

PRINCIPAL'S NOTES

Diocese of Wilmington—Catholic Schools Office

September 22, 2023

Pause and Ponder

***Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

The final week of focus on the first Beatitude offers us time to truly pause and ponder the ways we have tried this month to adopt a spirit of poverty in our lives. Our immediacy for wants or for action along with our gluttony for resources and materials can overtake our sincere desire to become people who are poor in spirit.

Yet we know that we have been gifted with the Holy Spirit in our lives who can lead us to change. Creating a different external or internal mindset related to a poor-in-spirit way of life provides a goal to which we may aspire. We simply need to call on God's Spirit to journey with us and change us, whenever and wherever the moment calls us to conversion.

Hopefully, because we are more aware of what the first Beatitude looks like, we have become witnesses to it in our lives. As we move forward in this academic year, let us remain keenly aware of when we see others living poor-in spirit and thank them for their lifestyle choice.



Let Us Pray...

- + for the Daughters of Charity celebrating a patronal day on Wednesday, September 27 – St. Vincent de Paul
- + that during this Respect Life Month our resolve will be strengthened to cherish and protect the gift of every human life
- + for the repose of the soul of Rev. John Kavanaugh, former pastor of Holy Cross, St. Peter the Apostle, Saints Peter & Paul, and St. John the Beloved Parishes

Calendar Dates

Sunday, Sep 24

***Twenty-fifth Sunday in
Ordinary Time
Share in the Spirit Collection***

Monday, Sep 25

CSO Staff Meeting, 9:00 am
Y1 Mentoring Meeting,
PreK-Grade 5, 3:45 pm, virtual

Tuesday, Sep 26

CSO Staff Meeting, 9:00 am
Y1 Mentoring Meeting,
Grades 6-12, 3:45 pm, virtual

Wednesday, Sep 27

Bishop's Visit, 10:00 am,
St. John the Beloved School

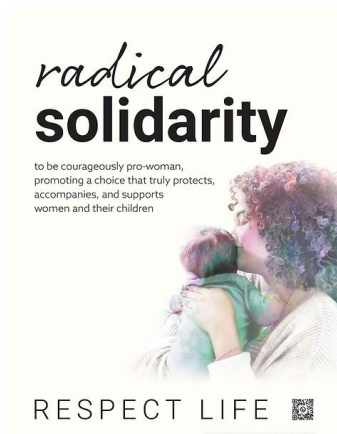
Friday, Sep 29

Renaissance Star Assessment
Testing Window #1 concludes

Sunday, Oct 1

***Twenty-sixth Sunday in
Ordinary Time
Respect Life Sunday***

Catholic Identity – Respect Life Sunday: October 1



Each October the Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month, and the first Sunday of October is observed as Respect Life Sunday. As Catholics, we are called to cherish, defend, and protect those who are most vulnerable, from the beginning of life to its end, and at every point in between. During the month of October, the Church asks us to reflect more deeply on the dignity of every human life.

Important Information

PowerSchool

All personnel fields in PowerSchool must be entered or updated by ***Friday, September 29***. The Catholic Schools Office relies on the accuracy of the personnel information entered in PowerSchool for multiple reports. Special attention should be given to assuring the salary levels and salary amounts listed in PowerSchool are accurate and up-to-date.

OCCL (Delaware)

Recent communications from David Kubacki, DAIS, and Joe Fitzgerald, diocesan lobbyist, recommend that schools proceed with the OCCL applications and schedule an initial site visit. At the time of the initial site visit, please invite Mr. Kubacki, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Dr. De Angelo to the meeting so that they benefit from the information in seeking possible waivers on some issues for our schools.

October Meetings

Please remind educators to mark their calendars for the October meetings.

October

- 2*** *Year 4 Mentees & Mentors Meeting*
- 3*** *Administrators' Meeting*
Elementary Religion Coordinators' Meeting
- 5*** *Secondary Theology Chairs' Meeting*
- 10*** *Middle School Level Coordinators' Meeting*
- 11*** *Nurses' Meeting*
- 12*** *Counselors' Meeting*
Intermediate Level Coordinators' Meeting
- 17*** *Initial Faith Formation Meeting,*
Southern Schools
- 19*** *Initial Faith Formation Meeting,*
Northern Schools
- 24*** *Primary Level Coordinators' Meeting*
- 26*** *Early Childhood Level Coordinators' Meeting*

Information about the meetings will be posted in Principal's Notes the week before each meeting to share with appropriate school personnel.

Second Chances

October is the Month of Second Chances. As we conclude September this week and mark the end of the first full month of the 2023-2024 school year, October offers teachers and students the opportunity to begin again. What worked well in teaching and learning in September and should be continued? What classroom procedures, learning strategies, or teacher or student attitudes need to be tweaked so that they will work better in October? What teacher or student behaviors or ideas should be discarded completely? Pay attention during this last week of September so that through metacognitive reflection you may discover answers to these questions. Remember... success builds on strengths and failure occurs only when we refuse to learn from our errors.

As you look at your classroom environment, consider the following items in each category below.

- **Managing Classroom Procedures**
 - Do you manage instructional groups to maximize learning and time on task?
 - How do you create smooth transitions between classes and among activities in a lesson?
 - Are classroom materials and supplies readily available to and easily obtainable by students?
 - Do students understand what to do regarding non-instructional time?
- **Managing Student Behavior**
 - Are student expectations brief, clearly outlined, and understood by students?
 - Is student behavior actively monitored at all times?
 - Are consequences for misbehavior understood by students and applied consistently?
- **Creating a Culture for Learning**
 - Does an appropriate rapport exist between teacher and students?
 - Does everyone understand that the business of school is learning?
 - Is content appropriate to the students?
 - Are the expectations for learning and achievement explained, posted, and reviewed daily?
 - Are students encouraged to take pride in their work?
- **Organizing Physical Space**
 - Is the classroom safe?
 - Is the classroom orderly?
 - Is the classroom a welcoming place to be?

These questions may be productive as part of either large- or small-group discussions in schools so that there is a common understanding for your school.



Why do we celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month?

As we kick off National Hispanic Heritage Month, it's important to understand *why* we dedicate a month to honoring the histories and cultures of Hispanics in the U.S. This week, we're spotlighting a [2-minute video](#) from PBS Learning Media that answers this question.

The video is short and accessible for students at all grade levels, so you can easily incorporate it into a lesson for the upcoming week. Begin by playing the video for your students, then follow up with the question at the end of the video, "What famous person of Hispanic or Latino descent would you like to meet?"

Professional Development Day Planning Committee

Each year a committee of administrators and faculty/staff has helped the Catholic Schools Office to plan and execute the March diocesan Professional Development (PD) Day. Once again, Carol Ripken, who will serve as the committee facilitator, is asking for volunteers who would be willing to meet monthly, October through March, and help with the many details that go into planning a valuable PD experience that will benefit all Pre-K to Grade 12 educators throughout the diocese. This year AI and social media are strong possibilities as areas of focus. Please consider joining this committee and inviting faculty/staff members who are interested in serving; technology coordinators would certainly be an asset to the committee. Principals, please email Carol Ripken at cripken@cdow.org with the names of anyone from your school interested in volunteering.

Principal Evaluation Committee

Veteran administrators are aware that the current principal evaluation process was developed by a group of principals in 2017-2018 and implemented during the 2018-2019 school year. It's now time for a thorough review and revision of the professional standards for principals, the principal evaluation process, and all accompanying surveys and documents. Administrators (presidents, principals, assistant principals) interested in serving on the committee are asked to email Carol Ripken at cripken@cdow.org.

NCEA Databank Summary Report – Due October 5

On Monday, September 18, each school received information regarding the annual NCEA Databank Summary Report. This information is important to NCEA and to the Diocese of Wilmington in many ways. It provides the NCEA national report on Catholic schools and it provides the demographic information for the Diocese of Wilmington. It also establishes our place among the 195 dioceses with schools in the United States.

All numbers should be the actual count as of **September 10**. Schools are asked to complete the report by **Friday, October 5**. If you have any concerns, please contact Amanda McLain at the Catholic Schools Office.

Vision for the Future 2024-2025 Applications

Applications for tuition assistance (Vision for the Future) for the 2024-2025 school year through the FACTS site opened **September 15, 2023**. The deadline for applications is **January 31, 2024**, and notification of awards will begin on **March 1, 2024**.

BrightArrow

Do you have new staff members that need to learn how to use BrightArrow's communication system interface, BrightView, within PowerSchool? Perhaps you are looking for a refresher course? BrightArrow continues to offer free monthly webinars for users!

Learn how to use BrightArrow's mass notification system within PowerSchool by covering the basics of creating and sending messages, reading reports, providing a recommended approach for weather announcements and the ins and outs of navigating the interface. This session is great for those users who need a refresher on how to use BrightArrow, or for those new to the system. Please be sure to check that your new users attending this session see the "BrightArrow MyList" link in PowerSchool and are able to log into it.

Please register for the training on Tuesday, September 26, at 1:00 PM using this link:
<https://app.acuityscheduling.com/schedule.php?owner=20266355&appointmentType=52204981>

We are pleased to provide these trainings where you can learn and ask all questions about BrightArrow's system. You can access this page at any time to register for BrightArrow trainings that are offered monthly:
<https://brightarrow.com/user-training-sessions/>



September 23-24, 2023

CONGRATULATIONS!



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GRANDEUR BREAKS THROUGH.

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