

VISION



NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

March 2, 2010



THOUGHT OF THE MONTH!

The season of Lent is an invitation to enter into the wilderness of our need for God.

This forty-day pilgrimage is marked by the practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, which are designed to focus and free us for the journey.

-Education for Justice

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Lenten Reflections

Dear Catholic School Educators:

During his Ash Wednesday general audience address, Pope Benedict XVI made a compelling statement for all of us to reflect on as we journey together this Lenten season. "Repent and believe the Gospel is not only at the beginning of Christian life, but it accompanies us at every stage." Each day is an opportunity for favor and grace. Each day through difficulties and fatigue, failures and weariness, even when we are tempted to abandon the path of following Christ and turn inward selfishly, we must open ourselves to the love of God in Christ, to practice justice and live His law of love.

The Pope's message calls each of us to a state of purification of hearts and minds as we heed the call to follow Him. Lent is a time for fasting and feasting. We feast on the "social virtues" of life that move us into union with God, while we fast from those obstacles that break the relationship between God and humankind.

*Fast from judging others; feast on the Christ dwelling in them.
Fast from focusing on differences; feast on the unity of all life.
Fast from apparent darkness; feast on the reality of light.
Fast from words that pollute; feast on phrases that purify.
Fast from discontent; feast on gratitude.
Fast from anger; feast on patience.
Fast from pessimism; feast on optimism.
Fast from worry; feast on trust.
Fast from complaining; feast on appreciation.
Fast from negatives; feast on affirmatives.
Fast from unrelenting pressures; feast on unceasing prayer.
Fast from hostility; feast on nonviolence.
Fast from bitterness; feast on forgiveness.
Fast from self-concern; feast on compassion for others.
Fast from personal anxiety; feast on eternal truth.
Fast from discouragement; feast on hope.
Fast from facts that depress; feast on truths that uplift.
Fast from lethargy; feast on enthusiasm.
Fast from suspicion; feast on truth.
Fast from thoughts that weaken; feast on promises that inspire.
Fast from idle gossip; feast on purposeful silence. (Anonymous)*

As institutions of education and formation, our Catholic schools must take heed to this invitation to feast and fast. Feast on what gives life, and fast from actions of destruction and selfish preoccupation. This Lenten season, let the God of liberation grant within us the grace to awaken the desire to change structures of sin to beacons of hope; and in every classroom and school, let us be witnesses to Christ's light. We, the Catholic educators, must be role models for our students by speaking the truth with love, by using words with care, by demonstrating dignity and justice for all human persons.

These forty days, I invite you to feast and fast with me.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

the administrators, students, and staff of **Academy of Our Lady of Mercy (Lauralton Hall)**, Milford, who were featured on WFSB, Channel 3 on February 12, 2009, as a *Cool School*.

Dr. Stephen Balkun, Principal of St. Timothy School, West Hartford, who will be inducted into the Northwest Catholic High School Alumni Athletic Hall of Fame in celebration with four other Northwest Catholic High School alumni on Saturday, March 27, 2010.

Andrew Biondi, a fifth grade student at St. Lawrence School, West Haven, who received Honorable Mention for his essay in the State of Connecticut 16th Annual Essay Contest, 3rd Congressional District.

Emily Kupcho, a fifth grade student at St. Peter/St. Francis School, Torrington, who received Honorable Mention for her essay in the State of Connecticut 16th Annual Essay Contest, 5th Congressional District.

Fiona Shea, a seventh grade student at St. Timothy Middle School, West Hartford, who delivered a speech about autism in October 2009, to an audience of 700 people including President Obama, at a fundraiser for U. S. Senator Dodd.

Sr. Theresa Marie Grochowski, CSSF, Principal of **St. Martha School, Enfield**, and Mrs. Patricia Kanute, Principal of **St. James School, Manchester**, whose schools were nominated as U.S. Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence, by the Council for American Private Education, U.S. Department of Education.

the Mock Trial Team of **Our Lady of Mercy School, Madison** who won the Connecticut State Championship. Over the last six years, Our Lady of Mercy School has one five times.

Thomas Toce, East Catholic High School '74, Manchester, and Yale University alumni, was a contestant on the television program, Jeopardy! in February 2010. An article appeared in the Manchester newspaper, *The Journal Inquirer* on February 25, 2010, regarding his appearance on the show.

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

the repose of the soul of **Peter Chepulis**, the brother-in-law of Pam Chepulis, the secretary of Julie Pion, Principal of St. Mary Magdalen School, Oakville. He was one of the men killed in the Middletown explosion on Sunday, February 7, 2010. May the soul of Peter Chepulis rest in peace!

the repose of the soul of **Herve Gosselin**, the 103 year old father of Shirley Ziolkowski, Coordinator of the Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Schools, who entered into eternal life on Friday, February 12, 2010. May the soul of Herve Gosselin rest in peace!

the repose of the soul of **Sr. JoAnne Lewko**, Principal of St. Bernard School and Little Angels Pre-School, Enfield, who entered into eternal life on Monday, February 15, 2010. She was a friend to many in the Archdiocese of Hartford, and will be missed by all. May the soul of Sr. JoAnne Lewko rest in peace!

the repose of the soul of **Mrs. Yolanta Wawrzenski** (known affectionately as Mrs. W), a gym teacher for over 20 years at the Enfield Catholic schools of St. Bernard, St. Martha, Montessori, and the former St. Adalbert, who entered into eternal life on Monday, February 22, 2010. She leaves a husband and three children. May the soul of Mrs. Yolanta Wawrzenski rest in peace!

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

The Prayer of the Month, written by the eighth grade class of **St. Thomas School, Southington**, will be featured on the Office of Catholic Schools' website for March.

Bishop Christie A. Macaluso: The Catholic Bishops of New England have agreed to communicate their thoughts on and dedication and commitment to the importance of Catholic schools. Communication has been delivered through articles authored by the Catholic (Arch)Bishops within the New England region since January 2009 and will continue through April 2010.

This month Bishop Macaluso provides a case for "What do our Catholic Schools look like today?" His article can be located at www.catholicschoolshartford.org/01.mainpage/bishops/bishops.html. We are truly grateful to Bishop Macaluso, as well as Archbishop Mansell (article written August 2009), and Bishop Rosazza (article written April 2009) for providing us with their thoughts, insights, inspirations, and wisdom regarding Catholic school education.

Roman Missal Discussion: Monsignor Anthony F. Sherman, Executive Director of the Secretariat of Divine Worship, will discuss the forthcoming third edition of the *Roman Missal* on March 20, 2010, at the St. James Parish Center, Rocky Hill, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monsignor's presentation will be of interest to anyone who is considering catechesis of the revised translation, or is otherwise involved with the Liturgy. Advance registration is required as space is limited. The \$35.00 registration fee includes coffee and pastry, and lunch. For more information contact Lucy Zocco, Associate Director, Office for Divine Worship at llzocco@aol.com or 860.761.7442.

2010 Catholic Youth Spectacular Streaming Video: The Office of Religious Education has posted a video about the 2010 Catholic Youth Spectacular. It may be accessed by visiting the web at www.youthspectacular.net. The Youth Spectacular will be held Sunday, September 12, 2010, at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield, from 2:00 – 7:00 p.m. There is a very significant discount for early registration. Call Shawnee Baldwin at the Office of Religious Education at sbaldwin@adh-ore.org or 860-243-9465, ext. 20 for more information. We hope to see great representation from our Catholic schools! The Spectacular is open to students in grades seven through college.

Clarification of University of Dayton Courses: The Office of Catholic Schools does not require our personnel to complete the questions marked *Certificate Program Students Only* when taking on-line religion courses through the University of Dayton. Those exercises are for personnel who have registered for a specific certificate program through the University of Dayton. The Office of Catholic Schools will issue its own certificate upon completion of the six religion courses required for Adult Faith Formation.

Chrism Mass: As in past years, Archbishop Henry J. Mansell has invited seventh and eighth grade students to attend the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, March 30, 2010, at St. Joseph Cathedral, Hartford, at 11:00 a.m. Please inform Maria Maynard via Karen Tyler at kt Tyler@adh-ocs.org with the number of students attending from each school by Friday, March 19, 2010.

ADMINISTRATION

Administrative Openings:

For the 2010-2011 School Year:

Blessed Sacrament School, Waterbury
St. Mary Magdalen School, Oakville

Archbishop Mansell's 10th Annual St. Patrick's Day Breakfast: The Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Schools will be hosting the *Archbishop's 10th Annual St. Patrick's Day Breakfast* on **Wednesday**, March 17, 2010 from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. This lively event has become a favorite way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and support Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford. The Breakfast features great food and Irish themed entertainment by Catholic school students.

For more information, please contact Shirley Ziolkowski at szolkowski@facshartford.org or call 860.761.7499. You don't have to be Irish to join the fun!

Discounted Broadway Tickets for the *Miracle Worker*: Academy Award® nominee Abigail Breslin (of Little Miss Sunshine) stars in Broadway's most inspiring drama, *The Miracle Worker*, a moving and true story of the Medal of Freedom winner, Helen Keller. The producers are offering discounted tickets to the Archdiocese for groups of 10 or more. Performance schedule begins February 12, Monday – Saturday at 8:00 p.m., Wednesday and Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Beginning on March 8, performances will be held Tuesday – Thursday at 7:00 p.m. and on Friday – Saturday at 8:00 p.m., Wednesday & Saturday at 2:00 p.m., and on Sunday at 3:00 p.m. This special offer results in savings of up to 60%. February 12 – March 21, 2010: Monday: Orchestra A-K: **\$59**, Student Best Available: **\$47**. Tuesday - Thursday: Orchestra A-K: **\$77**, Student Best Available: **\$47**. March 23 - August 1, 2010: Tuesday - Thursday, Orchestra A-K: **\$99**, Student Best Available: **\$47**. Contact Joe McGowan at joe@miracleworkeronbroadway.com to reserve tickets.

South Catholic High School Reunion, Save the Date, Saturday, May 22, 2010: All alumni, faculty, staff, and friends from all classes of South Catholic High School are invited to attend the school's first annual reunion on Saturday, May 22, 2010, at Northwest Catholic High School, West Hartford. All priests who have been associated with South Catholic High School are invited to attend and concelebrate Mass at 4:00 p.m. Registration begins at 3:00 p.m. and a reception follows Mass from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. For more information please contact Maura Smith-Cantwell at southcatholicreunion@gmail.com. Please spread the word!

Connecticut Future Musicians (CFM) All-State Band Concert: James Corcoran, Administrator, welcomes the public to enjoy a performance featuring over 250 fifth through eighth grade musicians from over 50 Connecticut Catholic schools on Saturday, March 20, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. at Central Connecticut State University, Welte Hall. Admission is \$5.00, and tickets are available at the door.

CURRICULUM

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) Testing Preparation: To browse tips to maximize organization of the ITBS tests, please visit the Office of Catholic Schools' website, and click Secure Downloads under Administrators' Login, then click "ITBS Tips Templates, and Reminders" under Curriculum. Included are tips for students for whom accommodations or modifications have been implemented this school year.

March 9, 2010, Federal Grant Programs Professional Development for Principals: In cooperation with Catapult Learning, we are privileged to welcome Michelle Doyle, Chief Executive Officer of Michelle Doyle Educational Consulting, who will provide invaluable information and inservice to elementary and secondary administrators, or their representatives, regarding optimizing federal programs and funds for Catholic schools. The program will take place at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary from

9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. If you did not receive your invitation from Catapult Learning via U.S. mail or email, please email Val Mara at vmara@adh-ocs.org.

“OCS Multiplication Challenge” for Grades 4-8: Many thanks to all the schools who are participating in the OCS Multiplication Challenge this year! The data from the pre-assessments has been tabulated; post-assessments to be administered on March 26, 2010 will be tabulated upon receipt of the data. The school that shows the most improvement will receive a cordless electronic tablet, courtesy of RM Education. Schools are encouraged to promote data analysis by graphing their individual weekly scores and documenting their own progress.

2nd Annual Archdiocesan Technology Award: The Office of Catholic Schools is pleased to sponsor the Archdiocesan Technology Award again this year. A school may submit an unlimited number of lesson plans that illustrate optimal integration of technology in content areas. Contest details can be found on the Office of Catholic Schools’ website, under the Administrators’ Login site, Curriculum.

Administrators Curriculum Conversations: The third and final curriculum-based conversation is scheduled for March 23, 2010, at St. Stanislaus School, Meriden, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Among other agenda items, focus topics will include special education laws in Connecticut and the Response to Intervention framework for Catholic schools. Please email vmara@adh-ocs.org with agenda items of interest and questions for discussion.

Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee: Reports for all local winners are now due to Mr. Ron Scoville, State Chairman for the contest. Contact Larry Duffany at lduffany@adh-ocs.org or 860.242.4362, ext. 136, with questions. The state final will be held at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary, Bloomfield, on April 11, 2010, beginning at 1:00 p.m.

ADVANCEMENT

2009 Annual Report: Copies of the 2009 Annual Report have been distributed to all schools and we ask that they be displayed prominently in a well-traveled area so that visitors may enjoy them. Additional copies are available from the Office of Catholic Schools, and those school administrators who would like more are urged to please alert Anne Clubb at aclubb@adh-ocs.org.

Online Parent Satisfaction Survey: The Parent Satisfaction Survey currently posted on the Office of Catholic Schools’ website is collecting some very interesting responses from parents at participating schools. We ask all school presidents and principals to encourage their parents to log-on and complete this very quick survey, and to consider establishing a link from their school website directly to the survey. Presently almost 300 surveys have been completed, and we hope to increase that number so that each participating school can “hear” this important feedback from parents. The survey will remain posted through April and results specific to each school will be shared after that time. Any questions can be directed to Anne Clubb at the Office of Catholic Schools.

HOPES Grants: Elementary principals are reminded that HOPES Grant applications must be submitted to the Office of Catholic School by **March 22**. To be considered for a grant, the following items must be on file at OCS: preliminary budget (due March 1), compilation, Advancement Plan, and Long-Range Strategic Plan. Required attachments include these items: names of current school board members, minutes from the last two school board meetings, and a one-page statement of purpose for the grant. Distribution decisions for the grants (to be administered during the 2010 – 2011 school year) will take place late in April. Any questions can be directed to Anne Clubb.

Parent Ambassador Tip: In last month’s newsletter, presidents and principals were encouraged to review the sample document entitled “The Graduate at Graduation,” (available on the Office of Catholic Schools’ website) that provides them with guidance as they create their own school’s overview of how students are

fully prepared for life. This is a critical tool for all Parent Ambassadors in their recruitment efforts. Every school's Parent Ambassadors should also be given the information that will allow them to answer the following list of questions knowledgeably, without hesitation, and with specific examples. Providing Ambassadors with these answers will help them to **tell the school's "story"** effectively and demonstrate to prospective parents how their children will be well served.

- ❖ What are the school's educational goals?
- ❖ How does the school teach moral values and spiritual truths?
- ❖ What curriculum opportunities are there for high school/college placement?
- ❖ What schools do graduates attend?
- ❖ How does the school prepare the students for family and civic life?
- ❖ What programs are in place to meet individual or special needs?
- ❖ What are the teachers' qualifications?
- ❖ How does the school handle discipline, including bullying?
- ❖ Is financial assistance available?
- ❖ How does the school compare to the competition?

All these questions speak to what is important to prospective parents. Remember: **Know your product and your customers' concerns.**

FINANCE

Elementary Preliminary Budget Due Date: The elementary preliminary budgets are due March 1, 2010.

2010-2011 Projected Retention and Enrollment Report for Elementary and Secondary Schools: To download this report from the Office of Catholic Schools' website, select Office of Catholic Schools on the left hand side of the home page, then Administrators' Login, and click Secure Downloads, then click Finances. This report is **required** to be completed and emailed to Ken Przysiecki, CPA, Director of School Finances, via his assistant, Jim Giangreco, at jlgiangreco@adh-ocs.org on the following dates: **March 1, 2010**, April 1, 2010, May 1, 2010, June 1, 2010, July 1, 2010, August 1, 2010, and Opening Day, 2010 in order to assess enrollment trends within the Archdiocese.

Projected Cash Position for Schools: Now is the time to project (estimate) your cash for the coming months, through June 30, 2010. Please have your business manager or bookkeeper visit the Office of Catholic Schools' website for a revised copy of the "Cash Flow Template" to assist in this computation. Changes to the form result in the ability to record and compare both "budget" and "actual" amounts. The basic components of the computation are as follows:

- Record cash as of February 1, 2010
- Determine tuition receivables as of February 1, 2010
- Determine tuition yet to be billed for the school year
- Of the two tuition components above, determine how much will be collected between now and June 30, 2010. Plot the expected tuition by month in the "Budget" column of the template.
- Plot salaries, benefits, and all other expenses for the rest of the year in the "Budget" column, as well.

This will determine your expected available cash (or cash shortfall) at June 30, 2010.

Each month update the "Actual" column and determine the variance between actual and projected figures. This will allow you to adjust and take action accordingly.

In these economic times, it is advisable to be keenly aware of cash flow in order to have sufficient time to respond to any shortage. Please do not hesitate to contact Ken Przysiecki, CPA, Director of School Finances,

at kprzysiecki@adh-ocs.org or his administrative assistant, Jim Giangreco, at jlgiangreco@adh-ocs.org, or call 860.242.4362 for assistance.

DUE DATES

NOW DUE

Periodic Inquiry and Source Report due to Anne Clubb via dnewell@adh-ocs.org

2010-2011 Projected Retention and Enrollment Report due to Ken Przysiecki via jlgiangreco@adh-ocs.org

2010-2011 Elementary Preliminary Budget due to Ken Przysiecki at kprzysiecki@adh-ocs.org

MARCH

15 Parish School Principal Letter of Intent due to designated Assistant Superintendent

19 RSVP Chrism Mass due to Maria Maynard via Karen Tyler at kyler@adh-ocs.org

22 HOPES Grant Applications due to Anne Clubb

26 OCS Multiplication Challenge Post-Assessments due to Valerie Mara at vmara@adh-ocs.org

EVENT DATES

MARCH

1-18 ITBS/CogAT Testing, All Catholic Elementary Schools

2 Foundation for the Advancement of Catholic Schools Board of Trustees Meeting, Chancery, 4:00 p.m.

5 Professional Development for Secondary Teachers, Northwest Catholic High School, West Hartford, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

8 Archdiocesan School Board Meeting, Office of Catholic Schools, 6:30 p.m.

9 Federal Grant Programs Professional Development for Principals, Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary, Alumni Lounge, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

17 Annual Archbishop's St. Patrick's Day Breakfast, Connecticut Convention Center, Downtown Hartford, 7:30 a.m. (Doors open at 7:00 a.m.)

18 New Principal Meeting, Office of Catholic Schools, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

20 Future Musician, Inc., All-State Band Concert, Central Connecticut State University, Welte Hall, 2:00 p.m.

23 Administrators Curriculum Conversations, St. Stanislaus School, Meriden, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

26 High School Corporation Meetings, Chancery, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

30 Mass of Chrism, Cathedral of St. Joseph, Hartford, 11:00 a.m.

APRIL

2 Good Friday – Day of Fasting and Abstinence (Office of Catholic Schools Closed)

5 Easter Monday (Holiday – Office of Catholic Schools Closed)

6 – 8 NCEA (National Catholic Educational Association) Annual Convention, Minneapolis, MN

25 NCEA Pastor Appreciation Day

26 Archdiocesan School Board Committee Reports due to Dale R. Hoyt via gkeene@adh-ocs.org

27 Priest Appreciation Luncheon sponsored by the Archdiocesan School Board, Aqua Turf, Plantsville, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.

28 PACE (Principals' Advisory Council for Elementary) schools, Office of Catholic Schools, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., followed by lunch



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