margaret Hendricks, Assistant Director, APTK presents the Pope’s Apostolic Blessing to Meredith Woods-Koppitch, peer mentor from Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School.
Remarks from Mickey

Every year, month, and day that I remain in this wonderful ministry of Catholic education, I am continually surrounded by talented people and exciting events. I continue to find myself moved by the spirit of those around me, especially the children, young or older, with whom I come into contact. Whether we are parents, grandparents, or educators, children do make a difference in our lives. Whether we serve in a school or a religious education program, we are touched by childlike joy and goodness. Wherever we meet the "little ones" -- on the playground, at camp, on a picnic or performing at an event -- they always breathe new life into our commitment to educational ministry. With such goodness all around us, it is important that we not allow other things to block our spirit. We have so much to be grateful for. God has blessed us with wonderful todays and bright tomorrows.

For some, this May marks the end of an era as they begin their retirement. Among them is someone very special to me and to all of us in total Catholic education. In my opinion, he is an icon. He embraces everyone and everything to the fullest. He has served his parish communities faithfully. He supports every aspect of total Catholic education. He is intelligent, witty and charming, to say the least. He has always been a visionary leader. He has dared to think bold new thoughts. He has certainly helped me to spread my wings and soar. So, I salute Msgr. Francis Tuohy, pastor of Christ the King parish in Indianapolis, for making a difference in the lives of many, especially in the hearts of the "little" ones. May he enjoy many years of retirement that he so rightly deserves. May God bless him.