

PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

Diocese of Wilmington—Catholic Schools Office

July, 2023

Pause and Ponder

Let Us Build the Kingdom of God

"Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5)."

This school year stones will occupy our images and imaginations as we seek to build the Kingdom of God. The passage from St. Peter reminds us that our cornerstone is Jesus Christ, "chosen and precious in the sight of God." We are "living stones" made ready by Baptism, willing by our Confirmation commitment, and able by our reception of Eucharist to bring the Kingdom of God to our schools and our world.

This exciting mission lies before us as we take up the joys and challenges of a new school year. Let us use these summer days to reflect on developing this wonderful opportunity for 2023-2024 with faculty/staff, students, and families.

Let Us Build the Kingdom of God



Let Us Pray...

- + for the July intention of Pope Francis – For a Eucharistic life: We pray that Catholics may place the celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of their lives, transforming human relationships in a very deep way and opening to the encounter with God and all their brothers and sisters.
- + for the good health of those who are ill
- + for those who have died and for their families who mourn their loss
- + for teachers needed to serve in Catholic school education

Calendar Dates

Tuesday, Aug 15	Administrators' Meeting 9:30 am, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church
Wednesday, Aug 16	PowerSchool Admin Meeting 9:30 am, virtual
Thursday, Aug 17	New Teacher Orientation 9:00 am, Christ the Teacher Catholic School
Wednesday, Aug 23	Spirituality Day 9:30 am, Saint Mark's High School
Monday, Aug 28	First Day of School

Catholic Identity – National Eucharistic Revival

Appropriately we begin the new school year this month with a focus on the Eucharist – “the source and summit of the Christian life (CCC 1324-1327).” The prayer intention of Pope Francis for July is Eucharist-centered. "If you are the same at the end of Mass as you were at the beginning, something is wrong," the Pope said in a video message released July 3 for his prayer intention for the month of July: "For a Eucharistic life."

As we move into year two of the National Eucharistic Revival, with its emphasis on the Eucharist in our parishes, take a few minutes (actually 1:41 minutes) to view Pope Francis' brief message about his July prayer intention at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luckJcd1kc0>.

Reflect upon ways your school may offer greater attention this year to the gift of the Eucharist through prayer, worship, and instruction.

Principal's Notes

Thank you for reviewing the July edition of *Principal's Notes*. Weekly editions for 2023-2024 will begin Friday, August 11, and be forwarded every Friday thereafter. Thank you, in advance, for reviewing the weekly memo completely to remain up-to-date on information.

Please feel free to share any information in these weekly memos with staff and families, as appropriate. Your regular communication to faculty/staff or families may need an idea for a spiritual or instructional message. You do not need to ask for permission to copy, paste, or edit.

If you have information to share with other schools, i.e., a prayer request, a professional development opportunity open to other schools, excess instructional resources to share, good news about a faculty or staff member, etc., please forward it to Dr. De Angelo.

CSO Intranet

The 2023-2024 password for access to the CSO Intranet (except for the Administrator's Page) is

Blessed2023

Please be sure to share this password with teachers and staff.

To receive the Administrator's Page password, please contact the Catholic Schools Office.

School Newsletters

Please be sure to include the Catholic Schools Office Staff on the distribution list for school newsletters.

Dr. Louis P. De Angelo – ldangelo@cdowschools.org

Carol Ripken – cripken@cdow.org

Mary Filippone – mfilippone@cdow.org

Dan Pin – dpin@cdow.org

Dr. MaryAnn Wallen – mwallen@cdow.org

Amanda McLain – amclain@cdow.org

School Mass with Bishop Koenig

The schedule for school Mass with Bishop Koenig is again provided for your reference along with the revised liturgy planning sheet. Please follow the directions in returning the sheet to Mrs. Therese Rubini, Secretary to the Bishop, and Rev. Michael Preston, Director of the Office for Worship, at least 14 days prior to the event. If there are any questions or concerns from either Fr. Preston or the Bishop's Office, your adherence to the return deadline allows time for responses.

All school liturgies should be well-planned and Mass with Bishop Koenig is no different. Student and staff familiarity with responses and music, well-trained servers and lectors, a sense of reverence in receiving the Eucharist, appropriate attire – all of these elements contribute to the dignity and solemnity of the celebration of Mass.

Teachers New to Your School 2023-2024

New Teacher Report – For each new teacher, counselor, and nurse newly hired to your school, a [New Teacher Report](#) and a copy of the educator's resume is to be submitted immediately upon hire to Mary Filippone, Personnel Coordinator. Educators whose New Teacher Reports are received by **Thursday, August 10**, will be included in the New Teacher Orientation on Thursday, August 17.

Hiring Teachers from Other Catholic Schools – In accordance with Policy 114 of the Catholic Schools Office School Personnel Handbook, presidents/principals may interview an administrator or a teacher from another Catholic school, if the candidate meets the minimum criteria for the open position. **An offer of employment may not be made without engaging in a conversation with the candidate's current administrator. This conversation must include a documented reference check on the candidate.**

At no time is the school administrator, or designee, permitted to solicit an employee from another Catholic school.

After August 1, school administrators may **not** consider hiring an administrator/teacher who has signed an agreement of employment with, or made a commitment to, another Catholic school.

New Teacher Orientation – All teachers, counselors, and nurses new to the Diocese of Wilmington, or returning after a gap in employment of five or more years, hired by Thursday, August 10, are to attend the New Teacher Orientation held **Thursday, August 17**, at **Christ the Teacher Catholic School, 2451 Frazer Road, Newark, DE 19702**, beginning at **9:00 am**. Please be sure new employees are aware of this information. Additional information will be communicated to new employees by email based upon the data submitted in the New Teacher Report.

Teachers New to Your School 2023-2024 (continued)

Employment Postings – IMPORTANT – In order to maintain the integrity of the employment posting page, please notify Mary Filippone as soon as a position has been filled so that the posting may be removed. It is very important this time of year that the postings reflected on the diocesan website are accurate and not outdated.

Students New to Your School 2023-2024

Student Immunizations – You are reminded that all students seeking admission to your school are required to have appropriate immunizations. This requirement is a health and safety issue for the entire school community. The COVID vaccine is not a required immunization.

There are two types of exemptions to immunization requirements – medical and religious – permitted in Delaware and Maryland. If a family provides documentation for a medical exemption to immunization, please review it with your school nurse before an exemption is granted. There is no religious exemption for students attending a Catholic school since immunizations are not in conflict with Church teaching. In addition, there is no parental request exemption available in Catholic schools. It is important that all schools adhere to this diocesan policy (#5110).

Be sure your school's application for admission includes the requirement for documentation of immunization and the notation that a student is accepted conditionally until the documentation is provided.

Conditional Acceptance – Parents of students new to your school should understand that their children are accepted conditionally for the first trimester (elementary school) or first quarter (high school). This conditional acceptance allows both the family and the school to determine if the placement is correct.

Enrollment Reports – On **Friday, July 14, July 28, and August 18**, parish and diocesan schools will be asked to submit an enrollment report for 2023-2024. The enrollment report should list the numbers of students who are registered for 2023-2024 by completing all the steps in the process your school requires and by submitting a registration fee.

All schools – parish, diocesan, and private – submit a **first day count** at the start of the new school year and an official enrollment count on **Friday, September 29**.

Teacher Professional Development Week

Teacher Professional Development Week offers the opportunity to begin the new school year in a positive way. Besides Spirituality Day (August 23) which brings together more than 500 colleagues for the celebration of Mass, the recognition of service years, and a message to begin the new school year, the other four days provide time for important work at your school. Each day should begin with the faculty and staff joining together for prayer, a way of emphasizing our collective Catholic identity. Other topics that may be addressed over the course of the four days include, but are not limited to...

- the diocesan theme and its planned development in the classroom and throughout the school by prayer, instruction, and service;
- the importance of the regularly-scheduled liturgies for the school year and appropriate preparation for them;
- expectations regarding lesson planning, instruction, assessment, and teacher supervision
- Renaissance assessment and the planned use of data
- a review of the school handbook and reference to the CSO School Personnel Handbook
- school safety procedures
- communication protocols with families
- new Teacher Evaluation process

In addition to these topics and others dealing with faith development, academic excellence, and school practices, reminding faculty and staff about the mission of Catholic education and spending time sharing the culture of your school are critically important to the start and continuance of a good school year. Thank you for using these professional development days productively.

As you plan for your August faculty days, remember that for educators to receive clock hours for school-based professional development, pre-approval from the CSO is needed. Use the [Professional Development Pre-Approval Form](#) which can be completed electronically and sent to Carol Ripken for approval. If you have a signed pre-approval form, you may generate the clock hour certificates at your school using the [Professional Development Certificate Template](#).

Renaissance – myON

As we study Renaissance data, we've learned a few things. First, a minimum goal in Reading and Math is for students to grow at least one year in learning each year, as measured by Renaissance data. Second, Math scores across schools tend to demonstrate greater learning than Reading scores. Third, the use of Freckle Math has improved scores in schools in which it is used consistently. Fourth, meeting cut scores for Blue Ribbon has not been successful since COVID and cut scores have not been adjusted.

Renaissance – myON (continued)

As educators, we know a few things. First, consistent attention to a particular subject improves results. Second, the way to become a better reader is to read. Third, to create change in schools, we need to hold teaching and learning to a standard that we check regularly.

To these ends, last year we engaged Renaissance in a pilot study of myOn across all elementary schools. (Some schools were already myOn users with good results.) Feedback was very positive among consistent users. We now have the opportunity to acquire myON for our students at the reduced rate of \$13.00 per student for Grades K-8 for September 1 through August 31, if we purchase as a district of schools. While this purchase may be out of cycle with regard to the school budget, it may be a great benefit, if utilized by teachers, in supporting student learning. One way to finance this acquisition may be through the home-school association.

Please inform Dr. De Angelo by Friday, July 21, of your school's interest (yes or no) in a diocesan initiative to acquire myON for the 2023-2024 school year. myON can be purchased with EANS or Title funds.

Opportunities

Help Our Veterans

The Veterans Association Medical Center in Wilmington on Kirkwood Highway is looking for individuals, including students, from our area Catholic High Schools, who will sit at the piano or bring their guitar and just play music in the mornings maybe for an hour in the mornings on Mondays through Fridays as the veterans wait for their appointments or interviews. You do not need to be a concert pianist or play first chair in an orchestra. Just be willing. Contact Jim Coty at the VA, room 189, phone number-302-994-2511, extension 4545.

Saint Joseph's University Partnership

The Diocese of Wilmington Catholic Schools Office maintains a partnership with a number of colleges and universities. Please see the information on the attached flyer from Saint Joseph's University.

High School Placement Test Prep

The attached flyer offers a program to prepare students for the High School Placement Test. Consider sharing this information with school families.

Welcome New Administrators

The Catholic Schools Office welcomes administrators new to their roles or to the Diocese of Wilmington.

- Christ the Teacher Catholic School – ***Kelly Lanza***, Principal
- Immaculate Heart of Mary School – ***Fran Corrigan***, Assistant Principal
- Saint Elizabeth Elementary School – ***Shaquona Meyers***, Principal
- Saint Elizabeth High School – ***Patrick Jordan***, Interim Principal
- Saint Elizabeth High School – ***Ashley Kelly***, Academic Dean
- Saint Francis de Sales School – ***Megan Duick***, Assistant Principal
- Saint Mark's High School – ***Rebecca Harvey***, Assistant Principal
- Saint Peter Cathedral School – ***Kim Zoellner***, Interim Principal
- Saints Peter & Paul High School – ***Scott Wilson***, Principal
- Serviam Girls Academy – ***Jacqueline Barnett***, President
- Serviam Girls Academy – ***Heather Brooks***, Principal

We thank them for accepting the invitation to a school-wide leadership role and wish them many blessings as they begin their new ministry.

**THE EUCHARIST IS DAILY FOOD, SUSTENANCE FOR THE JOURNEY,
NOURISHMENT TO GET US THROUGH THE DAY-TO-DAY.
BISHOP ROBERT BARRON**