Six Blue Ribbons for 2004

A total of six Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis have been recognized as national No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence for 2004. The schools are: St. Mary School, North Vernon; Saint Mary School, New Albany; St. Barnabas School, St. Christopher School, St. Luke School and Cathedral High School in Indianapolis. Bishop Dwenger High School in Fort Wayne was also honored. Our schools are among seven private schools and seven public schools recognized in Indiana. There were 50 non-public schools chosen nation-wide and 206 public schools. One hundred percent of the non-public schools nominated were chosen and 64 percent of public schools nominated were chosen for a total of 256 schools honored this year. The schools will receive their awards later in ceremonies in Washington, DC.

According to U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, the No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. The schools are selected based on one of three criteria:

1. Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance on state tests, as determined by the state school chief;
2. Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent on state tests; and
3. Private schools that achieve in the top 10 percent in the nation.

Under No Child Left Behind, schools must meet "Adequate Yearly Progress," in reading/language arts and mathematics. Each state sets its own academic standards and benchmark goals — not the federal government — because each state knows best what goals and criteria are most appropriate for its school districts, according to Paige.

A total of 15 schools in the archdiocese, including the six honored this year and four last year, have received national Blue Ribbons for Excellence. Past awardees are: Holy Family School, New Albany; St. Charles School, Bloomington; Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville; St. Paul School, Sellersburg; St. Louis School, Batesville; St. Jude School, Roncalli High School, St. Lawrence School and St. Mark School, all in Indianapolis. Roncalli has earned the honor three times, St. Jude twice and Cathedral received its second Blue Ribbon for 2004.

Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received more awards during each of the last two years than any other diocese, and we believe that no other diocese in the nation has had more schools honored in the national Blue Ribbon Schools program.

Congratulations to our national Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.

A complete list of all 2004 Blue Ribbon schools is available at: www.ed.gov/programs/nclbbrs/awards.html and a complete list of private schools honored can be found at www.capenet.org/brs2.html.
The ninth annual Celebrating Catholic School Values Scholarship and Career Achievement Awards dinner will be held at the Sagamore Ballroom of the Indiana Convention Center on Wednesday, October 27, 2004. The keynote speaker for this year’s event will be The Honorable Alan C. Page, Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court and a National Football League 1998 Hall of Fame Inductee. He played for both the Chicago Bears and the Minnesota Vikings and appeared in four Super Bowl games over 15 seasons. Page is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame where he was an All-American in football. He served as an assistant attorney general in Minnesota before being nominated to his state’s highest court. A noted motivational speaker, Page and his wife, Diane, have four children.

Four graduates of Catholic schools will be honored with Career Achievement Awards at this year’s event. They are:

- Sr. Dominica Doyle, OSF, St. Michael, Brookville, retired principal;
- Mrs. Mary Kenney, mother and retired nurse, St. Matthew, Indianapolis;
- Dr. and Mrs. James Nolan, retired optometrist and lay missionary couple, Holy Family, New Albany;
- Mr. Richard Pfleger, retired vice-president of worldwide sales, Juniper Networks

A fifth awardee, also a Catholic school graduate, will receive the Community Service Award. He is:

- Rev. Boniface Harbin, OSB, Founder and President of Martin University, Indianapolis

This year’s Celebrating Catholic School Values event will provide tuition assistance grants to help needy families throughout the archdiocese send their children to a Catholic school. As a result of the first eight events, more than $1.35 million in need-based scholarship assistance has been distributed to more than 2500 students. This year’s chairperson is past honoree, J. Timothy McGinley, Managing Partner, House Investments; and the vice-chairperson is Vicki F. Perry, President and CEO, Advantage Health Solutions, Inc.

Table sponsors are still needed. Please contact the Office of Stewardship and Development at 317-236-1425 or (800) 382-9836 extension 1425.

GREAT SPIRITS CAMP

For three weeks this summer some 350 children participated in a new summer camp experience. Funded by a 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant, teachers and counselors helped the students explore the topic of indigenous people of Africa, Australia and North America while reinforcing math, reading and writing skills.

It wasn’t all work, though. The student campers from All Saints, Central Catholic, Holy Angels, Holy Cross, St. Andrew & St. Rita, St. Joan of Arc and St. Philip Neri Schools also visited the Peace Learning Center enjoying the outdoors while practicing conflict resolution skills. They visited the Eiteljorg Museum, the Indianapolis Art Center and yes, they went swimming too.

The Great Spirits Camp supplements an extensive after-school learning program in the seven Indianapolis center city schools called Project RELATES. The program provides individualized instruction and tutorial help for students in the after school care programs in each of the schools. This program has also enhanced the libraries in all the schools. Sarah Batt is the program coordinator.

OCE WEBSITE IS OPERATIONAL

In the spring issue of the Good Word, we reported that the Office of Catholic Education had a new Website, thanks to Project EXCEED, the Lilly Endowment Inc. and other generous donors. We can now report that the Website is fully operational and is rapidly becoming a cornerstone of our efforts to communicate continuously with our constituents. Applicants for teaching and administrative positions can now apply directly online. Participants in the many workshops, meetings and programs sponsored by the OCE can register for these online. Web users can locate information about all schools and parishes on the site. Information about events and happenings is posted on the front page and on many of the program pages as well and many downloads are available. The entire religious and secular curriculum is also available online. Explore this exciting Website at www.archindy.org/oce/.
The NCA-CASI School Improvement Process

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) accredits the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. As a requirement of this accreditation the schools must engage in a continuous process of school improvement. The archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education (OCE) has chosen to follow the NCA-CASI (North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement) model. While all of our schools are accredited by the state and most are using this model, 31 schools within the archdiocese have already elected to become NCA-CASI member schools. In doing so, they are promising to meet the membership and improvement criteria, complete an annual report, and engage in a process of continuous school improvement.

The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) is a voluntary regional accrediting organization that was established in 1895, whose membership consists of nearly all of the colleges and universities and over 8,000 elementary, middle and high schools in 19 states, the Navajo Nation and the Department of Defense Schools overseas. The NCA model for school improvement was chosen because it allows our schools to develop a continuous plan for school improvement that is compliant with both the requirements of Indiana and North Central accreditation rather than having the schools complete two separate processes. Ultimately, this planning will result in improved student performance throughout the archdiocese.

As a volunteer, non-profit organization, NCA-CASI seeks and trains individuals who wish to serve the association and the schools using the process. State certified “Ambassadors” are utilized to conduct team visits and training throughout the state. Dr. Ron Costello and Carole Williams from the Office of Catholic Education are Indiana NCA Ambassadors who serve in these capacities as needed. To learn more about the association, visit their website at www.ncacasi.org.

TEAMPLAN at Five Years

Earlier this month a group of faith formation leaders from five parishes met in Nashville, Indiana, for a TEAMPLAN Effective Planning Workshop. The meeting marked the fifth year of a partnership between the Office of Catholic Education and the Mathile Family Foundation of Dayton, Ohio that, since 1999, has educated parish leaders and supported strategic planning for parish faith formation programs in nearly one fifth of all of the parishes in the archdiocese. The most recent group of parishes compose the eighth TEAMPLAN cohort and reflect the fact that parish faith formation ministry can no longer be measured simply by the number or variety of programs provided. Workshop participants made clear their desire to focus their energy on those areas that will make a difference in the faith lives of parishioners and to plan for the future by consulting the entire parish in order to identify key issues around which to develop strategies and action steps. The bishops of the United States in their monumental document, Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States (2000), state that “the parish is the curriculum”, meaning that the fabric and quality of total parish life is what forms people in faith. Parish administrators of religious education and faith formation commission members play a key role in fostering the faith life of the entire parish. The many new and exciting faith formation initiatives that have emerged through the TEAMPLAN strategic planning process over the past five years are a reflection of the “new evangelization” which is guiding parishes to be more welcoming, more faith-filled, more attentive to special needs, and better at communicating the message of Jesus and inviting all into the Body of Christ. The Office of Catholic Education applauds those parishes and pastoral leaders who have embraced TEAMPLAN in order to make a real difference within the faith community.
OCE Welcomes New Administrators

On August 26, new educational administrators from throughout the archdiocese gathered at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, Beech Grove, for a day of orientation to their roles and to the role of the Office of Catholic Education in helping them to be successful right from the start of a new program year. The day began with a Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by Fr. Robert Robeson, Director of Youth Ministry within OCE. Carole Williams, Associate Director for Catholic Schools and Harry Dudley, Associate Executive Director for Faith Formation, conducted a large group orientation session that included information on educational commissions, introduction to the OCE professional staff, and a discussion on building relationships in educational and pastoral leadership. A small group session for each ministry focused on specific responsibilities and areas of the administrator’s position description. The Office of Catholic Education is pleased to welcome and support the following new educational administrators for 2004-2005:

**Youth Ministry**
- Elizabeth Funk, St. Luke, Indianapolis
- Gina Hines, SS. Francis & Clare of Assisi, Greenwood
- Leticia Pinnick, Our Lady of the Springs, French Lick
- Adrianne Spahr, St. Agnes, Nashville
- Margaret Zeh, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis

**Faith Formation and Youth Ministry**
- Virginia Cygan, St. Gabriel, Indianapolis
- Pam McClure, St. Joseph, Shelbyville

**Faith Formation**
- Christa Dohmen, Our Lady of the Greenwood
- Christina Flum, Aquinas Center, Clarksville
- Nancy Harness, St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad
- Jackie Noll, St. Matthew, Indianapolis
- Anne Robertson, St. Bernard, Frenchtown
- Michael Schrecker, St. Mary, Navilleton
- Kristen Swift, St. Pius X, Indianapolis

**Catholic Schools**

**Presidents**
- Kevin Casperson, Fr. Thomas Sceccina Memorial High School, Indianapolis
- Joan Hurley, Our Lady of Providence Junior/Senior High School, Clarksville

**Principals**
- Carissa Cantrell, St. Ambrose, Seymour
- Joe Hansen, St. Roch, Indianapolis
- Al Holok, Bishop Chatard High School
- Maggie Jackson, St. Louis, Batesville
- John Kohan, St. Gabriel, Indianapolis
- Chad Moeller, St. Michael, Brookville
- Scott Stewart, Christ the King, Indianapolis

Sue Barth, Principal of St. Gabriel, Connersville, and Dennis Musial, Princiapal of Seton H.S., Richmond.

Left to right _____, _____, Nancy Fahenger, and Bev Hansberry.

Karen Oddi and Kathy Mears of OCE

Rob Rash, Principal at Our Lady of Lourdes School
NEW SCHOOL
CONSORTIUM

Archbishop Daniel Buechlein recently announced the official beginning of a Consortium that has been formed among the seven Catholic schools that serve neighborhoods in the center city of Indianapolis. The Consortium was formed as a result of a year-long study. In his remarks to center city pastors and principals, the Archbishop said, “You know how firmly I believe that Catholic education is an integral part of our mission as Church.” He then reminded the audience that if we wish to continue this mission in the center city of Indianapolis, “...we must find more efficient ways to make use of our limited resources.”

These seven schools will begin to operate differently this year. They will be pioneers in forming an association of schools that will no longer act completely autonomously, especially in terms of finances and development. Many decisions will be made for the good of the entire group of schools. The study indicated that the economic and educational needs of these schools can be better met by partnering together, and the Archbishop challenged everyone to “think big” and to develop a vision of what “could be.”

During this transition year, a team will lead the new Consortium. Mr. Tony Watt, a retired businessman, will be acting administrator; Bernadette Paradise, Associate Director of Schools for Urban Education, will continue to coordinate the urban educational programs begun through Project EXCEED; Jeff Stumpf, Chief Financial Officer for the archdiocese and Joseph Therber, Director of Stewardship and Development will also serve on the team along with Rev. Msgr. Joseph Schaedel, Vicar General and Mickey Lentz, Executive Director of Catholic Education.

The first staff position of the consortium is Associate Director of Finance. Vicky Miller was hired as the school year began, and she will begin the process to standardize and centralize the finances for each school. By the beginning of the 2005-06 school year, the position of Consortium Director of the will be filled.

A marketing study is underway which will involve interviews with constituents from each school culminating with a new case statement for potential donors. Creating an alumni list of the thousands of persons who have attended these schools is also a priority.

In concluding his remarks, Archbishop Daniel was mindful of the fact that these schools are here today because of the faith and sacrifices of those who have gone before us, and now it is time for us to pass on their legacy to the next generation.
People Making a Difference

I am sure I am dating myself when I refer to these words of Barbara Streisand's popular song, "People, People Who Need People Are the Luckiest People in the World", words that celebrate the fact that we all need one another and give lyrical testimony to our awareness that relationships are what life and living are all about. As people of faith in the ministry of Catholic education and faith formation, we are called to be servant leaders and Christian disciples committed to building and nurturing caring relationships with all the persons we serve. The blessing of having role models of servant leadership energizes our educational ministry. When one of these individuals is no longer with us, we are both saddened by loss and grateful for having had our lives enriched through knowing such a fine person.

On Sunday, September 12, Jesuit Father J. Paul O'Brien died very suddenly at the age of 67. For forty years Fr. Paul gave his heart and soul to the Jesuit Community and to Brebeuf Jesuit High School. What a great man he was! Fr. Paul was always around. His energy was boundless. He could call everyone by name. Students, colleagues, fellow Jesuits, and community leaders called him "passionate", "pastoral", "faithful", "a pillar of the community", "likeable", and "conscientious". I did not know Fr. Paul well, but I was always glad that he could call me by name. He was always so grateful and welcoming when I visited the school or attended a Brebeuf graduation ceremony. Oh how he loved the youth! In many ways he was one of them, bonding with them in the classroom and journeying with them toward a more just society.

Fr. Paul's untimely death calls us to think about the other role models who have been a positive influence in our lives, helping shape who and what we are today. Building relationships in our ministry is one of the most important acts we can perform, because people really do "make a difference".

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