



# ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

## SUPPLEMENT

## Catholic schools: promoting the love of Jesus every day

Gina Kuntz Fleming

Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is honored to serve more than 23,000 students in 68 Catholic schools throughout central and southern Indiana. With 57 elementary schools and 11 high schools, we certainly have the privilege of seeing the love of Jesus Christ in action every single day!



Though each school serves its unique community in its own special ways, there are several commonalities that all of our Catholic schools share, which include:

• **Shared Mission and Catholic Identity**—We recognize that each person is made in the image and likeness of God. Through programming and practices, we integrate our faith, culture and life in ways that help young people attain academic and career pursuits as well as everlasting life with God.

Our doors are open to all who desire a quality Catholic education regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status.

• **Academic Excellence**—Our focus remains on the growth and achievement of every young person we serve. Recognizing parents as the first educators, we partner to help youth grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

With ISTEP+ scores higher than state averages at every grade level and continued excellence illustrated by other measures of performance (such as SAT and ACT college entrance exams), our students are challenged and supported as we maximize their capacity in preparation for college, careers and heaven.

Our school leaders, teachers and other staff members truly set our Catholic schools apart from the rest for their dedication, professionalism and example as ministers of the faith which cannot be matched! We thank God daily for these amazing individuals and their service to our Church.

• **Quality Leadership/Governance**—We value local autonomy while having the broader support of our archdiocesan offices and network of Catholic schools.

We are grateful for our pastors and religious who give so generously so that we may all come to know, love and serve God more fully. With lay leaders from each community serving on school boards and commissions in an advisory capacity, our school leaders are provided supports intended to directly impact youths and families in positive ways. We are thankful for each of our board/commission members and other volunteers who readily assist in this great ministry.

• **Operational Vitality**—Committed to excellence and rigor, our Catholic schools responsibly approach personnel, financial and operational decisions in ways that put children first and fortify long-term viability for generations to come.

Our cost per student, on average, is significantly lower than that of public and charter sectors, and our youths are the direct beneficiaries of the resources secured.

Our Catholic schools exist to develop missionary disciples in Christ, and we do that through effective stewardship, strategic planning and prayerful discernment when making decisions.

Please join me in celebrating the ministry of Catholic schools and all those who aid in their success! May God continue to bless our Church abundantly and all those we serve! †



# Capital campaigns build community support for Catholic schools

By Sean Gallagher

Faith is the foundation of any effort to ensure the future of Catholic education in central and southern Indiana.

The students at St. Nicholas School in Ripley County may know that better than most. When construction on a new education center began at St. Nicholas



Fr. Shaun Whittington

Parish last year, students placed medals of saints in gravel where the foundation of the new school would be poured.

“I believe that the dedication to prayer for this project by the school children is what has made

the rough places smooth during our construction phase,” said Father Shaun Whittington, St. Nicholas’ pastor. “Taking the children onto the site under the supervision of our general contractor to bury the blessed medals was one of my favorite parts of the project so far.”

“Our parishioners have always been a very faith-filled group,” said Sherri Kirschner, St. Nicholas’ principal. “They understand that God is the center of everything. I think the opportunity to spread the good news of Jesus to even more youths of our parish and community excites them as their deep-rooted faith will live on in their children and grandchildren who will graduate from St. Nicholas School.”

The faith of today’s students at St. Nicholas and other schools across the archdiocese is built on the foundation of faith of generations past in central and southern Indiana.

St. Nicholas Parish was founded in 1836, just two years after the

establishment of the Diocese of Vincennes, which later became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Its school was founded in 1859.

At that time, parishioners across central and southern Indiana often came together as a community to put brick and mortar together with their own hands to start a Catholic school.

Community is no less a part of construction projects today than it was generations ago.

It usually happens now through capital campaigns in which parishioners and other school supporters contribute funds for needed improvements, renovations or additions to a school’s campus.

The capital campaign at St. Nicholas that has made its new \$3.2 million school building possible is its Heritage Project. The first phase of the project is the construction of the school building, which should be ready for use at the start of the next academic year. Future phases will include constructing a gymnasium and parish life center.

“Capital campaigns always build community,” said Jolinda Moore, executive director of the archdiocese’s Secretariat for Stewardship and Development. “In addition to raising money, they also raise excitement and commitment to [the school]. Engagement goes through the roof.”

Moore and other archdiocesan leaders help parishes and schools in the process of making a case for a capital campaign, determining what projects are possible through feasibility studies and then



Jo Hoy



Mary Schmidl, left, Lilah Butz and Henry Schneider, all sixth-graders at St. Nicholas School in Ripley County, place blessed medals of saints in gravel on Nov. 5, 2018, where a foundation was later laid for a new education center at the Batesville Deanery faith community. (Submitted photo)

launching a campaign and seeing it through to completion.

Joseph Hollowell, president of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis, knows well how capital campaigns build engagement among a school’s supporters.



Joseph Hollowell

Serving as the president of the interparochial high school for the Indianapolis South Deanery since 1995, Hollowell has overseen several building projects and capital campaigns, including the current construction of a \$6.5 million gymnasium that will seat 2,000 people and is expected to be open for use at the start of the next academic year.

“There’s a real sense of pride that comes from a community that has joined together to build a facility that is of great service to the young people there,” he said. “There’s a real sense of common ownership that builds up the body of Christ.”

Roncalli’s current capital campaign involved more than 100 volunteers who

met with five to 10 other people or couples to invite support for the project.

“No one or two people can pull off a capital campaign,” Hollowell said.

Jo Hoy, president of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, which serves the Indianapolis West Deanery, is leading her first capital campaign. It is a \$2 million project to build a new entrance to the school to improve safety and to reclaim four classrooms that have been used as offices in recent years.

“It was resoundingly supported by the fact that we always want to provide a safe environment for our students,” Hoy said. “That’s why we exist, to provide a Catholic education for the families that want it.”

Hoy previously served as Ritter’s principal and has seen how previous building projects and capital campaigns build up the community of people who support the school, especially its alumni.

“It gives them a sense of pride and continues to renew a sense of ownership,” she said. “They remember the reason that their parents sacrificed to send them to Catholic schools. It’s an incredible experience for all of us.” †

## Teacher offers tips to help students develop their talents

By John Shaughnessy

In 26 years of teaching at Catholic schools in the archdiocese, Lynne Locke has developed a definite approach to help students make the most of their talents.



Lynne Locke

It’s an approach that led to her selection in 2018 as the recipient of the Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

Here are some thoughts about being a Catholic educator from Locke, a junior high school theology and social studies teacher at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.

**Lead by example.** “I live what I teach. In teaching the value of each human being, as a child of God, students know they are respected, even when there is a difficult situation. I do make mistakes, and I model reconciliation by readily apologizing to students and/or parents when necessary.”

**Set standards.** “Keeping standards high for all students is integral to the Catholic notion of justice. All students

deserve to be challenged and supported according to their individual needs.

“I do not accept substandard work from any student. Of course, the standard is different for each student. Everyone—including me—can work to improve.”

**Provide support.** “Just because a student has a higher ability level does not mean that they never need support. Many students—both high and lower ability—come to school bearing burdens, and these burdens affect their ability to grow and learn.”

**Act fairly.** “Even when disciplinary measures need to be taken, I believe that I act in a just and fair way to students—and that each situation is a learning experience, helping students to understand their actions and the effect this may have on others.”

**Serve.** “By using my own gifts and talents to help others, I model responsible stewardship and help the students understand that using their God-given talents to serve others is a way of life.”

**Work with parents.** “Developing a working relationship with parents is crucial to supporting and challenging students. Helping parents to understand their student’s gifts and talents—and how to grow those gifts and talents—is a focus for me.” †

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Catholic Schools Week

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# Driven to lead and connect: Bishop Chatard student-athlete represents Catholic high schools in Indiana sports

By John Shaughnessy

The smile of Edreece Redmond is quick and full of light, and it flashes often during a conversation about the defining ways he represents high school student-athletes in Indiana.

The junior from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis is one of the 18 members of the student advisory committee of the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA)—a committee that represents more than 160,000 student-athletes from 410 high schools across the state.

One of the captains on Bishop Chatard’s basketball team, Edreece is the only member on the committee who is from a non-public school.

“It’s big—not only to represent all Catholic schools, but Chatard especially,” says Edreece, who is 17. “I’m the only African-American, too, so that’s big to represent that community.”

As he shares these two realities, he does it with a sense of humility, respect and responsibility—just some of the qualities that define him, according to those who interact with him often. In fact, they say, he represents the best of high school student-athletes, the ones who strive for success in the classroom, savor their bonds with their teammates and classmates, want to make a difference in their community, and give their all to their school and their sport.

“You couldn’t ask for a better student-athlete,” says Kerrie Schludecker, an assistant commissioner for the IHSAA who works with the student advisory committee. “He works hard, he’s coachable, and his respectfulness and his personality stand out. He’s always smiling.”

“Academically, he’s a high honor roll student, so he gets it done where it’s most important,” says Mike Ford, Bishop Chatard’s athletic director. “He’s also a very humble individual even though he’s a high achiever.”

Brian Shaughnessy has coached Edreece at the varsity level for three years. He also has him as a student in a religion class for juniors. In basketball, Edreece’s coach describes him as “incredibly determined and driven, a gifted athlete but humble.” As an example, he recalls how Edreece reacted when he had a game where he believed

he didn’t live up to his personal standards. After the game that night, Edreece spent an hour in the gym working to improve.

As his teacher, Shaughnessy sees a “focused, thoughtful” student who is equally dedicated in the classroom.

For Edreece, his approach to both sports and studies comes down to a basic philosophy.

“Go as hard in the classroom as I do on the court,” he says. “On the court, I want to be the best. If I do that, I have to put my best foot forward in class, too.”

Still, Edreece’s greatest attribute may be the way he relates to other people, Shaughnessy says.

“He is all class—as respectful, supportive, trustworthy and grounded a young man as you’re likely to meet. He is good to everyone I see him interact with, all the way down to my 3-year-old daughter.

“He is an amazing leader. He is a complete advocate for his teammates. They know he cares about them, has their back, and will put himself on the line for the team.”

Known for his natural smile, Edreece’s brightest one comes when he talks about his teammates.

“We’re all really close on and off the court,” he says, noting how they often go to breakfast together after a Saturday morning practice. “I want us to feel like a brotherhood, which it is on our team. I also want them to know that if there’s anything that they’re facing off the court, we’re all here for each other.”

Edreece is working to create that same sense of inclusion in another special way through his involvement with the IHSAA committee. One of the responsibilities of the 18 members is to start a “Champions Together” program at their high school.

“It’s bringing together kids with special needs with students here, and then have them compete in activities together. I think we’ll do bowling,” Edreece says. “Coming up, we’ll have a school assembly to get students interested in working with special needs students and raising money for the events.”

He views his involvement in the “Champions Together” program as another way to develop as a leader, another way to share his gifts to make a difference in the lives of other people. They’re qualities and desires, he



A junior at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, Edreece Redmond is one of the 18 members of the student advisory committee of the Indiana High School Athletic Association—a committee that represents more than 160,000 student-athletes from 410 high schools across the state. (Submitted photo)

says, that have been enhanced through the education he has received at Bishop Chatard.

“It’s really built me up as far as who I am as a person. Just the community—how close we are. It’s put me in a position of leadership that maybe I wouldn’t have at other schools. The relationships I’ve built with teachers and friends are really close. They’re always there for you. They genuinely care for you.” †



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# STEM classes create a bright future for students and society

By Sean Gallagher

Joe Esposito, technology teacher and coordinator at St. Pius X School in Indianapolis, says the future is now when it comes to preparing his students for a more technologically driven workforce.

That's why St. Pius and more Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana are introducing classes that incorporate science, technology, engineering and mathematics, commonly known as STEM.

"It's very important for Catholic schools to put an emphasis on STEM education because the demand for STEM skills is no longer on the horizon," Esposito said. "The world in which our students live is employing technical methods of making things faster, smarter and more efficient, and we would be doing them a disservice if we didn't equip them with the right tools today."

What sets apart Catholic schools in their approach to STEM classes is that they help their students learn about these fields in light of faith.

"They need to study the natural world, how it works and be able to effect change," Esposito said. "But they also need Catholic values to give them purpose and direction in their work. I actually was telling third graders today that because God created the natural world, we can find ways to connect with him by understanding how it works."

St. John Paul II School in Sellersburg began offering STEM classes to its middle schoolers in the 2017-18 academic year.

Karen Haas, St. John Paul's principal, has high hopes for the possible effects these classes can have on her students and the broader society.

"Those in the STEM field have the ability to solve problems," Haas said. "They gain knowledge while focusing on real world issues and problems. Today's

STEM student may someday create a design to help the disabled, or have an impact on decreasing the impact of a natural disaster through better forecasting.

"The benefits to society are endless. God gives each student the gift of his or her abilities. What he or she does with those abilities is his or her gift to God."

The focus in STEM classes is often on applying knowledge to specific projects that groups of students have to complete together.

For example, students at St. John Paul II were given an "egg drop challenge" in which they were given materials to create a package to hold an egg and keep it intact after being dropped to a hard surface.

In the challenge, they applied what they had previously learned about aerodynamics and impact forces.

The project was also a competition among the groups of students to see who could create the most protective package with the least materials used.

"We were able to apply in the real world things that we had already learned in class," said Alexander LaMaster, a seventh-grader at St. John Paul. "It was really cool."

Shelby Arthur, St. John Paul's STEM teacher, said she uses the natural competitiveness among children to enhance their learning.

"It really allows them to naturally work together and brainstorm multiple ideas and concepts without the students realizing that they are still performing school-related tasks," she said. "The students enjoy the positive reinforcement and praise for winning a STEM challenge."

"They get to carry that sense of achievement around with them. That continues to motivate the students to try their best and to really try to understand the STEM concepts we are covering so that they can win the next STEM challenge."



Harrison Howell, left, Evan Nevitt, and McKinley Combs, all sixth-graders at St. John Paul II School in Sellersburg, smile after winning a competition in their STEM class in the New Albany Deanery school. (Submitted photo)

Some students face challenges in STEM classes. Esposito appreciates helping them overcome obstacles and achieve success.

"To say it has been very rewarding is an understatement," Esposito said. "So many students think that they 'just aren't good at coding' or 'STEM doesn't make sense to me,' and I have the privilege of popping those bubbles."

"My eighth-graders last year were learning about [software] programming, and one student asked me if what we were learning was actually coding, and when I said yes, he exclaimed that he

actually understood it. You could see the empowerment on his face."

With teachers like Esposito across the archdiocese helping students past barriers that they thought were beyond their reach, Haas is anxious to see what the future will hold.

"We envision that our students will be well prepared as critical thinkers for their school career and beyond," Haas said.

"We pride ourselves on the fact that John Paul II students start here and succeed anywhere. We can't wait to see the world they create—a world we can only imagine." †

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# A special choir ‘sounds like angels singing for God’

By John Shaughnessy

Cindy Greer was on the verge of tears the first time she witnessed what the students had done.

Her appreciation has only grown five months later for the school children’s initiative, talents and faith.

“I almost cried the first week because it was so amazing,” says Greer, the principal of St. Anthony School in Indianapolis. “Their leadership and ownership have been great to see. And they’re really good.”

The special scene began at the start of the school year in early August when the school’s part-time music teacher had a commitment that wouldn’t allow her to be there for the weekly school Mass on Wednesday mornings. So seventh-grader Waldo Tapia took it upon himself to provide the music.

Waldo enlisted five of his female classmates who love to sing, and he set up a practice 45 minutes before school began that day. Then at the Mass, he strapped on his guitar and joined the girls in leading their schoolmates in songs that echoed with joy throughout the church.

The scene was so cool and contagious that fellow seventh-grader Lance Gratner brought his drums the next week, and soon sixth-grader Jennifer Cazares was playing the piano, and then students from kindergarten through the upper grades clamored to join the choir. Waldo, Lance and Jennifer welcomed them all, as long as they were willing to attend the practices.

Now, there are usually about 25 students in the choir at the school Mass, and a trombone player, a bass guitarist and two violinists have been added. The musicians have an extra practice each week.

“I was expecting a couple of kids to do it,” says Lance, who came up with the idea of expanding the choir. “I did not think we’d have this many people! A lot of the kids are little. We used to be little, too, so we understand them. We tell them, ‘OK, you have to practice.’”

Waldo nods and adds, “We



The student-led choir and musicians of St. Anthony School in Indianapolis use their talents to praise God during their weekly school Mass. (Submitted photo)



Jennifer Cazares, Waldo Tapia and Lance Gratner have taken the initiative to lead the student choir and musicians during the weekly school Mass for students at St. Anthony School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

created this atmosphere of being friendly because we’re all friendly here. I don’t care what grade they’re in. If they’re younger kids, they’ll eventually lead the choir. I want to give them the chance to lead.”

The three leaders of the group especially note the singing of the second-grade students, whom they view as an extra section of the choir because they sing so loud and they’re seated right near the choir at Mass.

“It gets me happy when I hear them sing,” Jennifer says, flashing a smile.

Greer is also all smiles when she thinks of the group.

“They took this on themselves,” says the principal of the Notre Dame ACE Academy school. “For them to be so dedicated and committed is amazing.”

Waldo just sees it all as an extension of the faith and the music that adds so much joy to his life.

“Ever since I was a small kid, I’ve loved to go to Mass,” says Waldo, who is 13 and from a musical family, just as Lance and Jennifer are. “The music is one of the most important things at Mass for me. I always like the Mass at school because it sounds like joy. The choir sounds like angels singing for God. That’s what I hear.” †

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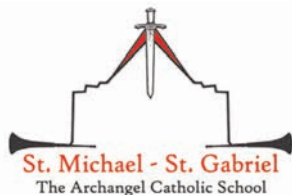


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# Learning days for principals help them impact students' lives

By Natalie Hoefer

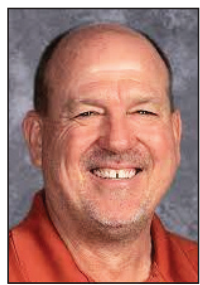
The world is changing, and so are the needs of the children living in it.

That's part of the reason the archdiocese offers several professional days for principals of its schools. And it is entirely the reason a recent professional day addressed the topics of social-emotional learning and cultural inclusivity.

What are these topics, what do they mean for Catholic school students, and how do principals keep up with other topics essential to their jobs? *The Criterion* interviewed three principals at archdiocesan schools in central and southern Indiana to learn more.

## 'Not in a day, but every day, all day'

"Almost all research now is pointing to social-emotional skills as being the key to learning," says Kevin Gawrys, principal



Kevin Gawrys

of St. Therese (Little Flower) School in Indianapolis. "If you don't have those [components], you can't process other information, you can't do anything with it."

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional

Learning, social-emotional learning is "the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

For perspective in terms of Catholic schools, Gawrys notes that "we see more and more every year how much more trauma and early child trauma kids have been through. Until you're able to add

social-emotional learning, significant, deep learning won't take place."

The source of trauma varies. But Janet Abdoulaye, principal of St. Susanna School in Plainfield, sees one pervasive trend.



Janet Abdoulaye

"I think social media and technology have made [children] a little more isolated than before," she says. "I think some of those skills they naturally learn in friendships, they don't learn as easily these days."

Cindy Johnson, principal of St. Michael School in Brookville, agrees.

"[Kids] know and hear so much more than what kids did 20 years ago," she says. "We have to meet them where they are."

Addressing students' need for social-emotional learning "is not done in one week," notes Gawrys. "It's done every day, all day."

He says one way to improve in this area is to "move away from, 'You did something wrong so you get punished' to 'You did something wrong. Why? What made you do that?'"

Another example he offers is teaching children a particular value by incorporating lessons on that value in intentional ways.

For instance, he says, "Our kids in third grade build endurance with reading. So we would tell them, 'Read for five minutes without talking.'"

"But we never told the kids, 'You're learning how to be persistent.' Now we're saying, 'Here's the skill you're learning,' instead of hoping they know what skill they're learning."

Abdoulaye says with the "Leader in Me" method that her school started a

few years ago, they began implementing social-emotional learning practices.

"The speaker showed a slide about how students need help with self-management," she says. "That's one of the first steps [of the 'Leader in Me']—'You are responsible for yourself.'"



Cindy Johnson

Johnson was so taken with the social-emotional learning concept that she personally bought 20 copies of a book

related to the method for her staff, even the cooks. She notes with a laugh that she has seen one classroom aide walking for exercise—while reading the book.

## Understanding differences

The second topic, cultural inclusivity, "goes hand in hand with social-emotional learning," says Gawrys. "Part of social-emotional learning is learning how to deal with people who aren't just like you, don't think like you, come from a different background, don't want the same things as you."

Abdoulaye notes that cultural inclusivity "is more and more important because we are becoming more and more divided as a society. So understanding differences and different points of view and different perspectives is really

important."

At Little Flower, diversity is not just a catchphrase—it's a reality.

Whereas the student body was predominantly Caucasian and Catholic when he started there 20 years ago, Gawrys says it is now one-third non-Caucasian and 50 percent Catholic.

"We have kids with nannies in the summer, and kids whose parents have no job," he says. "We run the gamut economically, racially, religiously, culturally. [Inclusivity] is the training of how we deal with other people, of how we go beyond tolerance to embracing the other person and realizing that differences make us stronger."

## 'We all have to be lifetime learners'

Abdoulaye, Gawrys and Johnson each expressed gratitude and enthusiasm for the ability to regularly meet with their principal peers.

"If I need help, I have colleagues I can call on—friends I can rely on," Abdoulaye says.

Johnson agrees: "It's priceless to talk with other principals. No one can help you the way other principals can. I look forward to those days. We all get to talk and brainstorm. It's awesome."

Bottom line, says Gawrys, "Kids want to do a good job. And we want to help them do that. The professional days are invaluable." †

# First graders' faith reflects teacher's plan to 'put God first'

By John Shaughnessy

One of Lindsey Morris' favorite moments as a teacher involves a non-Catholic, first-grade boy who always wanted to know more about the Catholic faith.



Lindsey Morris

"I was answering non-stop questions for a whole year," notes Morris, a first-grade teacher at St. Mary School in North Vernon. "I would see a spark in his eyes for the love of God and Catholicism."

"This young boy received his first Communion, reconciliation and confirmation all by himself. He is the only one in his family. He doesn't miss a Sunday Mass, and his love for the faith still grows. His testimony for this faith is something that will forever have a place in my heart."

The joy that Morris has in sharing that story reflects her major goal as a teacher.

"I pride myself on making sure I have

a relationship with every student," says Morris, who was a finalist for the 2018 Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

"I know my students' interests, needs and wants. I am constantly engaged with my students even after they leave my classroom. One example is in the way I lead our aftercare program after school. I love this because it allows me to reconnect with former students of mine."

She also continues that connection by serving as the faculty advisor for the school's student council and by leading the parish's high school youth group.

"Witnessing my students grow in their faith from first grade up is astounding."

That feeling is matched by being able to share her love of God and her faith with her students.

"Putting God first is the first thing that comes to mind when I think of my daily planning. I want my students to walk away from school every day and know that in every action and every conversation, we put God first." †



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# Alumni relish teaching at schools they once attended

By Natalie Hoefler

In terms of school, “homecoming” is an event when alumni gather from their scattered locations and return to their alma mater.

For many teachers in the archdiocese, every day is “homecoming” as they walk through the doors of the elementary, junior high or high school they once attended as students.

Below are the thoughts of a few of those alumni-educators at Catholic schools in central and southern Indiana. Among the aspects they value about teaching at their alma mater, there is one constant—their ability to openly discuss, share and practice their Catholic faith.

## ‘The Lord called me to be here’

Unlike most who seek jobs after college, Lindsey Scott cast a very small net—more of a lasso really.

“I couldn’t see myself working anywhere else, so I only applied here,” says the 24-year-old special



Lindsey Scott

education teacher at St. Monica School in Indianapolis. “I felt God call me to come back here.”

The lifetime member of the parish attended Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., to study deaf and hard-of-hearing education. One course

required for the degree changed her focus.

“I fell in love with special education,” she says. “It’s where I felt the most confident in my abilities, and the most joy.”

But Scott finds joy in Christ and her Catholic faith as well. She spent her first two years after college as a missionary in Ireland and Scotland sharing the Catholic faith and Gospel message with youths for National Evangelization Teams.

Toward the end of her second missionary year, Scott says she “asked the Lord where he needed me to go next. [St. Monica] is the only place I felt him need me. There were no issues, it was an easy process, and I felt such peace. It was a clear sign that the Lord called me to be here.”

Having spent time in a public school as a student-teacher, Scott appreciates now being able to “share with students my relationship with God, and how amazing it is to have one. I love working in an environment where I can pray, and the fact that we go to Mass every week as a school.”

Other than “calling my former teachers by their first name and getting away with it,” Scott says she feels no awkwardness in teaching where she herself had been a student.

“St. Monica is such a family community,” she says. “It’s my parish, my home. I can’t imagine doing anything else or being anywhere else. This is where I’m meant to be.”

## ‘I always dreamed of going back’

Jane Noel, 61, taught for eight years in public schools, and owned and operated a day care and kindergarten with a friend for 17 years. But in the back of her mind, she had a secret desire.

“I always loved my job,” she says. “But I always had a dream of going back to St. Lawrence and just giving back.”

For 10 years now, the lifetime member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg has been living that dream as a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher at the faith community’s school she herself attended.

“I wanted to be able to teach the kids how to pray, and that you can pray anytime, anywhere,” she says, “and to share my love of Jesus no matter what subject I taught.”

So she has, not just for the few years she taught religion, but also in her primary subject, language arts.

“Whatever the topic of the story they’re reading [for the class], there’s always a way to include the faith,” she says.

Noel even created “WOW God Wednesdays,” where she tells “a story about how God worked a miracle in someone’s life,” she explains. “They are true stories that leave the kids saying, ‘Wow!’ ... Sometimes the junior high kids will even stop in to hear a story.”

And Noel has been able to fulfill her desire to “pray at any given moment on any given subject. We pray every day at certain times, or any time. We’ve seen many prayers answered.”

Some of those prayers are “for our abortion-minded women,” says Noel, who serves as president of the board of directors for the Southeast Indiana Pregnancy Center in Lawrenceburg.

Getting to practice and share her faith at the school she once attended has been a wish come true for Noel.

“It’s all I dreamed it would be,” she says.

## A ‘special, unique school’ with ‘the feeling of family’

When Stephen Sims, 34, speaks of his alma mater, Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, his love for the school is obvious.



With Notre Dame Cathedral in the background, Aline Cambon poses with her students Caroline Wehner, second from left, Skip Maas, Hannah Storm and Myles Hesse during a trip she led to France. Cambone has been a French teacher at her alma mater, Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison, for 40 years. (Submitted photo)

“Shawe is a special, unique place, very small,” he says. “Our class had 25 [students], and they’re all my best friends.”



Stephen Sims

Things haven’t changed much since Sims graduated.

“It’s still the same as far as being close-knit and tight,” he says. “Kids are still everybody’s friend.”

The married father of two young children knows this because he sees it firsthand. Sims

is in his seventh year of teaching physical education at the school and serving as its athletic director.

Spoken like a sports fan, he appreciates the faith “that comes into play” at the school, attended predominantly by youths of families who, like the Simses, are members of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison.

The faith that unites the students and staff, combined with the school’s small size, creates “a more intimate environment,” Sims says.

“The staff knows every kid and what they need,” he notes. “They spend time with the kids. They know their strengths and weaknesses and their backgrounds, what’s going on in their families, so they can help them out better. Our teachers are supportive of the kids.”

French teacher Aline Cambon was working at the school when Sims attended Shawe—her son was one of his classmates.

But Cambon’s ties to the school go even further back. She has not only been teaching French at the school for 40 years—she, like Sims, is also a graduate of Shawe and Pope John XXIII School.

“We moved here from France when I was 9-and-a-half,” says Cambon, 63, who graduated from Shawe in 1973 and began teaching there in 1978.

She says the school has always had “the feeling of family. I like the support and love you feel from the students as well as their families.”

But what she most likes about teaching at Shawe is practicing her Catholic faith.

“If you see a student is down or having a difficult time at home, you can pray before class,” she says.

She teaches her students to pray the Hail Mary in French, and “they love to pray it,” she says. “They ask to pray it before tests. Once in the hall, they were practicing for an oral part of the test, and they asked, ‘Can we pray right now?’ And we held hands and prayed. It was so touching.”

The support, love and faith of the community shined through in a profound way after Cambon gave birth to her second son.

“I was in the hospital in a coma,” she recalls. “You wouldn’t believe the support they gave me—it was amazing. ... When I came back, the [Pope John XXIII] elementary kids made cards for me.”

Just this year, Cambon’s grandson started preschool at Pope John XXIII.

“To me, it’s like a dream come true to teach” at Shawe, she says. “I don’t feel like I’m going to work. I feel like I’m with my own family.” †



Jane Noel, center, poses with her 4th-grade class at St. Lawrence School in Lawrenceburg, which she herself attended in the late 1960s and 1970s. (Submitted photo)



# ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS Catholic Schools

Open Doors



Open Arms



Open Hearts

## What Makes a Catholic School Special

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE ...

- Centered in the person of Jesus Christ
- Contributing to the evangelizing mission of the Church
- Distinguished by excellence
- Committed to educate the whole child
- Steeped in a Catholic world view
- Sustained by Gospel witness
- Shaped by communion and community
- Accessible to all students
- Established by the expressed authority of the bishop

*(“Defining Characteristics of Catholic Schools”; National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools)*

### RESEARCH SAYS ...

- Catholic schools tend to operate as communities rather than bureaucracies, which links to higher levels of teacher commitment, student engagement and student achievement (Marks, 2009).
- In Catholic schools, the student achievement gap is smaller than in public schools (Jeynes, 2007; Marks & Lee, 1989).
- Latino and African American students in Catholic schools are more likely to graduate from high school and college (Grogger & Neal, 2000).
- Graduates of Catholic high schools are more likely to earn higher wages (Neal, 1997).
- Catholic schools tend to produce graduates who are more civically engaged, more tolerant of diverse views, and more committed to service as adults (Campbell, 2001; Wolf, Greene, Kleitz, & Thalhammer, 2001).
- When a Catholic school closes, neighborhood disorder increases (Brinig & Garnett, 2009).

*(University of Notre Dame. For more information, log onto [ace.nd.edu/resources/catholic-school-research/researched-case-for-catholic-schools](http://ace.nd.edu/resources/catholic-school-research/researched-case-for-catholic-schools))*



During National Catholic Schools Week, we proudly celebrate the 68 schools and more than 23,000 students served through the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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We ask for your prayers, as we keep you in ours.



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INSTITUTE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS



## How can we AFFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOL? Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers

My child is enrolled at a Catholic school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- My family is between 100% and 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

## TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP

CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INCOME LIMITS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

Persons in Household	69% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility	100% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility	200% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility
	Annual household income limit for a 90% Indiana Voucher	Annual household income limit for a 90% Indiana Voucher	Annual household income limit for a Tax Credit Scholarship (or 50% Indiana Voucher)*
1	\$15,418	\$22,459	\$44,918
2	\$20,904	\$30,451	\$60,902
3	\$26,391	\$38,443	\$76,886
4	\$31,877	\$46,435	\$92,870
5	\$37,363	\$54,427	\$108,854
6	\$42,850	\$62,419	\$124,838
7	\$48,336	\$70,411	\$140,822
8	\$53,823	\$78,403	\$156,806

Number Included All Adults in Household

Note: Income levels are determined in accordance with the *Income Verification Rules* Document available at [www.doe.in.gov/choice](http://www.doe.in.gov/choice).

\* For a household size of eleven (11) or more add \$5,486 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "90%" scholarship.  
\*\* Add \$11,988 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "50%" scholarship.  
\*\*\* Add \$15,984 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "50%" scholarship.

### What are Tax Credit Scholarships?

The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a \$500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

### Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
- A student who is enrolled in an eligible Catholic school.

### Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

### How do I apply?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit [www.i4qed.org/sgo](http://www.i4qed.org/sgo).

Additional local scholarships may also be available. Contact your local Catholic school.

I'm moving my child in grades K-12 to a Catholic school from a public school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- Apply before September 1, 2019
- My child attended public school the previous year (two semesters) OR received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher the previous school year.

AND one of the following:

My family is at or below 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

My family is at or below 150% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

My family is at or below 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level and my child qualifies for an IEP.

## K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

### What is an Indiana School Voucher?

A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

### Who qualifies for a Voucher?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student in grades K-12 who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
- A sibling received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher, AND/OR
- A sibling living in an "F" school area, AND/OR
- A current Catholic school student in grades K-12 who has received a Tax Credit Scholarship in a prior year, AND/OR
- A student who qualified for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

### Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Students enrolled in a Catholic school CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

### How do I apply for an Indiana school Voucher?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit [www.doe.in.gov/choice](http://www.doe.in.gov/choice).

Pre-K vouchers are available in Marion, Jackson, Bartholomew, Monroe, Madison, Harrison and Vigo counties. For more information, log onto [www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4932.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4932.htm).





# Catholic Schools

Open Doors

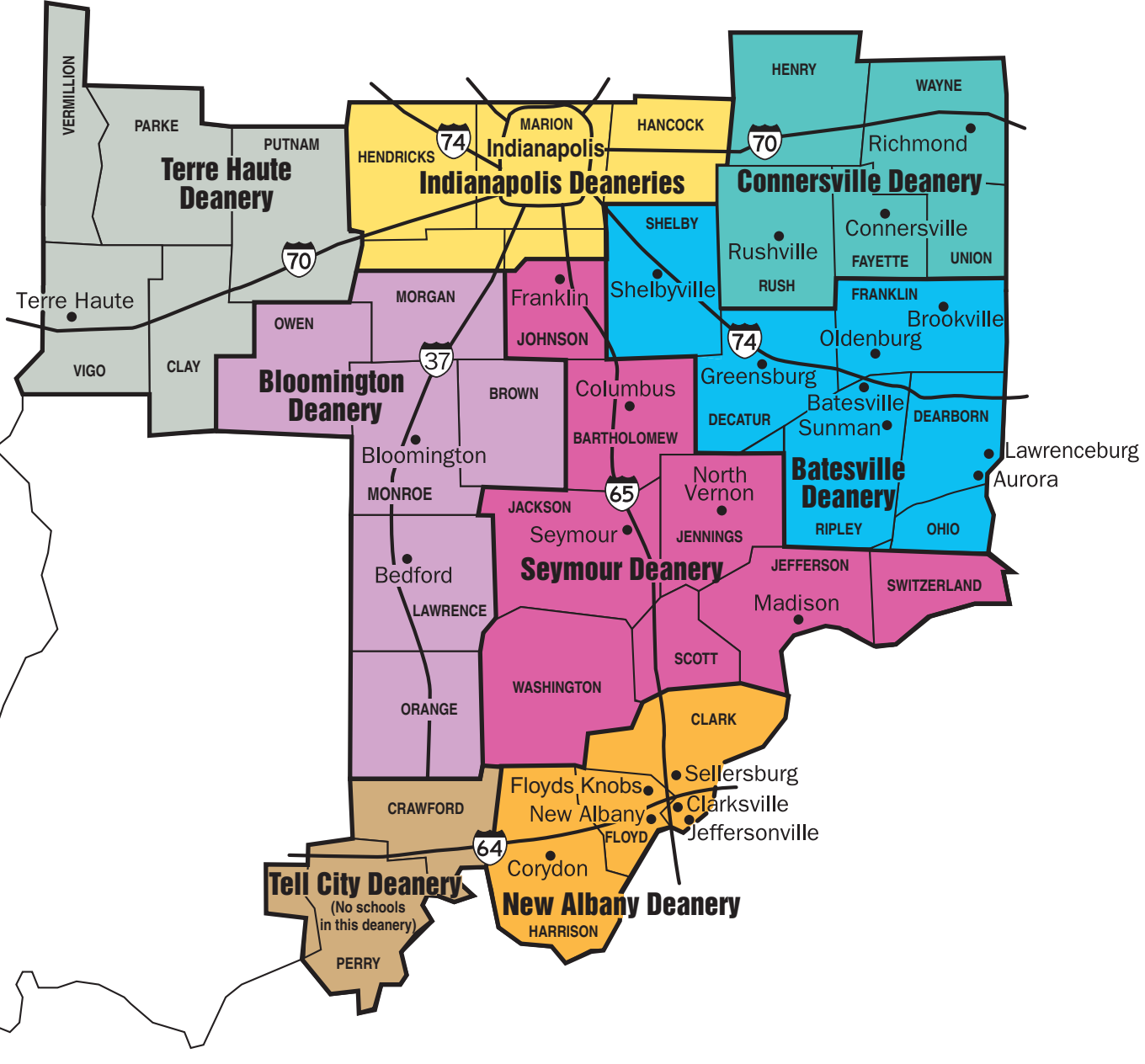


Open Arms



Open Hearts

## ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS



## DEANERY SCHOOLS

### Batesville Deanery

**Aurora**  
St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception School (K-8)  
211 Fourth St.  
Aurora, IN 47001  
812-926-1558

**Batesville**  
St. Louis School (PK-8)  
17 St. Louis Place  
Batesville, IN 47006  
812-934-3310

**Brookville**  
St. Michael School (PK-8)  
275 High St.  
Brookville, IN 47012  
765-647-4961

**Greensburg**  
St. Mary School (PK-8)  
1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way  
Greensburg, IN 47240  
812-663-2804

**Lawrenceburg**  
St. Lawrence School (K-8)  
524 Walnut St.  
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025  
812-537-3690

**Shelbyville**  
St. Joseph School (PK-5)  
127 E. Broadway  
Shelbyville, IN 46176  
317-398-4202

**Ripley County**  
St. Nicholas School (K-8)  
6459 E. St. Nicholas Drive  
Sunman, IN 47041  
812-623-2348

### Bloomington Deanery

**Bedford**  
St. Vincent de Paul School (PK-8)  
923 18th St.  
Bedford, IN 47421  
812-279-2540

**Bloomington**  
St. Charles Borromeo School (PK-8)  
2224 E. Third St.  
Bloomington, IN 47401  
812-336-5853

**Connersville Deanery**  
**Connersville**  
St. Gabriel School (PK-6)  
224 W. Ninth St.  
Connersville, IN 47331  
765-825-7951

**Richmond**  
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School (PK-6)  
801 W. Main St.  
Richmond, IN 47374  
765-962-4877

**Rushville**  
St. Mary School (PK-6)  
226 E. Fifth St.  
Rushville, IN 46173  
765-932-3639

### New Albany Deanery

**Clarksville**  
Our Lady of Providence High School (9-12)  
707 Providence Way  
Clarksville, IN 47129  
812-282-2144

**Corydon**  
St. Anthony of Padua School (PK-8)  
320 N. Sherwood Ave.  
Clarksville, IN 47129  
812-282-2144

**Corydon**  
St. Joseph School (PK-6)  
512 N. Mulberry St.  
Corydon, IN 47112  
812-738-4549

**Floyd County**  
St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School (PK-8)  
3033 Martin Road  
Floyds Knobs, IN 47119  
812-923-1630

**Jeffersonville**  
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus School (PK-8)  
1842 E. Eighth St.  
Jeffersonville, IN 47130  
812-283-3123

**New Albany**  
Holy Family School (PK-8)  
217 W. Daisy Lane  
New Albany, IN 47150  
812-944-6090

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help School (PK-8)**  
1752 Scheller Lane  
New Albany, IN 47150  
812-944-7676

### Sellersburg Deanery

**Sellersburg**  
St. John Paul II School (PK-8)  
105 St. Paul St.  
Sellersburg, IN 47172  
812-246-3266

**Seymour Deanery**  
**Columbus**  
St. Bartholomew School (K-8)  
1306 27th St.  
Columbus, IN 47201  
812-372-6830

**Franklin**  
St. Rose of Lima School (PK-8)  
114 Lancelot Drive  
Franklin, IN 46131  
317-738-3451

**Madison**  
Father Michael Shaw Memorial Jr./Sr. High School (7-12)  
201 W. State St.  
Madison, IN 47250  
812-273-2150

**North Vernon**  
St. Mary School (PK-8)  
209 Washington St.  
North Vernon, IN 47265  
812-346-3445

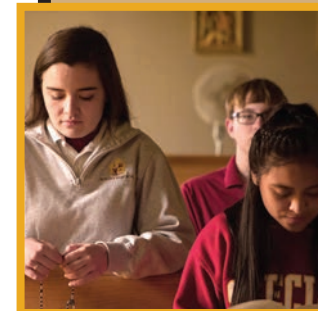
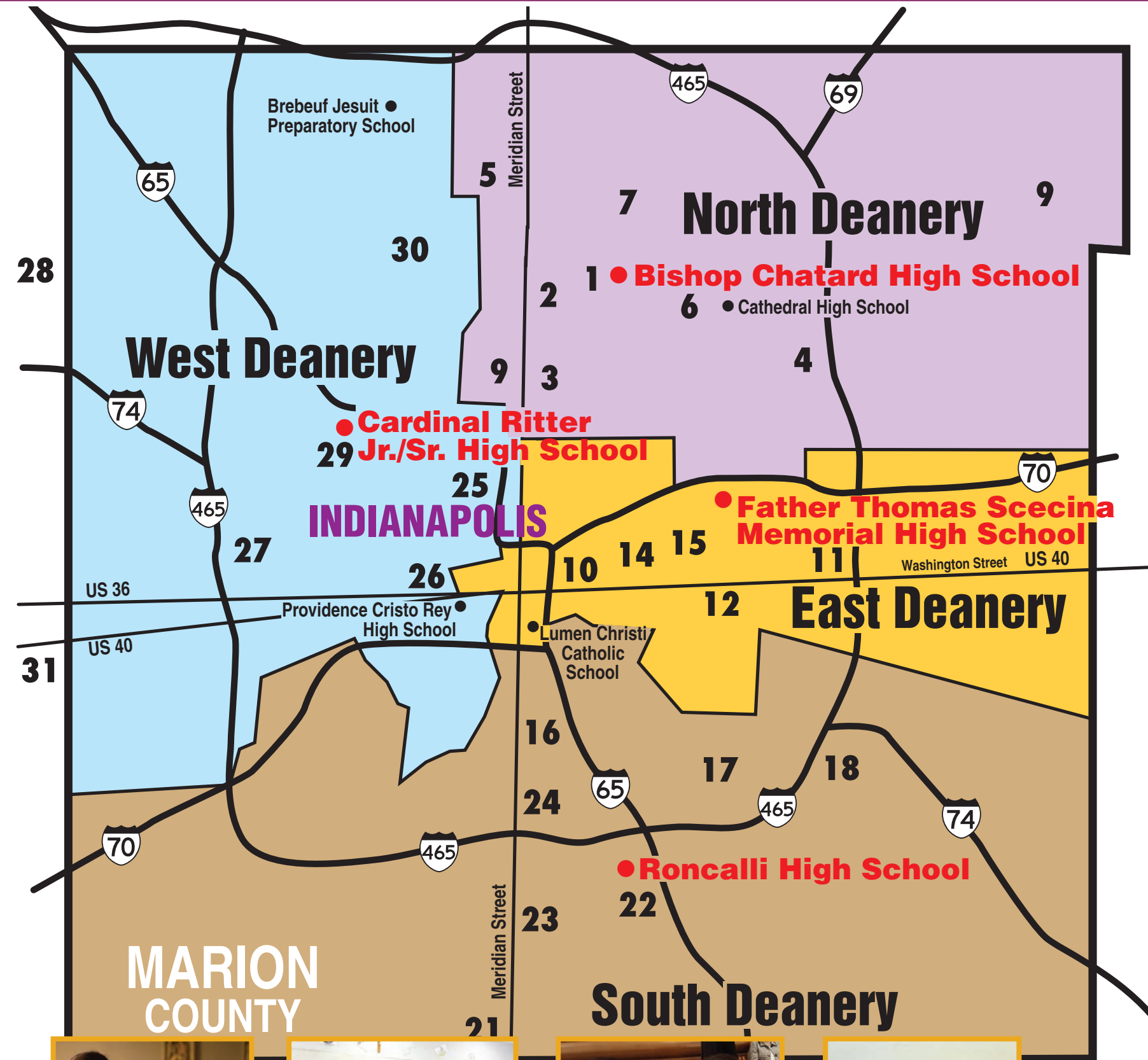
**Seymour**  
St. Ambrose School (PK-8)  
301 S. Chestnut St.  
Seymour, IN 47274  
812-522-3522

### Terre Haute Deanery

**Terre Haute**  
St. Patrick School (PK-8)  
449 S. 19th St.  
Terre Haute, IN 47803  
812-232-2157

**Private High School**  
**Oldenburg**  
Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception (9-12)  
1 Twister Circle  
P.O. Box 200  
Oldenburg, IN 47036  
812-934-4440

## GREATER INDIANAPOLIS



## GREATER INDIANAPOLIS DEANERY SCHOOLS

### Indianapolis North Deanery

• **Bishop Chatard High School (9-12)**  
5885 N. Crittenden Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46220  
317-251-1451

**1. Christ the King School (K-8)**  
5858 N. Crittenden Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46220  
317-257-9366

**2. Immaculate Heart of Mary School (K-8)**  
317 E. 57th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46220  
317-255-5468

**3. St. Joan of Arc School (PK-8)**  
500 E. 42nd St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
317-283-1518

**4. St. Lawrence School (PK-8)**  
6950 E. 46th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46226  
317-543-4923

**5. St. Luke the Evangelist School (K-8)**  
7650 N. Illinois St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46260  
317-255-3912

**6. St. Matthew the Apostle School (PK-8)**  
4100 E. 56th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46220  
317-251-3997

**7. St. Pius X School (K-8)**  
7200 Sarto Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46240  
317-466-3361

**8. St. Simon the Apostle School (PK-8)**  
8155 Oaklandon Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46236  
317-826-6000

**9. St. Thomas Aquinas School (K-8)**  
4600 N. Illinois St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46208  
317-255-6244

**Indianapolis East Deanery**  
• **Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School (9-12)**  
5000 Nowland Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46201  
317-356-6377

**10. Holy Cross Central School (PK-8) \***  
125 N. Oriental St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
317-638-9068

**11. Holy Spirit School (PK-8)**  
7241 E. 10th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46219  
317-352-1243

**12. Our Lady of Lourdes School (PK-8)**  
30 S. Downey St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46219  
317-357-3316

**13. St. Michael School (PK-8)**  
515 Jefferson Blvd.  
Greenfield, IN 46140  
317-462-6380

**14. St. Philip Neri School (PK-8) \***  
545 N. Eastern Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46201  
317-636-0134

**Indianapolis South Deanery**  
• **Roncalli High School (9-12)**  
3300 Prague Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46227  
317-787-8277

**16. Central Catholic School (PK-8) \***  
1155 E. Cameron St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46203  
317-783-7759

**17. Holy Name of Jesus School (PK-8)**  
21 N. 17th Ave.  
Beech Grove, IN 46107  
317-784-9078

**18. Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School (PK-8)**  
3310 S. Meadow Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46239  
317-357-1459

**19. Our Lady of the Greenwood School (PK-8)**  
399 S. Meridian St.  
Greenwood, IN 46143  
317-881-1300

**20. SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School (PK-8)**  
5901 Olive Branch Road  
Greenwood, IN 46143  
317-215-2826

**21. St. Barnabas School (PK-8)**  
8300 Rahke Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46217  
317-881-7422

**22. St. Jude School (K-8)**  
5375 McFarland Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46227  
317-784-6828

**23. St. Mark the Evangelist School (PK-8)**  
541 E. Edgewood Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46227  
317-786-4013

**24. St. Roch School (PK-8)**  
3603 S. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46227  
317-784-9144

### Indianapolis West Deanery

• **Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School (9-12)**  
3360 W. 30th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46222  
317-924-4333

**25. Holy Angels School (PK-6) \***  
2822 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46208  
317-926-5211

**26. St. Anthony School (PK-8) \***  
349 N. Warman  
Indianapolis, IN 46222  
317-636-3739

**27. St. Christopher School (PK-6)**  
5335 W. 16th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46224  
317-241-6314

**28. St. Malachy School (PK-8)**  
330 N. Green St.  
Brownsburg, IN 46112  
317-852-2242

**29. St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School (PK-8)**  
3352 W. 30th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46222  
317-926-0516

**30. St. Monica School (PK-8)**  
6131 N. Michigan Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46228  
317-255-7153

### Private Schools

• **Lumen Christi Catholic School (PK-12)**  
580 E. Stevens St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46203  
317-632-3174

• **Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School (9-12)**  
2801 W. 86th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
317-524-7128

• **Cathedral High School (9-12)**  
5225 E. 56th St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46226  
317-542-1481

• **Providence Cristo Rey High School (9-12)**  
75 N. Bellevue Place  
Indianapolis, IN 46222  
317-860-1000

\* Notre Dame ACE Academies

# Students learn to share their greatest gift in honors program

By John Shaughnessy

During Catholic Schools Week, sixth-grade students at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Richmond will collect diapers, baby wipes and formula to help struggling pregnant women.

This effort follows their Christmas outreach to bring fruit baskets to senior citizens at a nearby apartment complex—a visit where they talked and sang carols with the residents.

Then there are the after-school sessions where the sixth-graders—the oldest students in their school—regularly help younger children prepare for tests, do their homework or just spend time reading together.

It's all part of the school's National Elementary Honor Society program,

an initiative that uses the faith-based principle of caring for others to build leadership, character and lifelong service.

"We get to learn about being nice to people and helping them," says 11-year-old Kelsey Brim.

Abby Davis enjoyed participating in a march and a fundraiser to help the pregnant women.

"It was kind of cool to be there with teachers and students, to see all the people volunteering," Abby says.

Their friend and classmate Jackie Clemente adds, "It's really an honor to be in the society. It means you have this gift and this talent, and you can share it with others. It means a lot to me, and it helps the other students become better students as well."

"I was tutoring this one girl, and after we were done, she hugged me and said, 'Thank you! You've been so helpful.' She was in the third grade. That let me know I was sharing my gifts."

That's the primary goal of the honor society's approach, says its advisor.

"They're in charge. I let them take the lead," says Mary Leverton, the school's fifth-grade teacher. "They've really shined. They're doing things they've never done before in offering their abilities and their gifts to help others." †



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton students Gwynie Falcone, left, Jackie Clemente, Addi Guiley and Allison Hamilton deliver fruit baskets to senior citizens at a nearby apartment complex in Richmond before Christmas. (Submitted photo)

# Helping children with disabilities reflects teacher's focus on faith

By John Shaughnessy

Parents long for their child to have a teacher who cares for him or her—and then strives to bring out the best in their child.

It's a longing that may be even stronger for parents whose child struggles with a disability.

So the letter that a parent wrote in support of Jennifer Fisher Kelly says so much about the student service teacher at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville.

"[Our son] is dyslexic. He is far behind his peers in reading," noted the mom in her letter. "Most kids in his position have given up. I credit his hard work and willingness to go to school, even though it seemed impossible some days, to Jennifer Kelly. We could never repay her for the never-ending encouragement she has given our whole family. She was the best

advocate we could ever hope for in our journey."

Kelly's commitment to students with dyslexia, autism and other learning and developmental disabilities led to her becoming a finalist for the 2018 Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

It's a commitment that has its roots in a friendship from her days as a student at St. Anthony School and nearby Our Lady of Providence High School—a commitment that now extends to making a Catholic education possible for children with disabilities.

"I had a very good friend who attended K-12 with me who really struggled in school," she notes. "Those struggles made him dislike school more and more every year. During our senior year, he was diagnosed with ADHD and learning disabilities. He excelled in college

where he took advantage of support services and teachers.

"I often wondered what my friend's school experience would have been like had there been more awareness of learning differences and programs in place to meet different needs.

"His story always stuck with me. Once I decided in college that I wanted to be a special educator, I knew that I wanted to do so in a Catholic school at some point. I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to support children's needs with the Christian environment that their families have chosen for them." †



Jennifer Fisher Kelly shares a smile with one of her students during a computer exercise at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville. The student service teacher is known for her commitment to her students with special needs. (Submitted photo)

## Catholic Schools *Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service*

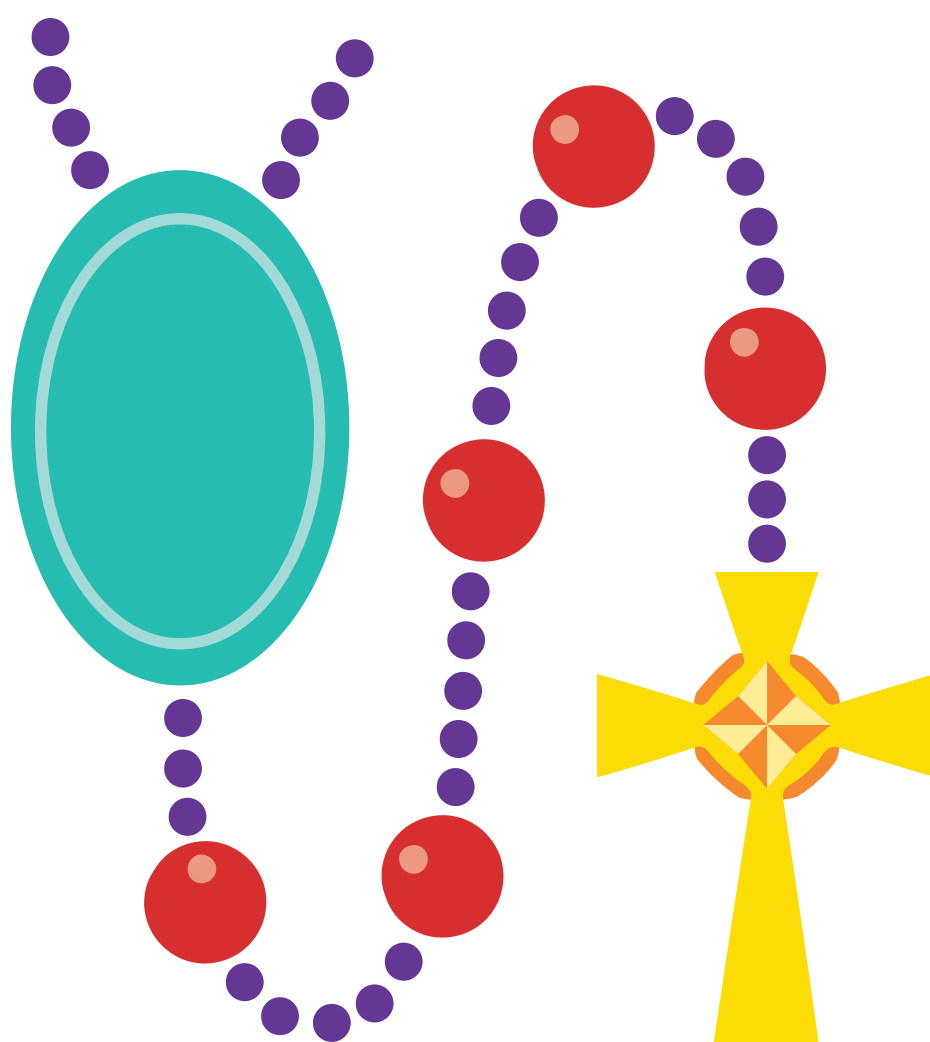
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# All the right ingredients make Soup Day a special tradition at Providence

By John Shaughnessy

One of the foundations of Catholicism is that many people need to help in the formation of a child's faith life.

A list that starts with parents also includes grandparents, godparents, coaches, pastors, older siblings and nearly everyone who works in the child's Catholic school.

That foundation is at the heart of an annual tradition at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville—a special tradition that was started 23 years ago by the leader of the school's cafeteria staff.

As the story goes, cafeteria manager Mary Ann Reed had a friend who devoted her life to helping the poor and homeless after she made a plea and a promise to God. The friend, who wasn't able to have a child, asked that she and her husband be blessed with one. In return, she would serve the needy.

The couple had a child. And as her friend upheld her promise, Reed started Soup Day at Providence to help her. As part of Soup Day, she served a simple meal of soup to the students, with all the profits from the day going to her friend's efforts. Reed also asked Providence students to bring canned goods and staple food items to the cafeteria, to help feed the homeless, too.

"Mary Ann started it, and it's meant so much to all of us," says Karen Hennessey, who worked with Reed for 16 years before Reed died in 2015. "She was special. She would always make you laugh, and her smile was contagious. She had cancer the last two years she worked here. She died two years after she left the school."

Now the cafeteria manager, Hennessey and the other members of the lunchroom staff continue the tradition, partly in Reed's honor and partly as a way of teaching students about the challenges of homelessness and hunger.

While soup is served during lunch, Hennessey and other members of the cafeteria staff talk to the students about how these challenges even can affect their classmates.

"We want them to know what it is like to wait in line, to maybe not eat everything you like to eat—to know that a bowl of soup might be all a kid gets each day," Hennessey says. "They may be your neighbor or someone who sits next to you in class."

In response to the pre-Thanksgiving effort in 2018, Soup Day raised about \$1,500 that was donated to two groups that help the needy: Haven House Homeless Shelter in Jeffersonville, and In Heaven's Eyes in New Albany. Nearly 1,500 canned goods and food staples were also distributed between Haven House and The Center for Lay Ministries in Jeffersonville.

"Every year when we do this, it's more special," Hennessey says. "We want the kids to know life is about community and giving back."

There is also a year-round, under-the-radar quality to the cafeteria staff's efforts to help people who are hungry—namely some students at Providence.

While some students benefit from a federally subsidized, free-lunch program, there are still students who deal with hunger at times. In response, teachers, staff and members of the cafeteria team at Providence have quietly contributed to the lunch accounts of such students.



The cafeteria staff at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville are instrumental in continuing the school's tradition of Soup Day, an effort to help the poor and the homeless. Staff members include Lindsey Rutherford, left, Karen Hennessey, Penny Schroeder, Maria Agtuca, Donna Burke, Aggie Kiesler, Elisa Bary and Sarah Gahagen. (Submitted photo)

"We had a boy who was eating a bologna sandwich for lunch and dinner each day," she says. "We put money in his account so he could get what he needed to eat. The fact that we have teachers and staff members who are willing to contribute to help kids and keep their names out of it says a lot about our school."

When money is added to a student's account, Hennessey sends an e-mail note to the parents of the child, letting them know that extra funds have been added by "a guardian angel."

Hennessey recalls one mother being so thankful because otherwise, she said, she would have had to choose between adding money to her child's lunch

account or paying an electric bill when her electricity was about to be turned off.

"Never once have I not received a thank you from the parents," she says.

Then there are the moments when students become the teachers.

"One student who was on the federal-assisted lunch program brought in 40 to 50 cans in two huge bags for Soup Day. It warmed my heart that she and her mother did that because money is tight for them."

They're all ingredients in what makes Soup Day a special tradition at Providence, Hennessey says.

"I appreciate the feeling of just knowing you're making a difference in someone's life." †

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St. John Paul II Catholic School, Sellersburg  
St. Mary of the Knobs Catholic School, Floyds Knobs

Celebrating Catholic Schools Week 2019

# Small parish makes big news in starting a school

By Jennifer Lindberg

Special to *The Criterion*

BRAZIL—A small parish community has shown that hope can outmeasure any label.

While Brazil was named the poorest town in Indiana from the United States Census Bureau, Annunciation Parish in that community took action to make a better distinction: opening a new school.

“With material poverty, there tends to be more drugs, crime, etcetera,” said Father John Hollowell, pastor of Annunciation Parish. “A lot of people, if you knocked on their door and invited them to Mass, wouldn’t dare come. But if you say, ‘We’d like to offer a really amazing, safe, holistic, education for your child,’ people are very much interested and ready to listen.”

Annunciation Parish was listening so well that after four parish dinners in December of 2017 to solicit private funds, they received \$75,000 just three months later from parishioners, alumni of the previous parish school and from friends of parishioners.

The school sparked an interest in an endeavor seeking to bring the light of Christ into some of the darkest corners through education. The new school also secured grants from The Froderman Foundation in Terre Haute and an early learning grant from the State of Indiana.

“Only the Lord could have brought all the pieces together,” said Christa Dohmen, the director of Annunciation Montessori School and the director of religious education for Annunciation Parish. “One of our goals is certainly to evangelize and bring new families with children to Annunciation Church.”

The new school, opening with a preschool for 3- to 6-year-olds, has plans to expand per archdiocesan approval each year. It can now accept The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) vouchers that help low-income families obtain child care and has a scholarship fund, Dohmen said. As the school adds elementary grades, it will be eligible for other state vouchers.

Mary McCoy, assistant superintendent for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools, worked closely with Dohmen and Father Hollowell on plans for the school.

“We are very blessed to have [Dohmen] down there and Father Hollowell too,” McCoy said. “I am so excited to see where this goes, and I hope they can sustain it.”

McCoy said that it is in the poorest areas that Catholic education sees a big impact. She was impressed with the vision that the school would evangelize Catholics and non-Catholics alike in the community.

“How beautiful,” McCoy said. “We believe that we educate not because



Sylvia Tews, a student at Annunciation Catholic Montessori School in Brazil, prays during the religious education program called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Sylvia was learning about the holy vessels of the altar that are used in Mass. (Submitted photo)

someone is [or isn’t] Catholic, but because *we* are Catholic.”

Dohmen first met Father Hollowell when she was studying in Rome more than 10 years ago. A former chemical engineer for Eli Lilly & Co. in Indianapolis, Dohmen began to feel a different call, one that led to graduating with a theology degree from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome and a master’s degree in Montessori Education from Loyola University Maryland before becoming principal of a Catholic Montessori school in Ohio. She was also a teacher in various Montessori schools.

Even with all these successes, Dohmen felt the Lord asking something more of her.

“The mission of a Catholic Montessori school was placed on my heart for vulnerable children in lower economic circumstances,” Dohmen said.

When she learned Father Hollowell was open to starting a new school, Dohmen felt that the cycle of poverty in Brazil and the surrounding area could be broken, and that children at the parish would be given another avenue to come closer to Jesus.

“Providing a Catholic Montessori experience to children as young as 3 years old can likely be the necessary component for a generation change in this low-income, at-risk community,” Dohmen said.

But the school is also about growing Annunciation Parish by bringing in younger families to an already aging

population, Dohmen said.

The Montessori approach, developed in the early 20th century by Dr. Maria Montessori, a devout Catholic, means the child’s education uses manipulatives that are hands-on, self-paced, collaborative and joyful, Dohmen said.

Students not only learn reading, writing and math, but also self-care. They learn to prepare snacks, basic sewing and how to care for their small environment that has child-size rugs, lamps and tables.

The school also has a full-time religious education component called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd that was created by Montessori. The program uses miniature items of the altar and Mass that students see at church, as well as other materials to help the child learn about the Bible and prayer. The setting is called an atrium, harkening back to the place where, in the early days of the Church, catechumens were prepared for reception of the sacraments. For the child, the atrium is a place to help prepare them for full participation in the life of the Church, Dohmen said.

“Whether Catholic or non-Catholic, being able to live the Catholic faith daily in the atrium and providing a faith community for the family to be a part of, we are supporting and nurturing the religious need within each child,” Dohmen said.

Dr. Kristen Walton, who is not Catholic, said she is grateful that her daughter Lillian, 4, is getting “a spiritual education alongside the Montessori

education.”

“We want our daughter to have the best education possible in a healthy environment,” Walton said. “In this part of Indiana, Annunciation is the only preschool we found that respects parents’ health decisions, genuinely cares about the child’s environment and provides research-based education.

“Lilly loves helping prepare her own snacks and other activities like sewing and playing the bells. Many of the activities she loves are not things we previously thought a 4-year-old capable of.”

Jeff Wools knew what a Montessori education was and wanted that for his grandson, Ian Schobee, 4. Wools, a member of Annunciation Parish, said he has seen marked improvement in his grandson during the time he has been at the school. Before, Ian was shy and didn’t speak much, Wools said.

“Now he has advanced,” he said. “He interacts with other kids a lot better, and it has all been very positive.”

Father Hollowell said opening a school is a lot of hard work, and this one has taken a lot of effort, from a major renovation project to securing funds and volunteers. He insists that the opportunity to share the faith makes all the efforts worthwhile.

“I feel like Catholic schools are such a wonderful way to bring the good news of the Gospel to the world.”

(Jennifer Lindberg is a freelance writer and a member of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville.) †

## Hard work spells success at state level for small school

By John Shaughnessy

Considering the success of the Spell Bowl team of St. Roch School in Indianapolis, the team members wouldn’t have any difficulty spelling the word, “dynasty.”

For the third straight year, the team of sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders from St. Roch has won the Indiana state championship in spelling at the Class 4 level.

In fact, in the past seven years, the team has won six state championships in the Academic Spell Bowl. The one team that didn’t win finished second, losing on a tiebreaker.

The latest state championship came on Nov. 10 at Purdue University in West Lafayette—a championship that produced the same reactions as when a sports team wins a title.

“There were big smiles, loud cheers and pumping of fists,” recalls Mary Ann Chamberlin, the team’s head coach who

also teaches religion and social studies at the school. “There’s a real sense of accomplishment because it’s hard, and they’ve worked hard.”

St. Roch team members practiced five days a week from the beginning of the school year in August until early November, striving to master the spelling of the more than 1,600 words that are the foundation of the competition.

Spell Bowl is a team competition, requiring eight team members to take their individual turn at trying to correctly spell—in writing—nine words. A person pronounces each word and uses it in a sentence. Participants then have 15 seconds to spell the word. The team that spells the most words correctly wins the competition.

“Just like in sports, they learn the value of teamwork, that they’re only as strong as their weakest link,” Chamberlin says. “They also learn the value of putting time into this. They practice at home, too. There’s that personal self-discipline that,

‘I’ve got to spell this word.’”

They’re “old-school” values from a teacher who considers herself “old school” about the importance of spelling.

“I think spelling is becoming a lost art,” says the mother of four and the grandmother of eight. “And I appreciate that these kids are willing to spend their time learning to spell. I think being accurate in your writing, your spelling and your grammar is very important.”

Chamberlin also savors the impact that the team’s success has on the students and the school where she has taught for 35 of her 37 years as a Catholic educator.



Students and coaches of the Spell Bowl team of St. Roch School in Indianapolis pose for a photo after winning the Indiana state championship in spelling at the Class 4 level, marking the sixth time in the past seven years that the school’s team has won a state championship. (Submitted photo)

“It’s nice for our little school to be recognized. I’m just so proud of the work the kids do.” †

# How to help more students experience benefits of a Catholic education

(Editor's note: The following analysis on "The Catholic School Choice" study was written by Phil Gonzalez, coordinator of Latino outreach for the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Schools.)

The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) recently released a market research study titled, "The Catholic School Choice: Understanding the Perspectives of Parents and



Phil Gonzalez

Opportunities for More Engagement." The purpose of this study was to measure opinions and perceptions of Catholic schools nationwide. To do so, NCEA conducted an online survey of 1,403 adult Americans from across the country.

A major finding of the survey was a disparity between parent perceptions of Catholic schools and their willingness to enroll their children in a Catholic school.

While 63 percent of respondents had a favorable impression of Catholic schools, only 51 percent were willing to consider enrolling their child in one. Survey results identified the two primary causes of

this disparity to be "Parents' concerns [or misperceptions] about the product as well as a lack of confidence they can afford the cost of tuition."

The perception that Catholic schools are financially inaccessible is a concern for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, even as Indiana has instituted perhaps the most robust school choice legislation in the United States.

In addition to financial assistance that individual Catholic schools offer, families in Indiana may also be eligible to receive financial assistance through Tax Credit scholarships and Indiana Choice scholarships, commonly known as vouchers.

The Tax Credit and Indiana Choice scholarships were instituted by Indiana to give greater educational choice to all Indiana families by offsetting tuition costs at participating schools. During the 2017-18 school year, 35,458 students across Indiana took advantage of the Choice Scholarship Program, an increase of 1,159 students from the prior school year.

Unique to Indiana, the Tax Credit and Indiana Choice scholarships are structured to benefit middle-income as well as low-income families.

For example, in the 2018-19 school

year a family of four with an annual income of \$92,870 was eligible to receive a Tax Credit scholarship. Additionally, an eligible family of four with an annual income of \$69,653 could receive a 50 percent Choice scholarship, an award that carried a value of \$2,720-\$3,771 per student depending on the school corporation in which the family resided.

Awareness of these tuition assistance programs needs to be increased. A 2017 survey of Indiana parents sponsored by EdChoice, a nonprofit advocate for greater school choice, found that approximately one-third of respondents to their survey had never heard of the Tax Credit and Indiana Choice scholarships.

Awareness of these programs is critical to enrollment efforts. Parents who are aware of tuition assistance programs and who believe they can afford Catholic school tuition are more likely to consider a Catholic education for their children.

Sixty-seven percent of parents in the NCEA survey said they would be "somewhat more" or "much more" likely to consider a Catholic school if their children "qualified to receive subsidized or discounted tuition."

Fortunately, there are strategies that Catholic schools and their stakeholders can use to increase awareness of their schools and the tuition assistance programs that make them more accessible. Some strategies include:

- Hosting "Coffee with the Principal" meetings in the parish.

- Increasing the visibility of information about tuition assistance programs on the school and parish websites, school social media accounts, school publications and parish bulletins.

- Engaging parents, parishioners and community leaders as "Share Partners" who share information about the school and tuition assistance programs in meetings with families and via school-created brochures and social media posts.

A concerted and coordinated effort by school and parish communities can address and overcome the perception that Catholic schools are financially inaccessible.

Such an effort can especially lead to these two important outcomes: to allow even more students to experience the academic and spiritual benefits of a Catholic education, and to further the evangelical mission of the Catholic Church. †

## Teacher's goal: building leaders who know, love and serve God and others

By John Shaughnessy

Pam Wells isn't shy about the ambitious goal that she has for each of the girls and boys that she teaches in her middle school classes:

"Enabling our students to be leaders and innovators in a global society, while sharing their gifts to know, love and serve God."

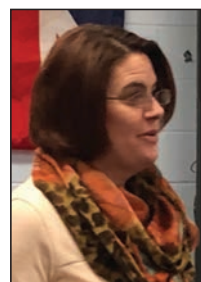
That combined goal has guided Wells in her 24 years of teaching in a Catholic school, including her current role as a teacher of middle school social studies

and eighth-grade religion at SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School in Greenwood.

"Integrating the Catholic faith into our daily life at school goes beyond prayer and religion class," says Wells, a finalist for the 2018 Saint Theodora Excellence in Education Award, the highest honor for a Catholic educator in the archdiocese.

"It is literally impossible to teach social studies without using our faith as a catalyst or a comparison. When we study other civilizations, we are always drawing parallels with their religion and our own."

She uses that same approach as she leads her students in discussing current



Pam Wells

events that have included right-to-life issues, the platforms of political candidates and the treatment of women in different areas of the world.

"I have implemented 21st century philosophies into Catholic

education: creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking as a means of educating children to prepare them to be successful adults in our communities in the future," says Wells, who sometimes dresses in costume to portray historical figures.

"Thousands of adolescents have walked through my door, and I believe that when they walked out for the last time, they were critical thinkers ready to make a difference in the world through their faith." †



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