

# PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

Diocese of Wilmington—Catholic Schools Office

January 26, 2024



Catholic Schools  
United in Faith and Community

## Catholic Schools Week January 28-February 3, 2024

### What Are You Looking For?

Two Sundays ago we heard at Mass the Gospel reading of the call of the Apostles. From Saint John it was proclaimed, "The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following him and said to them, "What are you looking for?" This same question can be asked of parents, educators, and the community at large regarding the education of youth today. While there may be multiple answers to this question, it seems that "quality Catholic education" may be the best and most comprehensive response. Why? Well, there are at least five compelling reasons.

**Daily exposure to the Catholic faith is important to developing a strong religious foundation.** This firm foundation is built on prayer, worship, community-building, and service. According to Our Greatest and Best Inheritance: Catholic Schools and Parental Choice (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) "Catholic school students are more likely to pray daily, attend church more often, retain a Catholic identity as an adult and donate more to the Church."

**Students in Catholic school achieve post-secondary academic success.** According to The National Catholic Educational Association ninety-nine percent (99%) of Catholic secondary school students graduate and eighty-eight percent (88%) go on to college. A study published in the Journal of Catholic Education finds that students who attended Catholic high schools had higher college GPAs, were more likely to graduate, and were more likely to graduate with a STEM degree. This Catholic school advantage is wide-ranging, benefiting many subgroups of students, including non-white, low-income, urban, and low-achieving students.

**Self-discipline, or discipleship, is developed daily in Catholic schools.** Rev. Ronald Nuzzi notes in "The Top Ten Benefits of a Catholic School Education" that "Catholic schools promote self-discipline through clarity of moral vision that is based on the Gospel. Students are challenged to be Christ-like in word and action." A report from the Fordham Institute finds Catholic school students are less likely to act out or be disruptive than those in other schools. They also exhibit more self-control. This remains true regardless of demographics.

**Civic engagement is greater among Catholic school graduates.** Now, more than ever, students are needed who are engaged in their communities, participate in civic concerns, and hold the attitude that they indeed can

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## **Catholic Identity – Apostolate of the Catholic School Teacher**

*Gravissimum educationis* – A declaration of Catholic education issued from the Second Vatican Council.

In section 8 we read,

*But **let teachers recognize that the Catholic school depends upon them** almost entirely for the accomplishment of its goals and programs. They should therefore be very carefully prepared so that both in secular and religious knowledge they are equipped with suitable qualifications and also with a pedagogical skill that is in keeping with the findings of the contemporary world. Intimately linked in charity to one another and to their students and endowed with an apostolic spirit, **may teachers by their life as much as by their instruction bear witness to Christ**, the unique Teacher. Let them work as partners with parents... Let them do all they can to stimulate their students to act for themselves and even after graduation to continue to assist them with advice, friendship and by establishing special associations imbued with the true spirit of the Church. **The work of these teachers, this sacred synod declares, is in the real sense of the word an apostolate most suited to and necessary for our times and at once a true service offered to society.***

### **What Are You Looking For?** *(continued from page 1)*

*make a better world. In the same article as above, Father Nuzzi reports that one study notes, “Catholic schools were ranked #1 in the percentage of graduates who actively participate in civic and community activities such as voting, volunteering, letter writing to legislators, Catholic Concerns Day, and donations to charity, not just for a tax write-off, but out of a sense of the requirements of justice. “*

**Parents value the values of Catholic school education.** *Here is the number one reason parents enroll their children in Catholic schools. The CARA Institute at Georgetown University confirmed that “strong moral values” is the top reason parents choose to send their child to a Catholic school. Many of the parents who choose a Catholic school education want their child’s education at school to be an extension of what they are being taught at home. Hence, parents are critical partners in their child(ren)’s education.*

*Catholic schools provide a firm foundation in faith, academic excellence meeting a variety of learners, and a community that lives the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Catholic Schools Week celebrates the gifts of Catholic school education which benefit the student, the family, the Church, and the world. As we think about the Lord’s question to his Apostles, when it comes to our youth, the question remains for families, parishioners, and benefactors, “What are you looking for?”*

## Let Us Pray...

+ for Catholic school students, families, educators, board members, and pastors who make Catholic schools places United in Faith and Community

+ for the Church to proclaim effectively the light of Christ to all peoples



*Presentation of the Lord – February 2*

## Weekly Calendar

<b>Sunday, Jan 28</b>	<b>Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>
Monday, Jan 29	Bishop's Visit @ Saint Mark's High School, 10:10 am
Tuesday, Jan 30	Bishop's Visit @ Padua Academy, 10:00 am
Wednesday, Jan 31	Bishop's Visit @ Archmere Academy, 9:10 am
Thursday, Feb 1	Bishop's Visit @ St. Elizabeth High School, 10:00 am
Friday, Feb 2	Presentation of the Lord
<b>Sunday, Feb 4</b>	<b>Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>

## ***Vision for the Future Tuition Assistance Deadline – January 31*** ***Final Month to Apply for 2024-2025***

Applications and all required documentation for the 2024-2025 school year must be received by FACTS no later than **January 31, 2024**. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Schools are asked to recommend that all student families apply for tuition assistance. This enables the Development Office to meet emergency needs that may arise during a school year. Often, a family will reach out to the Development Office when their circumstances change. The Development Office may only assist families if they have applied previously to FACTS.

2022 W2 statements are accepted. A family does not need to wait for the 2023 W2 statement.

Tuition assistance through the Diocese of Wilmington is provided to children attending Grades K-12.

Families currently receiving tuition assistance from the diocese must reapply. Assistance is not automatically renewed from year to year.

Award notifications will begin as of March 1, 2024.

## ***2024-2025 Official School Calendar***

The Official School Calendar for 2024-2025 is attached. Please share the calendar with faculty, staff, parents, and guardians. Please do not issue your local school calendar until the diocesan monthly calendar is forwarded in March, so that your school may avoid scheduling events that conflict with the diocesan calendar. The Principal is responsible for the integrity and accuracy of the local school calendar.

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

Please see the attached communication from the Board of Catholic Schools. You are requested to alert parents that the Annual Parent Feedback Survey will be forthcoming to parish and diocesan school parents on **Monday, February 5**. Information about survey distribution is explained in the attached memo.

## ***It's Academic 2024***

Registration information about *It's Academic 2024* is attached for your reference. Elementary schools are encouraged to participate in this event which builds community and strengthens the academic focus of our schools. *It's Academic 2024* will be held on **Saturday, March 16**, at St. John the Beloved School. The registration deadline is Thursday, February 15. For more information, contact Matt Haney (mhaney@sjbdel.org), Assistant Principal, St. John the Beloved School.

## **ON THE JAN. 27, 2024 EPISODE OF CATHOLIC FORUM**

**WE TALK WITH MR. SCOTT WILSON, PRINCIPAL OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL HIGH SCHOOL IN EASTON, MD., AND FIND OUT ABOUT HIS SCHOOL AND HOW THEY WILL CELEBRATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK.**



SAINTS  
PETER & PAUL  
HIGH SCHOOL



**LISTEN SATURDAY AFTERNOONS AT  
1:30 ON RELEVANT RADIO 640  
OR LISTEN ANYTIME AT  
CDOW.ORG/CATHOLICFORUM  
OR ON YOUR FAVORITE PODCAST  
PLATFORM.**



## **Welcome, Brian Moore, Director of Safe Environments**

In December Michael Connelly retired as Director of the Office for Safe Environments. We are very grateful to him for his years of service to our Catholic schools, religious education programs, and youth ministry programs. We welcome Brian Moore as the new Director of Safe Environments. Please see the message below from Mr. Moore.

*My name is Brian Moore, and I am honored to serve as the new Director of the Office for Safe Environments. I have spent the last 25 years working in public safety, both the volunteer fire service and law enforcement in Maryland and Delaware. Most of that time was spent working in education, serving as a Public Safety Director in a school district and for the last seven years I worked as the manager of School Climate, Discipline and Safety for the Delaware Department of Education. Most recently, I chaired our state's coordinating council for responding to the human trafficking crisis, until my retirement from state service in September. I have volunteered for 20 years as a Board member and Chairman of the Police Athletic League of Delaware and had served as a catechist for several years at St John the Beloved. If there is anything that I can do to help, feel free to reach out! My email address is [bmoore@cdow.org](mailto:bmoore@cdow.org). I look forward to working with all of our Diocesan family!*

## **Student Opportunities**

Please see other attachments regarding opportunities for your students.

*Let us thank all who teach in Catholic schools.  
Educating is an act of love; it is like giving life.  
-Pope Francis-*