

# PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

Diocese of Wilmington—Catholic Schools Office

February 2, 2024

## ***Pause and Ponder***

***Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.***

Very appropriate to the start of Lent on Wednesday, February 14, our next Beatitude to consider focuses on mercy. Similar to the wording found in the Our Father, where we pray, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” this Beatitude has the same ring to it. The blessing of mercy we shall receive is contingent upon the mercy we give to others.

But what does it mean to be merciful? Is it a forgetting of the wrong or the hurt incurred? Certainly not. When one is injured in some way – physically, emotionally, or spiritually, the hurt remains in some form. After all, even in his resurrected state, Jesus bore the wounds of the injury he received.

Mercy, however, is compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm. It is a deliberate act of kindness given to another person, one who sometimes regrets words spoken or actions taken or words or actions withheld.

Among the many blessings we can extend to others, mercy stands at the forefront. This week, as we reflect on our Lenten intentions, perhaps a commitment to acts of mercy throughout the penitential season will be the greatest gift we can give others and ourselves.

## ***Let Us Pray...***

- + *for the February intention of Pope Francis: For the terminally ill – Let us pray that the sick who are in the final stages of life, and their families, receive the necessary medical and human care and accompaniment*
- + *for priests of the Diocese of Wilmington who will engage with Bishop Koenig in retreat the week of February 5*
- + *for all married couples who strive daily faithfully and lovingly to live out their marriage promises, bearing witness to the love God has for each of us*
- + *for all those discerning a vocation to marriage to recognize the Holy Spirit working in their hearts and to respond generously to the call of God*

## ***Weekly Calendar***

<b><i>Sunday, Feb 4</i></b>	<b><i>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i></b>
Monday, Feb 5	St. Agatha CSO Staff Meeting, 9:00 am
Tuesday, Feb 6	St. Paul Mike & Companions High School Admissions Directors' Meeting, Ursuline Academy, 9:30 am
Wednesday, Feb 7	New Administrators' Meeting, St. Anthony of Padua School, 9:30 am
<b><i>Sunday, Feb 11</i></b>	<b><i>Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time</i></b>

## ***Catholic Identity – National Marriage Week – February 7-14***



The observances of National Marriage Week (February 7-14) and World Marriage Day (Sunday, February 11) are an opportunity to focus on building a culture of life and love that begins with supporting and promoting marriage and the family. The theme for 2024 is "Love Beyond Words."

During the week schools are asked to include an intention for married couples in prayer throughout the week. (Two possible intentions are found on page 1 under "Let Us Pray.") During the week or at another time this month would also be a time to discuss the vocation of the married life, to invite a married couple to reflect on the Sacrament of Matrimony, to learn more about the diocesan Pre-Cana program, or to send congratulations to a married or engaged couple.

While marriage may not fit into a particular curriculum unit, think of it as fitting into every curriculum unit for this Sacrament of Matrimony leads to children whom we educate. Taking time from one lesson to do something special connected to marriage, to share a personal, but appropriate story, to show wedding photos, or to answer student questions reinforces our value of this Sacrament.

### ***Important Information***

#### ***The Dialog***

***Thank you to the Dialog for the coverage of schools in its Catholic Schools Week edition. The 16-page supplement highlighted well the diversity of faith, learning, and service in Catholic schools.***

***Regular submissions to the Dialog are one way to share your school's niche in the community. Information may be submitted to Joe Owens, Editor, at [jowens@thedialog.org](mailto:jowens@thedialog.org).***

***Don't forget to send the Dialog home bi-weekly to your families as a means of developing their faith life as well as sharing good news about Catholic education.***

### ***Board of Catholic Schools Annual Parent Feedback Survey***

The Board of Catholic Schools Annual Parent Feedback Survey is an opportunity to gauge the pulse of parents and guardians regarding Catholic school education in the Diocese of Wilmington. Aggregate results, as well as individual school results, will be provided to each school after the survey window closes.

Please encourage participation in the survey since the greater the participation, the greater validity the data will have.

The survey window closes on Friday, February 16.

## ***Black History Month – February***

Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month, which is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of Black people in U.S. history. The 2024 theme for Black History Month is “African Americans and the Arts.” In 2024, we examine the varied history and life of African American arts and artisans. Throughout the month, in line with the 2024 theme, you may wish to consider featuring a Black American significant in the arts – music, drama, visual arts, or dance.

February is also a time to focus on Black Catholics. Here is a “Did You Know?” provided by Brenda Burns, Director of the Office for Black Catholics, Diocese of Wilmington.

Did you know that there are six African Americans known as the Sainthood Six currently being considered for sainthood from all parts of country? There are four Venerables: Augustus Tolton (Chicago), Henriette DeLille (New Orleans), Pierre Toussaint (New York City), and Mother Mary Elizabeth Lange (Baltimore). There are two Servants of God: Julia Greeley (Denver) and Sr. Thea Bowman (Mississippi). The process of becoming a Saint starts with being declared a Servant of God, then made a Venerable, then beatified as a Blessed, and then canonized a Saint.



## ***Teacher Observations/Walkthroughs and Summative Evaluations***

Administrators should be well on the way in completing required observations and walkthroughs for teachers. Process is as important as product in this regard, so please be sure that the appropriate steps are followed in observations and walkthroughs. Documentation from these required observations and walkthroughs, along with data from additional observations, walkthroughs, lesson plan and assessment reviews, consideration of beyond-the-classroom expectations, etc. will provide information for the annual summative evaluation.

***Summative evaluations should not be given to teachers prior to May 15.***

Information and forms about the observation/walkthrough process may be found on the CSO Intranet>Administrator Page. Questions should be directed to Miss Ripken or Dr. De Angelo.

## ***February Reflection***

This month's reflection related to the fifth Beatitude is attached for your use with faculty and staff. Faculty and staff prayer weekly or more frequently is one way of building community and highlighting the importance of prayer in our common mission.

## ***OCCL Meeting – February 8 – CANCELLED***

The meeting with Joe Fitzgerald, diocesan lobbyist, scheduled for **Thursday, February 8**, for Delaware administrators working with OCCL requirements has been cancelled. Last week's Zoom call addressed a number of issues that were on the agenda for consideration.

At this time every Delaware school should review the information and complete the OCCL application which were forwarded to you by Patrick Tiernan, Principal of St. Mary Magdalen School.

If administrators deem a future meeting is necessary, it will be scheduled.

## ***Principal Position – St. Elizabeth High School***

The position of Principal of St. Elizabeth High School with a start date of July 1, 2024 was posted on Thursday, February 1.

In accordance with CSO Policy 4120, if a current principal is interested in being considered for a transfer he/she must contact the Superintendent within ten days of the notification. At the same time, he/she must inform his/her current Pastor of the request. (If applicable, the principal must also notify the President/Board Chair.) Upon receiving the transfer request, the Superintendent will notify the hiring Pastor and, if designated, President and a determination of one of the following will be made:

- An interview will be granted to the current diocesan principal with the hiring Pastor and, if designated, President; if a transfer is deemed acceptable and agreed upon, the Principal Search Process is concluded.
- The current principal will be invited to participate in the full Principal Search Process with other candidates and will be granted an interview with the Principal Search Committee.

A current principal who applies for the vacancy after ten days, but before the deadline, will be interviewed with other candidates as part of the full search process.

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United in Faith and Community



Happy Catholic Schools Week 2024



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MERCY IS WITHOUT PRICE, AND BEYOND ALL PRICE.

UNKNOWN