

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK SUPPLEMENT



Catholic schools prepare students as citizens of Earth, heaven

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

Catholic Schools Week is a wonderful means of highlighting the incredible impact of our Catholic schools on the lives, families and communities throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, encompassing 39 counties in central and southern Indiana. In addition to two Catholic seminaries and two Catholic universities, we are blessed in the archdiocese with 68 Catholic grade and high schools.



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

Catholic schools have a specific mission. The holistic focus of our Catholic schools includes formation and education. Amid all the curricular and extracurricular activities, our schools seek to form character as well as educate the mind. The intent is to prepare each student for the two-fold citizenship of Earth and heaven.

We want our students to grow in their moral and faith development as both contributing members of society and saints in heaven. Thus, at the heart of the mission of any Catholic school is the transmission of Catholic teaching in transforming individuals and communities. The ultimate task of any Catholic ministry or service is salvation of souls.

I invite you to join me in acknowledging and thanking all those whose dedication and sacrifice make our schools so successful in enabling the Church to carry out its mandate to proclaim the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. Special thanks go to our school administrators (presidents and principals), faculty members (teachers, counselors, librarians), coaches and staffs.

Of course, we are also grateful for the wonderful team in our archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools. It is ultimately about the witness of living rather than mere words that has the greatest influence on those entrusted to one's care.

Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude and admiration for our students and their families. Both on and off campus, you serve as the most effective ambassadors of our Catholic schools.

Indeed, there is much to celebrate in Catholic Schools Week. All for the glory of God!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Charles C. Thompson

**MOST REVEREND CHARLES C. THOMPSON
ARCHBISHOP OF INDIANAPOLIS**





Catholic Schools
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Schools in archdiocese find ‘grace to tackle, move forward’ from pandemic challenges

By Natalie Hoefler

Steve Beyl wasn’t feeling well as the school year ended in May 2020.

He went to the doctor and was told he had a viral infection.

“When the doctor asked me if I was stressed, I just laughed,” said Beyl, principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in New Albany.

At that point, he—and school staff throughout the archdiocese—had been dealing since mid-March with the challenges of a sudden school shutdown to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

And the stress didn’t end in May.

“There’ve been a lot of sleepless nights, a lot of stress” since the shutdown began, said Beyl. Even now, he said, his cell phone “blows up from 6 a.m. to 10 or 11 [o’clock] at night.”

For nearly 11 months, principals, teachers, students and parents have faced many challenges to continue the vital role of Catholic education in the midst of a global pandemic.

Four principals spoke with *The Criterion* about those struggles—and the blessings and benefits that have risen from them.

‘We were not in this alone’

The challenges began with Archbishop Charles C. Thompson’s March 12 letter announcing the closure of schools “until at least April 5” to slow the continuing spread of COVID-19.

State mandates extended the closures through the end of the 2019-20 academic year.

“From March to May, we had to essentially design a whole new school,” said Beyl.

The same was true for St. Susanna School in Plainfield.

“Our biggest challenge was remote learning,” said Janet Abdoulaye, the school’s principal. “We hadn’t made moves to be an e-learning school.”

But within a week of the March 12 announcement, “our teachers were using [e-learning technology] and they were ready to go,” she said proudly. “That was enormous.”

Whether their schools had a remote-learning plan in place or not, all administrators faced the challenge of the unknown.

“It was beneficial that the archdiocese had weekly Zoom meetings with all the principals,” said Sherri Kirschner, principal of St. Nicholas School in Ripley County. “We were able to get information, clarifications and affirmation we were not in this alone.”

One after the other, the challenges were met, and the school year came to an end.

The stress faced by principals, however, did not.

‘A little bit of everything’

During the summer, several plans had to be made for the start of the next academic year. Each plan offered a different learning format to provide the safest environment for students based on the status of the pandemic.

“We had hybrid and virtual plans, but in-person was our preference,” said Kirschner.

That preference meant more than students and teachers simply returning to school. There were myriad tasks to complete and new procedures to implement, most involving ways to meet state and local COVID-19 social-distancing and safety requirements.

“We had to move the cafeteria to the gym, rethink recess, move furniture out of classrooms to make more room for social distancing, create a new

dismissal procedure,” said Kirschner.

“Everything you do during the day, you had to go back and think, ‘Is this safe?’”

Ultimately, most of the 68 Catholic schools in the archdiocese began the new school year operating in-person, with a virtual option for sick or quarantined students.

“With virtual learning, it’s almost like the kids not in the building are here,” said Beyl. “They’re on the screen, they can hear the teacher, they can interact with kids in the room. We’ve got kids at home and kids in class working on the same group document.”

Some schools, like Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, implemented a hybrid approach: a rotation of in-person and offsite days varying by grade level, plus an all-online option for those who request it.

“We’re doing a little of everything” to maximize social distancing and safety, said school principal Kari Jost.

‘What we’re asking them to do is kind of crazy’

The option of virtual learning has allowed schools to continue teaching and forming students “without skipping a beat,” said Kirschner.

In fact, at St. Anthony School in Indianapolis, virtual learning and the quick reaction of a teacher even led to a 911 call to save a student, his family and their home from a fire on Jan. 20 (WTHR.com).

While it hasn’t led to a 911 save in New Albany, “Having all this technology is nice,” said Beyl. But it also provided different challenges as well.

“Those unfamiliar with it needed training,” he said, like learning how to connect to and use social meeting platforms. Or getting a white board to display virtually as well as in the room. Or making and posting videos and other material to a learning management system.

“Teachers are now doing two to three jobs at once,” said Abdoulye. “They’re making sure in-person kids are learning, coordinating home learners, and then becoming tech wizards.”

Add the task of finding and learning to use tools “to see what our students are comprehending,” said Jost, and teachers are left with “quite a balancing act.”

“The flexibility I’ve asked of my staff is not fair,” Beyl admitted. “In reality, what we’re asking them to do is kind of crazy.”

More than one principal noted the challenges have brought their staff closer.

“I watched teachers step up and help other teachers learn how to use technology,” said Jost. “For me, it was like this organic professional development.”

The profound gratitude for and pride in their teachers’ response to the challenges rang through from each principal.

And each principal identified the same driving factor behind their educators’ efforts: the students.

“One of the blessings of teaching in a Catholic school is that teachers will work so tirelessly for our kids,” said Jost. “Our educators put a child’s well-being before anything.”

‘Seeking out that community feeling’

Part of that well-being includes staying connected. Continuing a sense of school community was especially important in the first months of the shutdown.

But it required some creativity.

“One thing we did was photo challenges,” said Abdoulye.

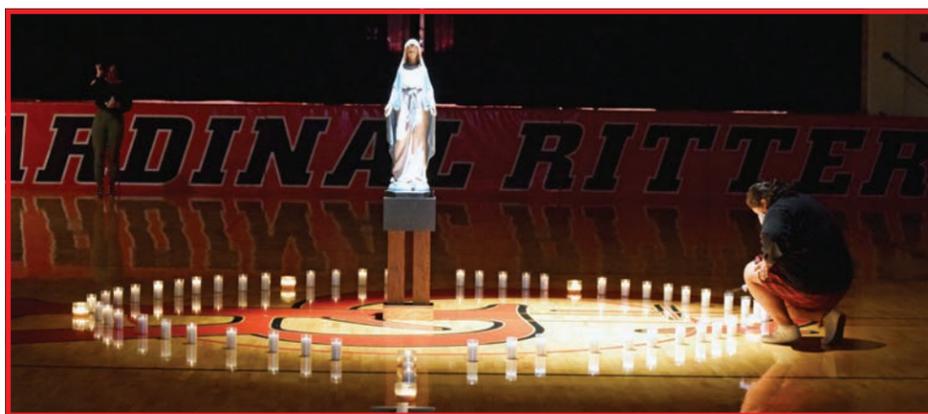
For example, St. Susanna students were asked to hold a May crowning service in their home, then submit a picture of the event. Parish pastor Father Robert Hausladen placed the pictures in the church pews to create room for social distancing.

“So people know where to sit, and they can see the photos of the kids,” said Abdoulye.

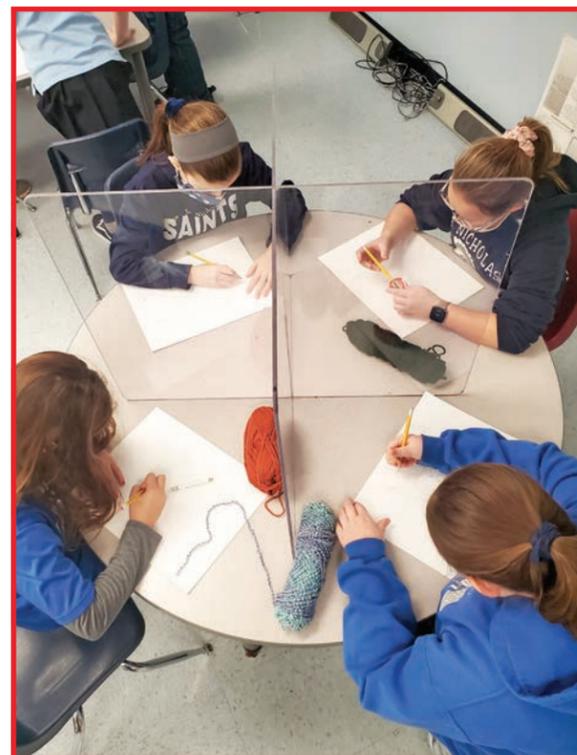
Soon after the shutdown began, Beyl used the “live” feature of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School’s Facebook page each evening “just to chat with families,” he said.

The virtual evening gathering “caught on,” he said. Soon, the chats turned into time for playing games, trivia quizzes and other types of fun. Eventually, faculty members adopted certain nights to lead virtual activities.

“I couldn’t believe so many people were tuning in,” said Beyl. “We realized our families were seeking



A student prays during a socially distanced “living rosary” at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis during the 2020-2021 academic year. (Submitted photo)



Plexiglass is used on a table during sixth grade art class at St. Nicholas School in Ripley County during the 2020-2021 academic year to help slow the spread of the coronavirus. Clockwise from upper left, the students are Maria Drieling, Anne Kraus, Mazzy Stockman and Lily Eckstein. (Submitted photo)

out that community feeling that had been so quickly removed from our lives.”

When the academic year ended, the connections continued. A caravan of school staff stopped outside the home of each graduate to deliver a package and wish them well. In July, the kindergarten teachers visited their new students to present them a school pride T-shirt.

Staying connected became easier as most students returned to school for the 2020-21 academic year.

And each of the principals interviewed agreed: If there’s one thing students wanted, it was to return to school.

From ‘shock and scramble’ to ‘seamless’

At Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, “Kids were so eager and excited to be back,” said Beyl. “That’s been a huge motivation to our staff to continue to give their best effort, because the kids made clear from day one they want to be here.”

Jost recalled the change in response of Ritter’s students to the school’s closing.

“When we first shut down and thought it would be two weeks, kids were like ‘Yay!’” she said. “Now kids say, ‘I want to be in the building every day.’”

The feeling is mutual.

When Jost sees students in the building, “it’s wonderful!” she said. “It’s this ‘Yay!’ feeling. Students and teachers have a new appreciation for each other.”

Beyl agreed. Before the pandemic, he said, “Having the ability to come together as a school community, having the ability to go to Mass together—it had become routine. We realize how important they are now.”

Kirschner sums up St. Nicholas School’s journey since March 2020 in one word: “Wow!”

“We have come so far,” she said. The change from the Ripley County school’s “initial shock and scramble [in March] to what is now a pretty seamless academic day is amazing. ... All the changes and new guidelines now seem like we have always done them.”

Kirschner’s final assessment could be said of each of the 68 Catholic schools in the archdiocese:

“Whatever we do, we do our best and let God take care of rest,” she said. “I truly feel the Holy Spirit filled all of us with grace to tackle any challenge and move forward.” †



To help create a school community connection at the end of the school year on May 20, 2020, prior to the state mask mandate, teachers Brandy Baiser, left, Abby Haynes and Carrie Beth Andres of Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in New Albany help form a socially-distanced, spirited line of educators for parents and students to drive by while retrieving school supplies after the school closed in March to help slow the spread of the coronavirus. (Submitted photo)



Students share how Catholic education has changed their lives for the better

(Editor's note: The Criterion asked four high school seniors from across the archdiocese to share how their Catholic education has had an impact on their lives. Here are their stories.)

By John Shaughnessy

She had the same fear and hope that nearly all students have when they attend a new school.

Fear that she wouldn't fit in with the other students. Hope that she would find a home, friends and a community that would help her grow as a person—all the things Deysi Garcia-Vazquez wanted when she left her public high school to attend Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis as a sophomore.

"Not only were the teachers and staff welcoming, but the students as well," notes Deysi, now a senior. "This is when I knew that the education here would be life-changing. The thing I noticed was how dedicated both the students and teachers are toward each other and the education."

Now in her third year at the school, she has also learned more about herself and what she sees as her place in the world.

"Being part of a Catholic school not only taught me to be closer to God, but it truly helped me find who I really was," Deysi says. "Now I realize how many people truly need help, and that it is our job and duty to continue God's work in helping others."

She views her decision to come to a Catholic school as "a sign from God"—a decision that will continue to have an impact on her life after she graduates.

"God wanted me to get closer to him and wants me to continue in spreading his love and care for others. I will continue to volunteer at local food pantries, and I will continue to donate to those in need.

"I hope others see that Catholic education isn't all about praying, but rather it's finding your true self like me."

A special place in the heart

As he prepares to graduate from high school, Trey Suggett talks affectionately about how his 12 years of Catholic education make a difference in his life.



Trey Suggett

"Catholic education holds a special place in my heart," Trey says. "Being part of Catholic education has allowed me to push myself to the limits and enjoy learning. I am able to understand how to form connections as well as implement God in my everyday life."

One particular influence stands out to Trey from his education at both Pope John XXIII School and Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, both in Madison.

"I learned of a saying my teacher told me, and I've kept it in mind, 'To love is to serve, and to serve is to love.' If I love everyone around me, I am serving

God and serving others. Seeing the community around me form and work together so that I may be blessed with a wonderful education is such a heartwarming experience."

Trey believes the experiences he's had and the foundation he's been given will serve him well in his future beyond high school.

"I am always excited to face my future, and with a superb education with me, I feel as if I can take on new challenges and obstacles with ease," says Trey, a member of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison.

"Everything I have learned will help me get along with others in college and even as I continue past college. I will be able to make connections with others, which in turn will benefit all of us. My Catholic education has benefited me greatly, and I hope to use it to help others to the best of my ability."

'The greatest gift'

As a senior at Seton Catholic High School in Richmond, Olivia Howard finds herself focusing on the people who have touched her life during her 12 years of Catholic education.



Olivia Howard

"I am filled with gratitude remembering the teachers, friendships and experiences which have helped to mold me into the person I am today," says Olivia, who plans to major in elementary education in college.

"The love, support and example of my teachers through the years have matured me, challenged me and supported me as I learned to think critically, to dedicate myself to achieving my best, and to developing the talents God has given me."

She places a special emphasis on how her faith has grown.

"The greatest gift of these years has been the nurturing of my spiritual journey, and my relationship with Jesus, and the nurturing in my Catholic faith," says Olivia, a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Richmond.

"It is that faith which will be my strength, my comfort and my joy going forward through all the seasons of my life. I will be forever grateful for the role that Catholic education has played in the development of that greatest gift."

'Christ at the center of all that we do'

As he tries to decide which college to attend, Sam Bowles knows that school will have to have one quality that is essential to him.

"It is very important to me that the colleges I am looking to attend have a Catholic basis on campus,



Sam Bowles

even if that means a small church where Mass is held every Sunday," says Bowles, a senior at Our Lady of Providence High School in Clarksville.

"I want to be able to continue to attend Mass into college, which is something that is extremely important to me and has been important to me since a young age."

Bowles has made that connection a requirement because of the education he has received at Providence and earlier in his grade school at what is now St. John Paul II School in Sellersburg.

"Having a Catholic education throughout my life has significantly changed my life, and it has created a basis by which I can follow God," says Bowles, who is 17.

He envisions his Catholic faith and his relationship with God being a significant part of his long-term future, too.

"The values and beliefs I follow now are largely centered around what the Catholic Church believes. I will do my best to continue to hold these values close to my heart in my future endeavors. This is true even down to the relationship I am currently in, in which we have both chosen to hold Christ at the center of all that we do.

"I hope to continue this journey of life through the Catholic lens by which I have been taught." †



Bishop Chatard High School student Deysi Garcia-Vazquez, center, enjoys checking out the Indianapolis North Deanery high school's new yearbook at the beginning of the 2019-20 academic year with fellow Trojans Emma Shea, left, and Gracie Dillon. (Submitted photo)

Catholic Schools: Growing together in faith, academic excellence and service

By Mary McCoy

Interim superintendent of Catholic schools for the archdiocese

National Catholic Schools Week has been the annual celebration of Catholic education across the country since 1974. It always begins on the last



Mary McCoy

Sunday in January and runs all week. In a typical year, our Catholic schools celebrate this week with Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members. It is safe to say this is not a typical year as we continue to navigate through a pandemic that none of us has ever experienced in our Catholic schools.

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are truly special places of academic excellence and faith-filled mission. Catholic schools across central and southern Indiana serve nearly 21,000 students with open doors, open arms and open hearts. It is through this ministry of education that our outstanding pastors, school leaders, teachers and staff members form our young people in the Catholic faith.

As we celebrate our Catholic schools across the archdiocese, we also take this opportunity to

recognize the true heroes during this pandemic—our teachers. It has been amazing and energizing to witness more than 2,000 teachers continue to provide a Catholic education to young people throughout the archdiocese. Sometimes in-person, sometimes remotely, sometimes a hybrid, and sometimes all three at the same time!

Our teachers have creatively met the needs of students spiritually, academically, emotionally and physically, while at the same time keeping the safety of all students a priority. To quote St. Theodora Guérin, "Show kindness to them [children] and be attentive to their spiritual and physical needs." Our teachers have done just this during these challenging times, and for this we commend them.

Please take time to visit the center pages of this year's Catholic Schools Week Supplement, where 185 Catholic school teachers are recognized for 25 years or more of service in Catholic education. These amazing teachers are navigating through one of the most challenging years of their careers and have taught in ways they never would have imagined. They are true heroes who have dedicated their careers to such an important ministry in the Catholic Church, and for that we say, "thank you!"

As we pray and have hope for brighter days, thank you for your continued prayers and support of our Catholic schools across the archdiocese,

especially during this special week. They are true beacons in our communities and, for some, the brightest spots during these challenging times.

Happy Catholic Schools Week—#CSW21.

Safety: the priority of every Catholic school during the pandemic

Masks are one of the many safety precautions that Catholic schools have taken during this school year to protect students and educators from COVID-19 while they are in the classroom.

Readers of this Catholic Schools Week Supplement will notice that some photos featured in this special section are displayed showing teachers and students not wearing masks. Most of these such photos were taken in a previous school year and are featured here to show the interactions of a Catholic school community in a "normal" year. A few of these such photos were taken this year while other safety precautions were in place, such as safety dividers between students' desks.

The safety of everyone involved in a school community is the priority of every Catholic school in the archdiocese, according to Mary McCoy, interim superintendent of Catholic schools in the archdiocese. †



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Schools reap blessings from growth in diversity

By Sean Gallagher

Beginning in the mid-19th century, classrooms in Catholic schools across the U.S. began to be filled with the children of immigrants

who sought freedom and economic opportunity in America.

During the past decade, this has begun to happen again in parish schools across central and southern Indiana, including St. Mark the Evangelist School in Indianapolis and St. Bartholomew School in Columbus.

In 2009, St. Mark had about 165 students. Today, it has an enrollment of 455, with more than 250 of those students being the children of Burmese refugees who fled religious persecution and conflict in their native Myanmar in southeast Asia.

“We had a lot of extra room in 2009,” said Rusty Albertson, St. Mark’s principal, with a laugh. “Now we have no extra room.”

St. Bartholomew’s enrollment has also increased and become more ethnically diverse. In the 2011-12 school year, about 11% of St. Bartholomew’s students were Hispanic. Today, that number stands at 45%. There are also children enrolled whose parents came from many Asian and African countries to work in Columbus for employers there.

“We’ve always been a welcoming community,” said Helen Hickman, St. Bartholomew’s principal. “But even more so now, because we are so diverse. People can see that we’re welcoming.”

‘Here, we are treated equally’

Angela Dim is grateful for the welcome that she and so many other Burmese have experienced at St. Mark. Resettled in Indianapolis in 2009, Dim now has two children enrolled at St. Mark and hopes to have her youngest child enter its pre-kindergarten class next year. She also works in the school’s office and as an education assistant.

“Here, we are treated equally with American citizens and we can get a good education,” said Dim. “We thank God for that.”

That’s important for Dim because in Myanmar, she and her fellow Catholics and other Christians in the Chin state

have strict limits placed on their educational and employment opportunities because of their faith.

About a decade ago, many Burmese refugees fleeing such persecution began to be re-settled on Indianapolis’ southside where St. Mark is located. About 20,000 Burmese now live on the southside.

Father Timothy Wyciskalla, St. Mark’s pastor, grew up in the area at a time when it did not nearly have the ethnic diversity it has gained in recent years.

“The southside went from having a very small number of Burmese residents to having one of the largest Burmese communities in the United States in a relatively short time,” he said. “To see this added level of diversity and vibrancy on the southside has really been remarkable.”

It also called for a response by St. Mark Parish, one that Father Wyciskalla is proud to have witnessed and helped lead during the past two years.

“Though our cultures are very different, the faith unites us all,” he said. “Along with the universal nature of the Church, we have also always had a preferential option for the refugee, the immigrant and those in need. When the Burmese community first arrived here on the southside, they fit that description and found a community at St. Mark willing to welcome them. This is fundamental to who we are, and this beautiful aspect of the Church has been on full display at St. Mark.”

Albertson has led St. Mark School since 2009. He began to see the large influx of Burmese students into



Ruth San, second from right, kneels in prayer during a Feb. 2, 2020, Mass at St. Mark the Evangelist Church in Indianapolis. She is one of more than 250 Burmese students enrolled in the school of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community. (Submitted photo by Steve Raymer)

the school a few years later when Indiana launched its Indiana Choice Scholarships, more commonly known as the voucher program.

The quick change in demographics at St. Mark presented challenges to its staff. Albertson recalled veteran teachers coming to him about them.

“‘What are we going to do? They don’t speak English,’” Albertson recalled them saying. “I said, ‘We’re going to teach them.’”

St. Mark soon hired a part-time English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. It now has a full-time ESL teacher and three other teachers called interventionists who work full time with ESL students to help them with particular subjects.

Overall, St. Mark went from having 15 staff members in 2009 to 45 now. It had one classroom per grade in 2009. Now it has two.

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Central Catholic School
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CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

HOLY NAME CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nativity Catholic School

OUR LADY OF THE GREENWOOD CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. BARNABAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Saints Francis & Clare of Assisi Roman Catholic Church
SS. FRANCIS AND CLARE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. JUDE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. MARK CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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That led to the challenge of finding space for all the students.

St. Mark Parish is now in the midst of a capital campaign that, among other things, will fund the addition of two classrooms to its school.

“The growth that this parish has seen over the last 10 years or so is incredible, both in parish families and in the school,” Father Wyciskalla said. “The introduction of the Burmese community to St. Mark was like a shot in the arm for the parish.”

Although Indiana’s voucher program has played a key role in the growth of St. Mark School, Albertson said that a number of parents of Burmese students who came to Indiana as refugees have now secured such well-earning jobs that they don’t qualify economically for a voucher.

In any case, he said, the high value that Burmese place on a Catholic education for their children is what is driving the enrollment changes at St. Mark.

“Even if the vouchers went away, I don’t think the Burmese students would go away,” Albertson said. “I think they would find a way to keep them here.”

Having moved to the southside when the Burmese community there was small, Dim is now glad to see her children and so many others from Myanmar enrolled as students at St. Mark.

“I’m hoping that the future for my children will be very good,” she said. “They have the opportunity to go to a Catholic school. They can learn good from bad and become smart. When they grow up, they’ll be someone.”

‘We feel safe in a Catholic school’

Like St. Mark, the demographic changes at St. Bartholomew have in part been affected by the state’s voucher program.

But Heckman noted that the Columbus school had a strong scholarship program before the voucher program was launched.

“Parishioners have stepped up, because they know [the school] is important,” she said. “They want to give anyone who values a Catholic education a chance to come to St. Bartholomew.”

Paula Lamadrid placed a high value on Catholic education when she and her husband enrolled their eldest child at St. Bartholomew in 2007.

She had attended a Catholic school in her native Mexico. Her husband, an employee of the Columbus-based Cummins, was transferred from Mexico to Columbus 20 years ago. Their two sons were born here, and the spouses became naturalized

U.S. citizens three years ago.

Lamadrid’s oldest child became a student at St. Bartholomew long before there was a large presence of Hispanic students there. She arranged for speakers to come to the school to help the students and teachers appreciate the particular cultural and religious traditions of the Hispanic community.

“I wanted to show them more diversity and to help them learn more from other countries,” Lamadrid said. “Anytime we had the chance, we’d show them our traditions and also embrace the traditions of this country that we love so much.”

Among the Hispanic traditions now observed at St. Bartholomew are *Dia de los Muertos* (which happens on All Souls Day), *Las Posadas* (a novena in the days leading up to Christmas) and a special emphasis on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Many Hispanic families felt drawn to enroll their children at a Catholic school, Lamadrid said, because of their high reputation in their home countries.

“If you can make the effort to send your kids to a Catholic school, it means they’re going to get the best learning experience and be prepared the best to go to college,” she said.

The fact that the schools are rooted in the Catholic faith is also key for Hispanic families, Lamadrid said.

“It’s a comfort for so many of our international families and perhaps especially for our Hispanic families,” she said. “We feel safe in a Catholic school because it’s the faith that we know and share.”

The introduction of so many students from countries around the world during the past decade to St. Bartholomew has been a challenge to the school’s staff. But it’s one that Heckman has embraced with enthusiasm.

“It’s amazing to see teachers welcome a family and not give a second

thought to who they might be or whether or not they speak English,” Heckman said. “They just accept whoever is in front of them and make them feel welcome.”

Retired Father Clement Davis was pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish when the faith community’s school began experiencing a significant growth in the diversity of its student body, and saw it on display in a special way at school Masses.

“You’d have children coming up to do the readings and the prayers of the faithful, and you can have three or four different racial or ethnic backgrounds represented in the half dozen kids that come up,” Father Davis recalled. “You could see at a school Mass the diversity of the universal Church and the diversity of the world’s population represented right there in the church.” †



Hispanic students at St. Bartholomew School in Columbus dress in festive costumes on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12, 2019. The Seymour Deanery faith community has seen a large growth in Hispanic students during the past decade. (Submitted photo)

BISHOP CHATARD HIGH SCHOOL

EDUCATING STUDENTS OF THE NORTH DEANERY IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH



- Christ the King
- Immaculate Heart of Mary
- St. Joan of Arc
- St. Lawrence
- St. Luke
- St. Matthew
- St. Pius X
- St. Simon
- St. Thomas Aquinas

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25 or more years to Catholic education. This is the first of several stories in the supplement that will feature such educators.)

By John Shaughnessy

After she says a prayer with her students, Angela Toner sometimes shares one of her “CODES TO LIVE BY” with them.

“Some of them are simple,” says Toner, a math teacher at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis. “Open the door for others. Call your grandparents. Never look down on another unless you are giving them a hand up.

“And some are fun quips. If God is your co-pilot, swap seats. Do not let your worries get the best of you, remember Moses started out as a basket case. Forbidden fruits create many jams.”

Toner’s inspiration for sharing such codes each Monday started a few years ago when she decided, “If I want students to make solid decisions, then I should tell them exactly what I mean.”

“Students become excited about the code each week, and I’ve often had college students e-mail me and tell me that they have their CODES posted in their dorm rooms,” she says. “Knowing one can make a difference in kids’ lives through prayer fulfills Roncalli’s mission to ‘make God’s love complete among us.’”

That’s also been Toner’s mission in her 35 years of teaching in a Catholic school. She’s even been known to make “house calls” as a teacher, bringing students their homework and tutoring them when they’ve had to stay at home because of an injury or an illness. She’s also come to Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis to tutor a student who has been hospitalized there for cancer.

Downplaying such efforts, she says, “When I see how appreciative the parents and kids are, that is a gift to me.”

Teacher’s ‘codes to live by’ inspire her students

(Editor’s note: Part of the emphasis of this year’s Catholic Schools Week supplement is to honor Catholic school educators, especially those who have dedicated



In her 35 years of teaching in Catholic schools, Angela Toner of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis has made it her mission to connect with her students inside and outside the classroom. (Submitted photo)

Even after 35 years, her passion for teaching and trying to influence young people’s lives still burns.

“Having the opportunity to impact kids is paramount,” says Toner, a member of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis. “I pray that every teacher gets to hear from a student at least once in their lives, ‘You were my favorite teacher.’ This is extremely powerful and makes one want to continue to excel and thrive in the classroom in order to allow children to do the same.

“Honestly, however, I receive equivalent satisfaction from students who say, ‘Your class was so fun,’ and even, ‘Mrs. Toner, you made math tolerable.’ This is

because I truly believe Maya Angelou’s adage that people may not remember what I said, but they will never forget how I made them feel.”

That focus complements her educational goals to help students “understand the material, become a good problem solver, and be prepared for the next level of math.”

Tying all those components together, Toner says she tries to model the wisdom that St. Theodora Guérin offered about the education of young people: “Love the children first, and then teach them.”

Toner considers that approach as her own personal code to live by. †

NEW ALBANY DEANERY SCHOOLS

New Albany Deanery
Catholic School System

PK-12



PROVIDENCE



HOLY FAMILY
SCHOOL



ST. JOSEPH
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
- Educating Hearts and Minds -



ST. JOHN PAUL II
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Our Lady of Providence H.S., Clarksville
Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, New Albany
St. Anthony of Padua School, Clarksville
Sacred Heart Catholic School, Jeffersonville

Holy Family School, New Albany
St. Joseph Catholic School, Corydon
St. John Paul II Catholic School, Sellersburg
St. Mary of the Knobs Catholic School, Floyds Knobs

Celebrating Catholic Schools Week



Moments. Milestones. Memories.





Catholic Schools
Faith. Excellence. Service.

Priest is driven to build bonds of faith with students

By John Shaugnessy

Ten-year-old Eli Connolly laughs as he talks about Father Michael Keucher driving a school bus full of

students on a field trip, honking the horn and waving hello to people along the way.

Eleven-year-old Macey Robbins enjoys how energetic Father Keucher gets during his homilies at Mass, including when “he jumps up and down” to make a point.

And both fifth-grade students at St. Joseph School in Shelbyville love the way their parish priest makes learning about the Catholic faith fun when he teaches religion to their class and the fourth-grade class.

As for Father Keucher—who has a bus driver’s license—he’s driven to making a lasting impact on the students, especially when it comes to their faith.

“I believe our students are not just the future of our Church, but the present,” he says. “It’s important to teach them the traditions that have been handed down to us from our ancestors, from the Apostles. I want to help children get excited about Jesus, the Blessed Mother and the Church.”

To help create that connection, he works on building bonds with the students.

“It’s important that the kids have a good relationship with the priest and know him,” he says. “I love doing things with the kids in religion class, activities and trips. I find it very rewarding and fun.”

So do the children.

“Every time we see him, he asks us a question about something holy,” Eli says. “I’ve learned a lot of stuff that way this year. When we were learning about the books of the Bible, he made up songs about them.”

Marcy chimes in, “When we started learning the Ten Commandments, he made hand signs to help us remember. He makes learning about our faith a lot more fun.”

He brings that same approach to the school’s rosary club, meeting once a month with members from the third, fourth and fifth grades. The students get to use their creativity in making rosaries that they then share with loved ones and other people who are homebound, in hospitals and in nursing homes.

The children also enjoy it when he brings his dog, Sister Glory, to club meetings.

“They get to pick the colors and make the rosary the way they want,” Father Keucher says. “I love it. These kids love the rosary, and they love to pray the rosary with their families. There’s a relationship going between these kids and the Blessed Mother that is very beautiful.”

The students at St. Joseph School have a similar



Father Michael Keucher led the fourth- and fifth-grade students of St. Joseph School in Shelbyville on an All Souls Day visit to St. Vincent Cemetery in Shelby County and St. Joseph Cemetery in Shelbyville. Father Keucher led a prayer service at each cemetery where students performed the spiritual work of mercy of praying for the dead. Many students knew where some of their relatives are buried so their pastor blessed those graves. (Submitted photo)

bond with him, according to Eli, Macey and the school’s principal, Beth Borland.

“Relationships are a two-way street,” Borland says.

“As much as the kids adore Father Mike, he adores them. He’s so full of joy and enthusiasm in all that he does. And he weaves the lessons of our

faith into everything he does.

“He’s so fun loving that they want to be around him. He plays dodge ball with them, eats lunch in the cafeteria with them, rides scooters through the school. That builds that connection. He’s open with his joy and his love. He’s open with his mistakes. The kids can identify with that. And they all know his love of donuts, chicken wings and pizza. I don’t know who gets more out of the relationship—him or the kids.” †



As the pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Shelbyville, Father Michael Keucher leads the rosary club at the parish’s school, guiding students to a closer relationship with the Blessed Mother. (Submitted photo)

Thank you to our teachers, volunteers, and supporters putting students on the path to college and heaven.

St. Philip Neri School
www.stphilipindy.org

Holy Angels Catholic School
www.holyangelscatholicsschool.org

Central Catholic School
www.centralcatholicindy.org

Holy Cross Central School
www.holycrossschoolindy.org

NOW ENROLLING!



Valuable lessons from her students touch a teacher's life

By John Shaughnessy

The story is profound in its innocence and its faithfulness, and it speaks volumes about what Lillian Kelley has always valued in her 34 years of teaching her students.

"I have enjoyed many visits and comments from former students, but I recall a time that one of my preschool students caused diners at Red Lobster to quiet themselves as she prayed over her meal," Kelley recalls.

She also shares another story of a small child, a story that helps explain why she has dedicated so much of her adult life to Catholic education by teaching pre-school and kindergarten students at such places as the former St. Andrew Academy and Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis.

"As a young child growing up in rural Mississippi, I was made aware of the fact that Catholic schools were the 'good schools,'" she notes. "I liked the idea that the schools taught religion, required discipline and they expected students to excel academically."

Influenced by her own Catholic education, Kelley says she has been "blessed" to live her dream to "teach in this wonderful faith community."

At the same time, she has never stopped being a student. She initially gives credit to the knowledge she has gained from administrators, priests and parishioners through the years. Still, she says, her

most valuable lessons have come from her students.

"They are the ones who taught me the following approaches: First, get to know the child. Second, help the child to feel that you care. Third, develop a relationship with parents. Finally, but most importantly, teach the child the Good News about Jesus Christ. Children will learn academically, grow spiritually and develop a way to see God in all things."

Keeping that focus on the children, Kelley has one more story to share about a former student, one more

story about the joy she's experienced from teaching in Catholic schools.

"I was at Indiana University in Bloomington when a former student gave me a hug and thanked me for being her preschool teacher," Kelly recalls. "She is a college professor." †



In her 34 years of dedication to Catholic education, Lillian Kelley has always felt blessed to live her dream of teaching "In this wonderful faith community." Here, she teaches in her current school, Holy Cross Central School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service

EAST DEANERY SCHOOLS

Holy Cross Central

125 N Oriental St
317.638.9068
holycrossschoolindy.org

A NOTRE DAME ACE ACADEMY

Holy Spirit

7241 E 10th St
317.352.1243
school.holyspirit-indy.org

Little Flower

1401 N Bosart Ave
317.353.2282
littleflowerparishschool.org



LET
LIGHT
SHINE
OUT
OF
DARKNESS

Our Lady of Lourdes

30 S Downey Ave
317.357.3316
ollindy.org

Seccina Memorial High School

5000 Nowland Ave
317.356.6377
seccina.org

St. Michael

515 Jefferson Blvd, Greenfield
317.462.6380
school-stmichaelsgrfld.org

St. Philip Neri

545 N Eastern Ave
317.636.0134
stphilipindy.org

A NOTRE DAME ACE ACADEMY

CHECK OUT OUR SCHOOLS DURING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 5.



Our Teachers, The True Heroes of Catholic Education

This year's Catholic Schools Week Supplement is dedicated to the more than 2,000 Catholic school teachers in the archdiocese who continue to go above and beyond in their efforts—especially during this challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic—to educate the nearly 21,000 students in our 68 schools across central and southern Indiana.

As part of that tribute to our teachers, the Office of Catholic Schools in the archdiocese particularly wants to salute the 185 educators who have devoted 25 years or more to Catholic education.

Bishop Chatard High School, Indianapolis
Greg Miller, 30 years

Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School, Indianapolis
Mary Pat O'Connor, 25 years
Roula Saidah, 29 years

Cathedral High School, Indianapolis
Greg Bamrick, 31 years
Linda Bamrick, 35 years
Marc Behringer, 25 years
Lizabeth Bradshaw, 25 years
Melinda Bundy, 47 years
Lisa Ford, 40 years
Ken Kaufman, 33 years
Laurie O'Brien, 37 years
Belinda Speck, 31 years
Gary Spurgin, 32 years
Sister Mary Ann Stewart, S.P., 41 years

Central Catholic School, Indianapolis
Margee McHugh, 30 years
Patty Wulf, 29 years

Christ the King School, Indianapolis
Donna Aragon, 31 years
Karen Wagner, 38 years

Father Michael Shawe Memorial High School, Madison
Aline Cambron, 43 years
Lou Ann Center, 36 years

Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, Indianapolis
Anthony Guldner, 39 years
Sister Sheila Hackett, O.P., 47 years
Ott Hurrie, 44 years
Elizabeth Williams, 25 years

Holy Angels School, Indianapolis
Linda Doua, 26 years

Holy Cross Central School, Indianapolis
Lillian Kelley, 29 years
Blythe Kleinschmidt, 27 years
Caren Stinger, 38 years
Angie Therber, 32 years

Holy Family School, New Albany
Judy Cooper, 27 years



Ott Hurrie of Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis is seen with his football players. (Submitted photo)

Kimberly Huff, 28 years
Carolyn Summers, 29 years
Kathleen Weber, 45 years

Holy Name School, Beech Grove
Sister Nicolette Etienne, O.S.B., 32 years
Ellen Taylor, 25 years

Holy Spirit School, Indianapolis
Brenda Ahonen, 27 years
Linda Eagan, 26 years
Christie Eastman, 33 years
Lisa Etchason, 25 years
Heather Hacker, 26 years

Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Indianapolis
Patty Koors, 30 years

Nativity School, Indianapolis
Rose Haltom, 44 years
Chris Peek, 38 years

Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Oldenburg
Theresa Murphy, 36 years
Kris Wampler, 44 years
Charlene Weberding, 25 years

Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, New Albany
Terri Day, 35 years
Anne Woods, 37 years

Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville
Larry Denison, 27 years
Kerry Gerber, 40 years
Ben Hornung, 41 years
Scott Hornung, 33 years
Scott Hutchins, 25 years
Kathryn Jacobi, 30 years
Mary Alice Knott, 28 years
Karen Schueler, 33 years

Our Lady of the Greenwood School, Greenwood
Paula Howard, 44 years
Mary Schultz, 38 years
Jan Sexton, 28 years
Pam White, 36 years

Pope John XXIII School, Madison
Colleen Burdette, 28 years
Cristy Schultz, 29 years
Patti Welsh, 36 years

Pope John XXIII School, Madison
Colleen Burdette, 28 years
Cristy Schultz, 29 years
Patti Welsh, 36 years



Mary Pickerrell, a teacher at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville, is seen helping some of the students in her classroom. She has been teaching for nearly 50 years. (Submitted photo)



Jan Sexton, a teacher at Our Lady of the Greenwood School in Greenwood, shares a light-hearted moment with some of her students. (Submitted photo)

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis
Pat Crosley, 28 years
Denise Joseph, 43 years
Rob Kratoska, 31 years
Kathy Peach, 38 years
Jim Ratliff, 55 years
Kathy Schembra, 49 years
Mark Statton, 35 years
Gerard Striby, 37 years
Angie Toner, 35 years
Laura Williams, 30 years

Sacred Heart School, Jeffersonville
Lynne Evanczyk, 37 years
Ronda Jackson, 28 years
Yvonne Smith, 27 years

St. Ambrose School, Seymour
Angie Craig, 32 years
Theresa Joray, 30 years

St. Anthony of Padua School, Clarksville
Nancy McGarvey, 40 years
Mary Pickerrell, 38 years

St. Anthony School, Indianapolis
LeAnn Patterson, 28 years
Theresa Slipher, 43 years

St. Barnabas School, Indianapolis
Terri Collins, 45 years

Mary Martha Hoefling, 39 years
Karen Miller, 40 years
Ronald Pittman, 34 years

St. Bartholomew School, Columbus
Diana Graman, 25 years
Julie King, 25 years
Shannon Royer, 25 years
Missy Tressler, 29 years

St. Charles Borromeo School, Bloomington
Theresa Alexander, 30 years
Laura Olivera, 25 years

St. Christopher School, Indianapolis
Chris Evans, 43 years
Tracy McKee, 27 years

SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School, Greenwood
Pam Wells, 25 years

St. Gabriel School, Connersville
Angie Fuller, 26 years
Susie Tipton, 34 years

St. Joan of Arc School, Indianapolis
Frank Demma, 29 years

St. John Paul II School, Sellersburg
Amy Barber, 26 years
Doris Barnett, 29 years



Beth Emsweller, a teacher at St. Louis School in Batesville, poses with some of her students and a globe which shows the constellations above the Earth. (Submitted photo)

Julie Cahalan, 26 years
Marcia Ernstberger, 26 years
Ronda Hobbs-Jackson, 27 years
Katie Sellmer, 26 years

St. Jude School, Indianapolis
Sally Meyer, 36 years
Julie Ross, 38 years
Jill Schultz, 40 years

St. Lawrence School, Indianapolis
Chris Battocletti, 27 years
Christine Hummel, 32 years

St. Lawrence School, Lawrenceburg
Susan Schmuelling, 27 years

St. Louis School, Batesville
Jean Bossert, 36 years
Beth Emsweller, 34 years
Diane Jones, 26 years
Mary Beth Linville, 35 years
Tammy Roell, 30 years
Amy Weigel, 27 years

St. Luke the Evangelist School, Indianapolis
Cathy King, 27 years
Kathleen Prater, 27 years
Pam Scheck, 31 years

St. Malachy School, Brownsburg
Michelle Craney, 34 years
Mary Feeney, 41 years
Lori McFarland, 38 years
Mary Nell, 34 years
Paula Owen, 33 years
Tracy Prahl, 26 years
Gail Strahle, 29 years
Jackie Swihart, 36 years

St. Mark School, Indianapolis
Cathy Boyle, 44 years
Marna Diemer, 27 years
Ann Kinney, 35 years
Karen Koesters, 32 years
Tina Valdois-Bruner, 35 years

St. Mary School, Aurora
Ann Marie Grove, 25 years
Amy Denning, 28 years
Suzy Rice, 25 years
Jim Waldon, 41 years

St. Mary School, Greensburg
Kathleen Paul Murray, 35 years
Susan Myers, 31 years
Jennifer Smith, 26 years

St. Mary School, North Vernon
Sandi Kirchner, 38 years

St. Mary School, Rushville
Melissa Cull, 25 years

St. Matthew School, Indianapolis
Mary Beth Keiser, 26 years
Sister Heidi Marie Krack, O.S.B., 46 years

Mary Marsh, 27 years
Brian Moyer, 26 years
Rita Naddy, 30 years

St. Michael-St. Gabriel School, Indianapolis
Patricia Guilfof, 43 years

St. Michael School, Brookville
Melanie Back, 29 years
Pam Kolb, 37 years
Krista McKinney, 26 years

St. Michael School, Greenfield
Cindy Geswein, 30 years
Storm Murph, 26 years

St. Monica School, Indianapolis
Lyn Goldsberry, 25 years
Eileen Wodda, 25 years

St. Nicholas School, Ripley County
Mary Bedel, 27 years
Jona Dierckman, 33 years
Mary Jo Reer, 25 years

St. Patrick School, Terre Haute
Dallas Wright, 27 years

St. Philip Neri School, Indianapolis
Kelly England, 25 years

St. Pius X School, Indianapolis
Marsha Austin, 37 years
Chris Buhler, 38 years
Alice Mattingly, 40 years
Jeanie Ritter, 25 years
Jill Starlipper, 25 years
Jeanie Warrick, 43 years

St. Roch School, Indianapolis
Mary Ann Chamberlin, 32 years
Mary DeArmond, 25 years
Mary Fields, 25 years
Sister Anne Frederick, O.S.B., 30 years
Dick Gallamore, 30+ years
Susie Jordan, 35 years
Teresa Plummer, 30 years
Anna Roberts, 25 years
Kevin Watson, 25 years

St. Rose of Lima School, Franklin
Kim Dinkel, 27 years
Mary Ticken, 37 years

St. Simon the Apostle School, Indianapolis
Cindy Cavender, 28 years
Petey Frederick, 32 years
Kerry O'Brien, 32 years
Monica O'Brien, 32 years

St. Susanna School, Plainfield
Karen Villarias, 32 years

St. Therese Little Flower Catholic School, Indianapolis
Gary Asher, 40 years
Theresa Slayton, 46 years

St. Thomas Aquinas School, Indianapolis
Sandy Hoy, 37 years

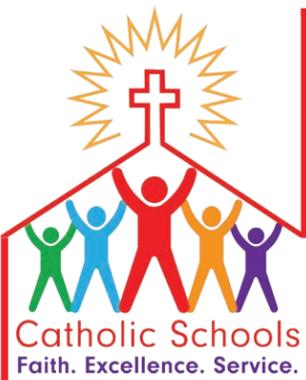
Seton Catholic Elementary School, Richmond
Ruth Brown, 40 years

Seton Catholic High School, Richmond
David Brown, 26 years



Melissa Cull, a teacher at St. Mary School in Rushville, poses with some of her first Communicants. (Submitted photo)

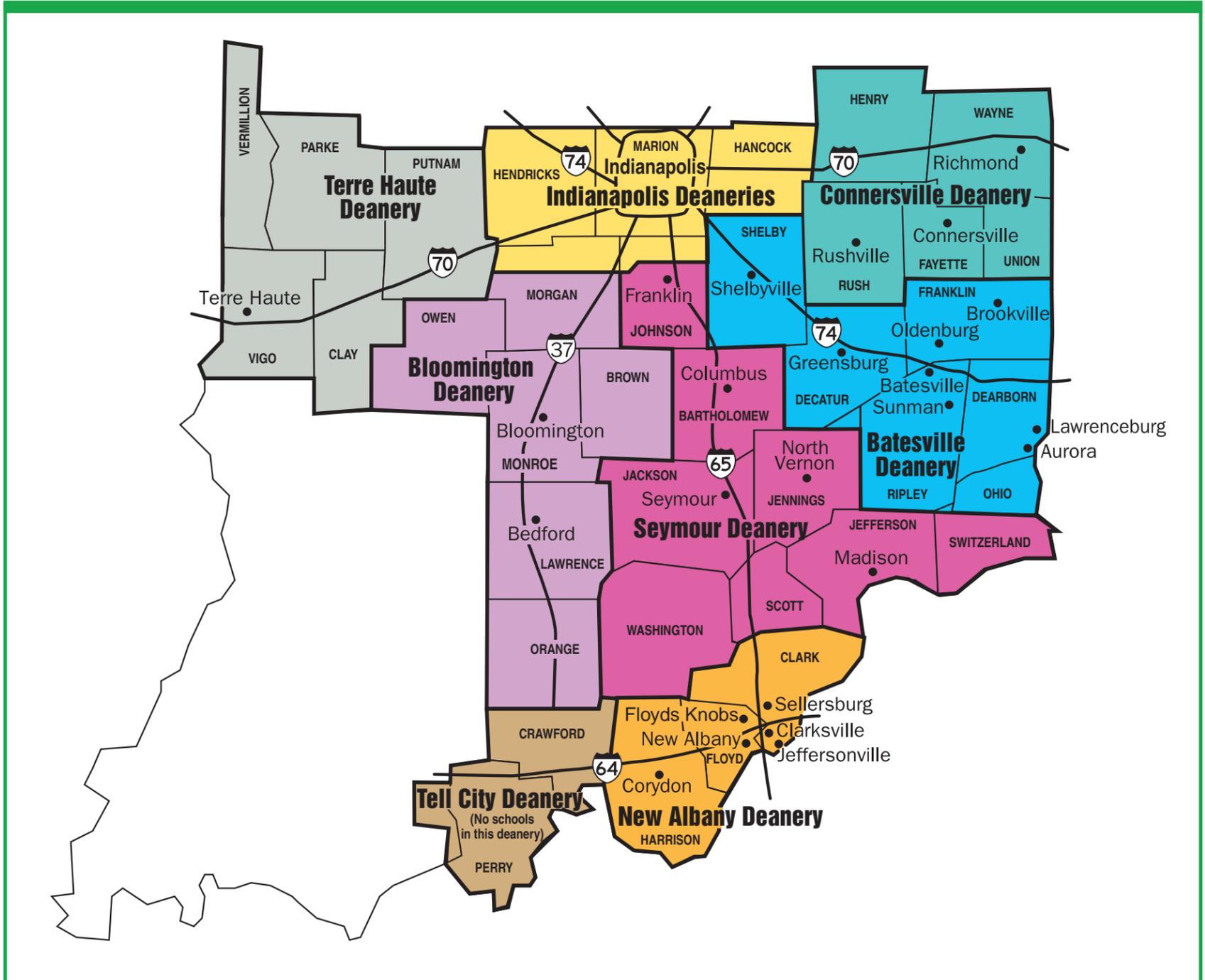
Vertical text on the right edge of the page listing various Catholic schools and their names.



Catholic Schools
Faith. Excellence. Service.

Catholic Schools

ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS



DEANERY SCHOOLS

Batesville Deanery

Aurora
St. Mary of the Immaculate
Conception School (K-8)
211 Fourth St.
Aurora, IN 47001
812-926-1558

Batesville
St. Louis School (PK-8)
17 St. Louis Place
Batesville, IN 47006
812-934-3310

Brookville
St. Michael School (PK-8)
275 High St.
Brookville, IN 47012
765-647-4961

Greensburg
St. Mary School (PK-8)
1331 E. Hunter Robbins Way
Greensburg, IN 47240
812-663-2804

Lawrenceburg
St. Lawrence School (K-8)
524 Walnut St.
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
812-537-3690

Ripley County
St. Nicholas School (K-8)
6459 E. St. Nicholas Drive
Sunman, IN 47041
812-623-2348

Shelbyville
St. Joseph School (PK-5)
127 E. Broadway
Shelbyville, IN 46176
317-398-4202

Bloomington Deanery

Bedford
St. Vincent de Paul School (PK-8)
923 18th St.
Bedford, IN 47421
812-279-2540

Bloomington
St. Charles Borromeo School (PK-8)
2224 E. Third St.
Bloomington, IN 47401
812-336-5853

Connersville Deanery

Connersville
St. Gabriel School (PK-6)
224 W. Ninth St.
Connersville, IN 47331
765-825-7951

Richmond
Seton Catholic High
School (7-12)
233 S. 5th St.
Richmond, IN 47374
765-965-6956

**Seton Catholic Elementary
School (PK-6)**
801 W. Main St.
Richmond, IN 47374
765-962-4877

Rushville
St. Mary School (PK-6)
226 E. Fifth St.
Rushville, IN 46173
765-932-3639

New Albany Deanery

Clarksville
Our Lady of Providence
High School (9-12)
707 Providence Way
Clarksville, IN 47129
812-945-2538

**St. Anthony of Padua
School (PK-8)**
320 N. Sherwood Ave.
Clarksville, IN 47129
812-282-2144

Corydon
St. Joseph School (PK-6)
512 N. Mulberry St.
Corydon, IN 47112
812-738-4549

Floyd County
St. Mary-of-the-Knobs
School (PK-8)
3033 Martin Road
Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
812-923-1630

Jeffersonville
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
School (PK-8)
1842 E. Eighth St.
Jeffersonville, IN 47130
812-283-3123

New Albany
Holy Family School (PK-8)
217 W. Daisy Lane
New Albany, IN 47150
812-944-6090

**Our Lady of Perpetual
Help School (PK-8)**
1752 Scheller Lane
New Albany, IN 47150
812-944-7676

Sellersburg
St. John Paul II School (PK-8)
105 St. Paul St.
Sellersburg, IN 47172
812-246-3266

Seymour Deanery

Columbus
St. Bartholomew School (K-8)
1306 27th St.
Columbus, IN 47201
812-372-6830

Franklin
St. Rose of Lima School (PK-8)
114 Lancelot Drive
Franklin, IN 46131
317-738-3451

Madison
Father Michael Shawe
Memorial Jr./Sr. High School
(7-12)
201 W. State St.
Madison, IN 47250
812-273-2150

Pope John XXIII School (PK-6)
221 W. State St.
Madison, IN 47250
812-273-3957

North Vernon
St. Mary School (PK-8)
209 Washington St.
North Vernon, IN 47265
812-346-3445

Seymour
St. Ambrose School (PK-8)
301 S. Chestnut St.
Seymour, IN 47274
812-522-3522

Terre Haute Deanery

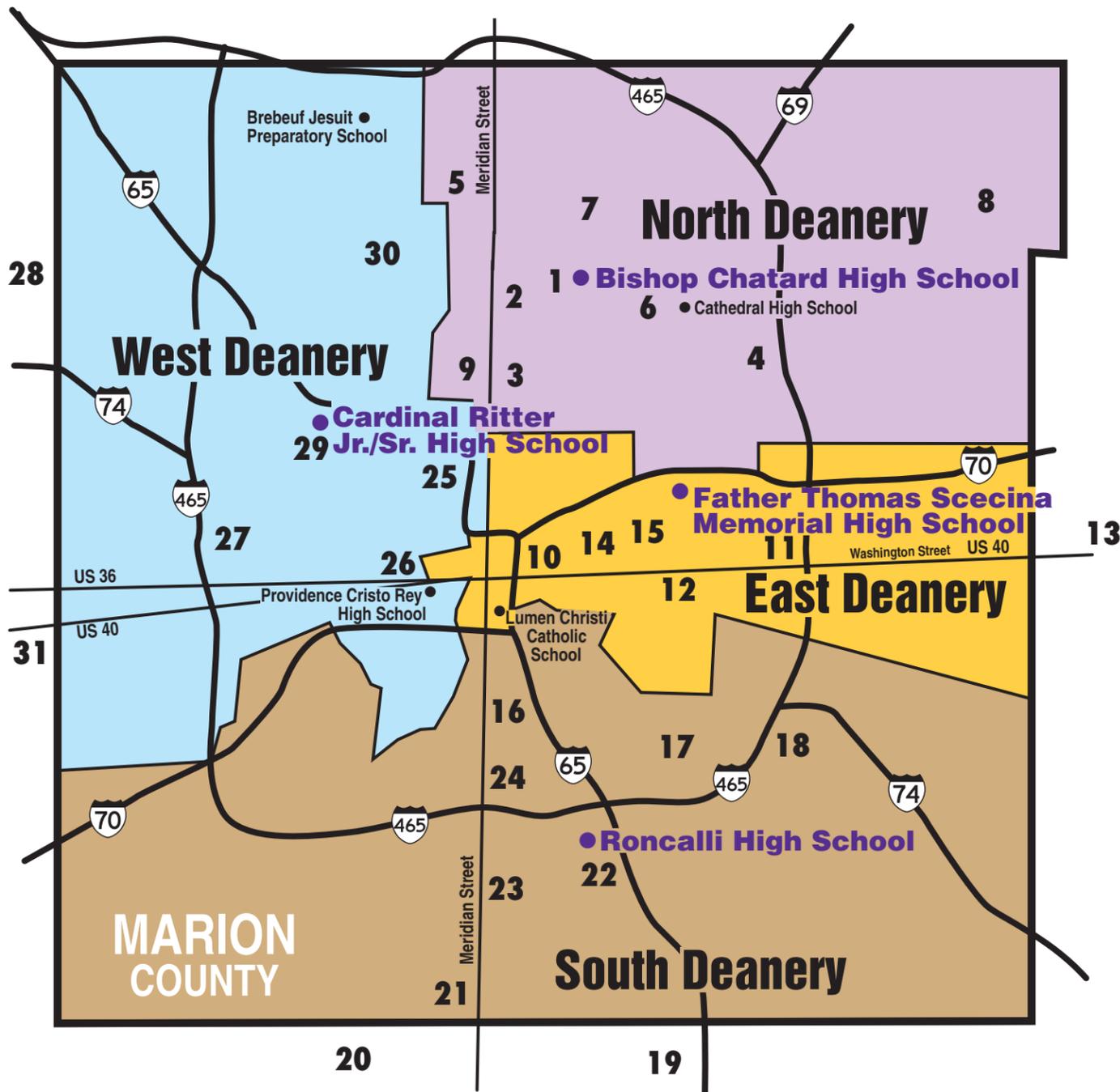
Terre Haute
St. Patrick School (PK-8)
449 S. 19th St.
Terre Haute, IN 47803
812-232-2157

Private High School

**Oldenburg Academy of
the Immaculate
Conception (9-12)**
1 Twister Circle
P.O. Box 200
Oldenburg, IN 47036
812-934-4440



GREATER INDIANAPOLIS



GREATER INDIANAPOLIS DEANERY SCHOOLS

Indianapolis North Deanery

- **Bishop Chatard High School (9-12)**
5885 N. Crittenden Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-251-1451
- 1. Christ the King School (K-8)**
5858 N. Crittenden Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-257-9366
- 2. Immaculate Heart of Mary School (K-8)**
317 E. 57th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-255-5468
- 3. St. Joan of Arc School (PK-8)**
500 E. 42nd St.
Indianapolis, IN 46205
317-283-1518
- 4. St. Lawrence School (PK-8)**
6950 E. 46th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46226
317-543-4923
- 5. St. Luke the Evangelist School (K-8)**
7575 Holliday Dr. East
Indianapolis, IN 46260
317-255-3912
- 6. St. Matthew the Apostle School (PK-8)**
4100 E. 56th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46220
317-251-3997

- 7. St. Pius X School (K-8)**
7200 Sarto Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317-466-3361
- 8. St. Simon the Apostle School (PK-8)**
8155 Oaklandon Road
Indianapolis, IN 46236
317-826-6000
- 9. St. Thomas Aquinas School (PK-8)**
4600 N. Illinois St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-255-6244

Indianapolis East Deanery

- **Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School (9-12)**
5000 Nowland Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-356-6377
- 10. Holy Cross Central School (PK-8) ***
125 N. Oriental St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-638-9068
- 11. Holy Spirit School (PK-8)**
7241 E. 10th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-352-1243

- 12. Our Lady of Lourdes School (PK-8)**
30 S. Downey St.
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317-357-3316
- 13. St. Michael School (PK-8)**
515 Jefferson Blvd.
Greenfield, IN 46140
317-462-6380
- 14. St. Philip Neri School (PK-8) ***
545 N. Eastern Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-636-0134
- 15. St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) School (PK-8)**
1401 N. Bosart Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-353-2282

Indianapolis South Deanery

- **Roncalli High School (9-12)**
3300 Prague Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-787-8277
- 16. Central Catholic School (PK-8) ***
1155 E. Cameron St.
Indianapolis, IN 46203
317-783-7759
- 17. Holy Name of Jesus School (PK-8)**
21 N. 17th Ave.
Beech Grove, IN 46107
317-784-9078

- 18. Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ School (PK-8)**
3310 S. Meadow Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46239
317-357-1459
- 19. Our Lady of the Greenwood School (PK-8)**
399 S. Meridian St.
Greenwood, IN 46143
317-881-1300
- 20. SS. Francis and Clare of Assisi School (PK-8)**
5901 Olive Branch Road
Greenwood, IN 46143
317-215-2826
- 21. St. Barnabas School (PK-8)**
8300 Rahke Road
Indianapolis, IN 46217
317-881-7422
- 22. St. Jude School (PK-8)**
5375 McFarland Road
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-784-6828
- 23. St. Mark the Evangelist School (PK-8)**
541 E. Edgewood Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-786-4013
- 24. St. Roch School (PK-8)**
3603 S. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
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Indianapolis West Deanery

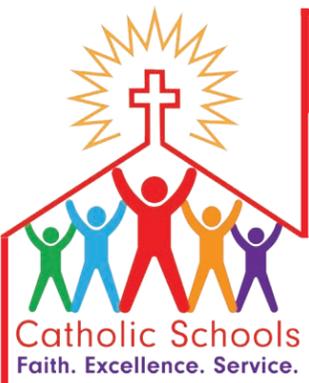
- **Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School (7-12)**
3360 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-924-4333
- 25. Holy Angels School (PK-6) ***
2822 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317-926-5211
- 26. St. Anthony School (PK-8)**
349 N. Warman Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-636-3739
- 27. St. Christopher School (PK-6)**
5335 W. 16th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46224
317-241-6314
- 28. St. Malachy School (PK-8)**
330 N. Green St.
Brownsburg, IN 46112
317-852-2242
- 29. St. Michael-St. Gabriel Archangels School (PK-8)**
3352 W. 30th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46222
317-926-0516
- 30. St. Monica School (PK-8)**
6131 N. Michigan Road
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317-255-7153

- 31. St. Susanna School (PK-8)**
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Plainfield, IN 46168
317-839-3713

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- **Lumen Christi Catholic School (PK-12)**
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317-632-3174
- **Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School (9-12)**
2801 W. 86th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46268
317-524-7128
- **Cathedral High School (9-12)**
5225 E. 56th St.
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317-542-1481
- **Providence Cristo Rey High School (9-12)**
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Indianapolis, IN 46222
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Not even an out-of-control car can stop teacher from going the extra mile for her students

By John Shaughnessy

attitude, “Anything God wants me to do”—an approach that was tested to its limits one day when she saw a car veering out of control as she helped monitor an after-school pick-up line of cars.



Sandi Kirchner

The car was headed right toward the spot where a boy in the first grade was talking to her about his grandparents’ dog. Seeing the car’s driver slumped over the wheel and a little girl inside the car, Kirchner pushed the boy to safety.

As the car bounced off the curb in front of Kirchner, it ricocheted toward the center of a busy street. Kirchner ran toward the car, opened the front passenger door, jumped inside the car and stretched her left foot toward the brake—stopping the car. No one was hurt, including the driver who later recovered from the seizure that caused the car to veer out of control.

That scene from 2009 was a moment of drama in the 38-year teaching career of Kirchner—a teacher who has made it her mission to have a dramatic impact on the lives of her students, albeit in a much more calm and constant way. She tries to make that impact on her third-grade students at St. Mary School in North Vernon by asking them to do the one thing she demands of herself.

“I’m trying to be the best person I can be every day, and I’m trying to be better every day,” she says. “And that’s what I try to instill in my students. I try to instill in them that we’re not perfect and God knows that, but he wants us to try to be better.

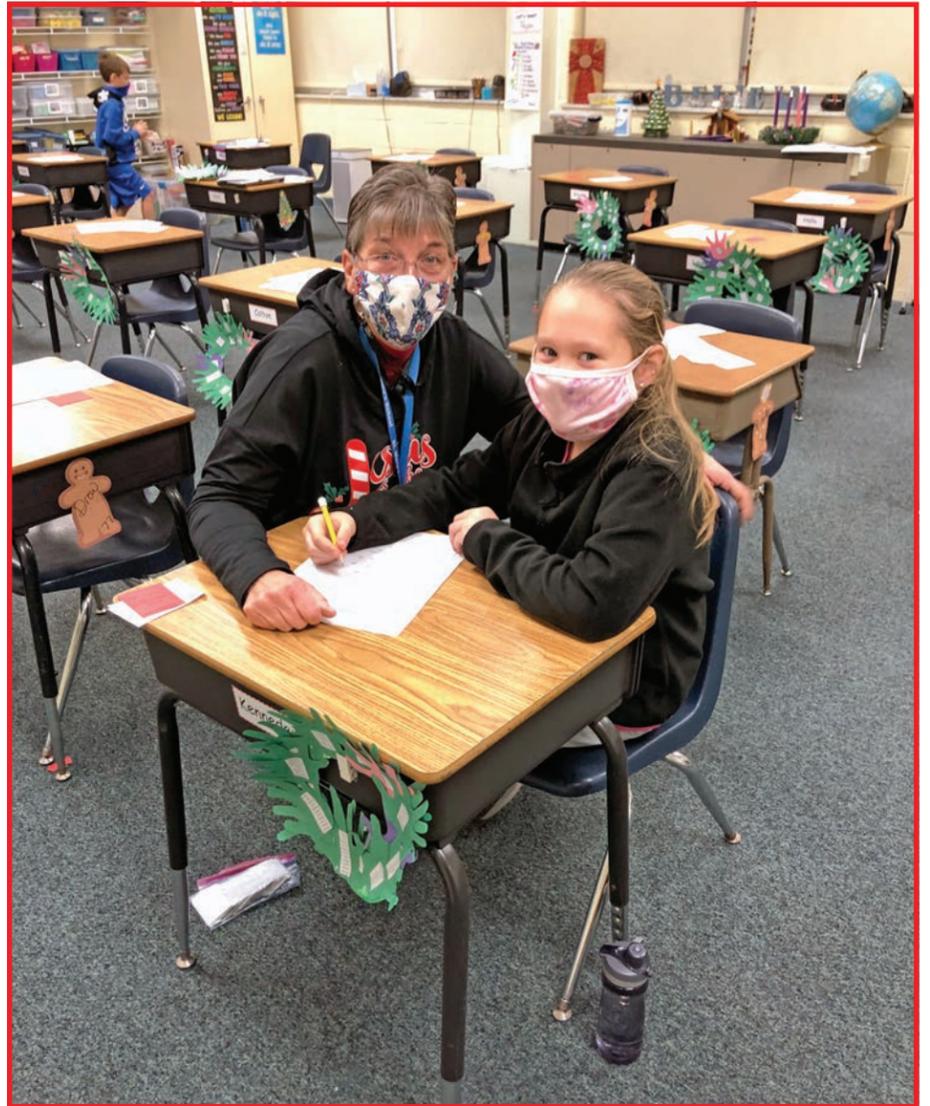
“We talk a lot about bullying and peer pressure. We talk about how God calls us to stand up for a classmate or to help an elderly person when all our classmates rush by. And we talk about doing the right thing because God is there, and he’s sent us the Holy Spirit to

help us do that.”

Kirchner has shared that message with two generations of students in her 38 years of teaching, which have all been done in the third grade at St. Mary School. Even with that longevity and continuity, she strives to add a fresh approach to every school year. She also strives to view every student as a child of God.

“Whether I’m talking about our spirituality or academics, I always try to identify where the students are in their lives. I have students being raised by their grandparents, by single parents, by parents who are at the poverty level and by parents who have more money than you and I will ever have.

“I identify where the students are, help them to become a better person and acknowledge we are all gifts from God and we’re all in God’s family. That’s the foundation where I start from, and we go from there. It’s all driven by my faith. This is the call God has given me, and he’s entrusted me with these children.” †



As she works with her students, Sandi Kirchner of St. Mary School in North Vernon encourages them to follow her lead in “trying to be the best person I can be every day.” Here, she helps one of her students, Kennedei Roll. (Submitted photo)

The West Deanery Celebrates Catholic Schools Week

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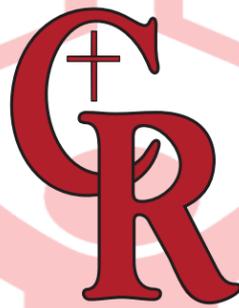


St. Malachy
CATHOLIC CHURCH
& SCHOOL

ST. MICHAEL-ST. GABRIEL
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Elementary School



CARDINAL RITTER
HIGH SCHOOL

ST. MONICA
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



ST. ANTHONY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL



ST. ANTHONY

HOLY ANGELS
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ST. CHRISTOPHER
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Holy Angels

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Teacher cherishes the joy and wonder of her students

By John Shaughnessy

When Ruth Brown shares special moments from her nearly 40 years of teaching students in the first grade, it's easy to understand why she considers that grade to be "the Wonder Year!"

"Often, they seem so tiny—gone in a flash—but celebrated in the heart," says Brown, a teacher at Seton Catholic School in Richmond. "Maybe it's hearing a student use a courtesy word unprompted, or seeing a child allow another to go in front for the first time, or having a student say they want to write a letter to someone who's sad."

Then there are the moments when the influence of a teacher on a child goes deeper.

"I remember one time when a first-grader who was usually a motivated and capable student showed signs of slipping and then was late to school and grouchy one day," Brown recalls. "My first questions were rebuffed with 'I'm fine' and 'Nothing's wrong.' Later, I was walking with her back to the classroom and she started to say something. I invited her to sit down right there on the steps with me, to talk or just sit quietly."

"After a few minutes, she poured out a story about her very dysfunctional home life and how she had ended up caring for a younger brother, alone in her

home for several hours not knowing where her mom was. At that moment, I could only offer her my loving presence and understanding, and the promise that, although I couldn't fix things at home, our classroom would stay the same place of safety, respect and caring for her every day. I hope it gave her a secure spot in her life."

Even in such challenging situations, Brown regards teaching at Seton as an "opportunity to practice living in the presence of God in every moment."

"My beliefs about God and God's people inform my approach to students and to teaching," Brown says. "If one starts with the belief that each child brings worth and a unique, special wisdom to the classroom, then the job of the teacher is to affirm and support what's already there and then nurture the child's spiritual, intellectual, social and emotional growth."

She's also a firm believer in teaching her students through her actions *and* her interactions with them.

"I hope they absorb the atmosphere of a classroom where God and God's creation are cherished and where people lift each other up."

Brown cherishes the joy and wonder that her students have brought to her life through the years: "Teaching first grade gloriously suits my mind, heart and soul."

"My hope for all my students is that they will fondly remember a time and place where they were nurtured and celebrated for who they were and who they might become." †



At Seton Catholic Elementary School in Richmond, Ruth Brown strives to create a classroom atmosphere "where God and God's creation are cherished and where people lift each other up." (Submitted photo)

Shared values of Catholic schools shape students

The Office of Catholic Schools strives to educate the nearly 21,000 Catholic school students in the archdiocese with a three-pronged approach of vision, mission and shared values.

Here is a closer look at the approach that guides the Office of Catholic Schools and the 68 Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

Our Vision

Ours will be an archdiocese where every Catholic school community flourishes by having the professional and spiritual leadership it needs to advance the mission of the Church, and where every professional is supported, every family is engaged and every child, regardless of race, culture, socio-economic condition or learning need, is nurtured in mind, body and spirit.

Our Mission

With open doors, open arms and open hearts, the Office of Catholic Schools supports the formation of young people through holistic, engaging and academically excellent programming that integrates faith, culture and life as modeled by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Our Shared Values

Open Doors:

- We believe that Catholic schools serve as a vital ministry of the greater Church.
- We believe that Catholic schools should be accessible and affordable.
- We believe that the viability and vitality of Catholic schools are the responsibility of all the faithful.
- We believe in shared leadership with pastors, school leaders and commissions/boards under the direction of the archbishop and guidance of Church teachings.

Open Arms:

- We believe in fostering positive relationships that exemplify the love of God.
- We believe that Catholic school communities are enriched by the unique image and likeness of God that is present in each individual.

- We believe that formation best occurs within faith-filled cultures of learning that are inclusive.
- We believe that parents are the primary educators of each young person and that it is the responsibility of Catholic schools to support the domestic Church.

Open Hearts:

- We believe that Catholic schools are part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, forming disciples through the intentional integration of faith, culture and life.
- We believe that "excellence" is defined by and achieved through the growth and holistic development—spiritual, intellectual/academic, social, emotional and physical—of the individual within the context of community.
- We believe that professional educators in Catholic schools are valued ministers of the faith who strive to live the universal call to holiness. †

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Scecina High School's capital campaign succeeds despite challenges of pandemic and economic crisis

By Sean Gallagher

Bringing a \$6 million capital campaign to a positive conclusion in the middle of a worldwide pandemic with a related economic downturn is usually not a recipe for success.

But Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School not only met the ambitious goal amid the coronavirus pandemic, the school added another \$600,000 to the campaign's goal.

Facing and overcoming challenges is not new to the archdiocesan high school for the Indianapolis East Deanery since it was founded more than 60 years ago.

Scecina president Joseph Therber has seen many of these challenges. He served as a teacher and assistant football coach there from 1986-98 before returning as its president in 2009.



Joseph Therber

He credits the campaign's success to the "base of people that are extremely generous with their time and resources and who believe in the mission of the school."

"We have alumni from all decades of the school's history who believe the same and want to help in ways large and small to make it happen," Therber said.

One of those alumni is George Newhart, a 1960 Scecina graduate. When he grew up on Indianapolis' eastside, it was, as he remembered it, "a center of industrial activity for the Midwest."



George Newhart

Factories for Chrysler, Ford, Western Electric and RCA dotted the corridors along Shadeland and Sherman avenues and other locations.

"In my day, most of the kids were from blue-collar families," Newhart recalled. "Our parents



An artistic rendering portrays the new chapel to be constructed at Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School in Indianapolis. The archdiocesan high school for the Indianapolis East Deanery is completing a \$6.6 million capital campaign to fund various projects, including the chapel construction. (Submitted photo)

worked in the factories. My dad worked at Chrysler. A lot of kids had parents who worked in the fire department and police department. It was a much different world."

In the decades that followed, most of the factories on the eastside closed. But while many employers disappeared from the eastside, Scecina remained, serving as an anchor for the community.

"All those companies went away," Newhart said. "But the amazing thing is, Scecina has been able to stay where it's always been and still contribute to the academic and personal development of the eastside kids. And they've expanded [the student body] well beyond the eastside."

An added recent challenge to the eastside is that many who live there now have jobs in the service industry that has been severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Newhart, who serves as the chair of Scecina's board of directors and on the campaign's executive committee, was at first anxious about the pandemic's effect on the school's fundraising efforts.

"In any kind of

economic downturn—and this was more of an economic disaster—you fear for those kinds of things," he said. "Bills can't be paid as quickly or as efficiently as before. But we have done very well. Our families and the Scecina community are so loyal and dedicated."

Therber said that, for many in the Scecina community, getting behind the effort to provide a positive future for the school has been a source of relief during the present time with its many challenges.

"Hope is energizing," Therber said. "It's brought optimism, purpose and a vision for the future at a time when we could have shrunk or turned inside of ourselves."

The campaign, which is the first in Scecina's history to have such an ambitious goal, has already funded the construction of a new weight room in the main building of the school. It is hoped that a new chapel in the main building will be completed in time for the start of the 2021-22 school year.

Other projects to be funded by the campaign include reworking its main entrance, construction of new athletic and activity fields, and endowments to ensure future academic excellence at the school, tuition assistance and the maintenance and improvement of facilities.

"We tried to do something extraordinary, and we have," Therber said. "That should give us confidence for even more in the future."

(To learn more about Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, visit scecina.org.) †



Special moment shows teacher how God is using him

By John Shaughnessy

Jim Waldon sums up one of the great mysteries of life and teaching when he says, "As you live your life, you never know how God is using you."

Waldon then shares a favorite story of how God has used him during his 33 years of teaching at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception School in Aurora.

"We had a student come to us from a public school as a seventh grader,"

Waldon recalls. "His parents could see he was slipping through the cracks. At the time, if a student didn't keep up his schoolwork, one of the consequences was they'd lose recess and have to clean up the cafeteria. This student chalked up a remarkable number of clean-up days.

"Rather than resenting me, he came through for his own sake and his parents. He went on to serve in the Navy on a submarine. And to this day, when he

comes home to see his family, he looks me up and invites me to dinner. In an experience like that, you realize God did use you. Those are the moments when you know you've touched them beyond what you hoped. It's very humbling."

Waldon has taught mostly English and religion during his years at St. Mary, the school that he attended from first to eighth grade.

"As I look back, I realize what a blessing it is to me to be in a place where I was so strongly impacted and where I've worked with so many wonderful teachers and students through the years.

"It's been my privilege to dedicate my life to working with so many fine people to keep the mission of our parish school alive. I've experienced the blessing of teaching two generations of many families. The greatest reward is seeing the successes achieved by so many of my past students.

"My goal with the students is simply that I want them to remember that God loves them and hears every prayer they offer. If they don't learn anything else from me, I hope they remember that I encourage them to pray constantly." †



Jim Waldon

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Catholic education provides a life-changing foundation for many people in the archdiocese

(Editor's note: The Criterion invited Catholics across the archdiocese to share how their Catholic education has had an impact on their lives. Here are some of their stories.)

By John Shaughnessy

The slogan for his children's Catholic school represents everything that Richard Shagley wants for them:

"Building Saints and Scholars."

That slogan at St. Patrick School in Terre Haute also reminds Shagley of the impact that people at that school tried to have on him when he was a student there.

"I don't know if that was their slogan then, but it's what they were doing when I was there," the 46-year-old father of four says. "It wasn't a big school, but there were good kids, a good education and good people around you who wanted you to succeed. And it wasn't just the teachers and administrators. It was the parents as well.

"As a child, I didn't see that, but that's what my wife Alice and I want for our children—a good education provided by people who care about you. I'm very grateful that our kids are getting that start in life."

Shagley also appreciates the foundation of faith that the school has provided for him and their children: George, Eleanor, William and Harriet.

"You get that early foundation—all the teachings about treating each other like you would want to be treated," he says. "I've noticed my oldest child [16-year-old George] doesn't resist going to church. He still sees the value. I'd like to say it's what he sees in his parents, but I'd be foolish to think it wasn't St. Patrick School, too. I'm thankful that they get that element of faith throughout the day."

He's also thankful for the influence that Father Daniel Bedel, the pastor of St. Patrick Parish, has on the school children.

"We're fortunate that our kids have Father Dan. He's a terrific priest. I've been to the children's Mass and saw his magic. I credit my increased participation in the Church to him. I'm on the parish council because of him."

A lawyer, Shagley also credits his parents for giving him the gift of a Catholic education, a gift he and his wife share with their children, too.

"Growing up Catholic, I learned about giving back. I'm lucky in my job that I'm able to give back to our [parish] Church. I got a lot of that from my father, Rick Shagley, who is also an attorney. I've seen the way he gives back and helps the community. I hope I can instill that in our children."

'We became Catholic as a result of their kindness'

One of the worst times of JoAnn Johnson's life led to one of the best life-changing moments for her and her children.

"I got married when I was almost 16," recalls Johnson, who grew up as a Baptist. "My husband and I weren't in love. We had 12 children in our marriage. My life was hard. My husband had an alcohol problem and didn't provide the needed food or rent for a place to stay.

"I broke my ankle when my 11th child was born. I had to stay in the hospital from January to May. I didn't know what was happening at home. One Sunday, two ladies came to the hospital passing out Communion and I was crying so hard, one lady came to my bedside and asked what was wrong. I told her the whole story."

The two women were members of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.

"They told me not to worry and that someone would be at my house Monday to take care of my children and to clean my house. They did this for over a month.

We became Catholic as a result of their kindness."

Living on the city's south side, Johnson found a faith home at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis. Her 12 children found a home at the parish school, which is now closed.

"They were very good people," says Johnson who is 92 now. "My children never wanted for anything when we became Catholic. I can't tell how much their kindness meant to me and my family.

I hope this gives you an idea of what I have been through, and the gratitude I have for the Catholic Church when I needed someone the most."

'I fell in love'

For Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones, her first year of Catholic education led to a love that has guided her life ever since.

"When I was 6 years old, I went to the first grade at

St. Ambrose School in Seymour," she says. "Something happened to me there that has made all the difference in my life. I fell in love. The object of my affection was my teacher. Her name was Sister Mary Hubert. She was a Benedictine sister.

"That love affair has lasted to this very day. The sisters who taught me were beautiful, kind and caring. I thought in the hierarchy of things, God was first and then there was them. Obviously since I have been a Benedictine for over 50 years, their impact on me was great. Even at age 6, I knew they possessed something that I wanted."

Her eight years of Catholic education also led to another deep pursuit of her life.

"St. Ambrose prepared me for life, but also for the afterlife," says Sister Mary Luke, a member of the Benedictine community of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

"I learned all the basic subjects, but also the importance of caring for others and the importance of honesty and hard work. We loved it when sister rolled up the sleeves of her long habit to wash desks since we got a glimpse of something other than her face and hands.

"I can trace a direct line from my religious vocation to sitting in that first-grade classroom. My eight years at St. Ambrose were the bedrock of my life. The romance endures!"

Mom's victory is a win for her sons, too

When Bert Leffel considers the way he met his wife and his lifelong friends, he's ever thankful that his mother cast the deciding vote in his parents' decision to send him and his two brothers to Catholic schools for their education.

Leffel's dad had attended a Catholic school as a child, but the cost of a Catholic education and the quality

of public schools in the family's Indianapolis neighborhood made him think about sending his sons to the less-costly option. At the same time, Leffel's mother, a product of public schools, saw how a Catholic school's emphasis on faith, family values and education had strongly influenced her husband's life.

"Long story short, Mom won," Leffel recalls. He has no doubt that he and his brothers won, too.

"Catholic education has been a life-changing experience for my children, family and myself," Leffel says, referring to his education at St. Pius X School and Cathedral High School, both in Indianapolis.

"I played baseball, basketball and football in grade school, and my friends were all there with me. I'm 42, and this group of teammates and classmates are still my closest friends. Friendship was at the heart of my school years and my main reason for sending my children to St. Pius to follow in my footsteps."

For Leffel, what makes those friendships so deep is the connection of faith.

See EDUCATION, page 18B



Benedictine Sister Mary Luke Jones, right, poses with her second grade teacher, Benedictine Sister Louise Hoeing, who also served for many years as a guidance counselor at Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis. (Submitted photo)



The connection of the Shagley family to St. Patrick School in Terre Haute runs deep, influencing the lives of parents Richard and Alice and their four children. Here, the family members come together for a photo on the school grounds: Pictured are, Richard, left, George, William, Harriet, Eleanor and Alice Shagley. (Submitted photo)



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EDUCATION

continued from page 17B

“At the core of our friendships was Jesus and God. We were altar boys, and we attended Mass regularly all of my childhood. St. Pius as a church and an institution became my dear friend as well. Every priest we were fortunate to come into contact with was a blessing and a true friend. Father Jim Farrell has helped my family through our hardest times. We love him.”

Catholic schools also led Leffel to the love of his life. He first met his wife Tiffani, a graduate of St. Matthew the Apostle School in Indianapolis, at a Catholic Youth Organization dance. They continued to date during their time together at Cathedral.

“Friendship and family are the impact the Catholic school system has played in my life,” he says. “It is one of the most important and treasured parts of my life. If anyone is on the ledge, like my dad once was, trust in knowing that once you are a part of this wonderful world it will truly change your life and your loved ones’ lives for the better.”

A prescription for a long, happy life

Joanne McKinley believes she has the prescription for anyone who wants to live a long, happy life.



Joanne McKinley

“I’m 88 years old, and I attribute my good, happy life to my good, sound Catholic education,” says McKinley, a member of St. John Paul II Parish in Sellersburg.

“For eight years, I was taught by the wonderful Franciscan nuns from Oldenburg. They taught me so much about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We were taught how to dress and act appropriately for church, how to be respectful to our elders and how to understand that the Ten Commandments gave us the rules that God wants us to live by. Wouldn’t it be a wonderful world if everyone did live accordingly?”

McKinley learned those lessons while she was a student at the former St. Mary School in New Albany, the school where a classmate of hers, Thomas, later became her husband of nearly 67 years, leading to a family of six children, 19 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Her thoughts of her Catholic education also take her back to another defining moment in her life—her first Communion.

“My first Communion was one of the happiest moments of my life. Sister Mary Omer, my first Communion instructor, had a huge influence on my life. We were taught about loving God, understanding, appreciating and participating in Mass, and having a deep love for the Blessed Sacrament.”

The importance of community

Carol Wethington Divine is grateful for the gift her father gave her as a child.

“I often heard my father boast about the fact that he had been able to send one of his children all of the way through school via Catholic schools. He imparted to me the importance of the community that only Catholic education could provide.”

Divine found that sense of community from the time



Catholic education has been a life-changing experience for the members of the Leffel family of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis. Johnny and Cadence pose for a family photo with their parents, Bert and Tiffani, who met at a Catholic Youth Organization dance when they were in grade school. (Submitted photo)

she started her education in Indianapolis at the former Holy Trinity School in 1956 through her graduation from Marian University in 1973, with four years at Cardinal Ritter High School included.

That focus on community then guided her in her 46 years as a teacher before she retired recently. She had taught at Cardinal Ritter, Bishop Chatard and Providence Cristo Rey high schools in Indianapolis.

“It all started in kindergarten,” she says. “I was beginning my journey learning that I not only had my strong community of family, but also was learning a new and wonderful community of Catholic education. My identity was soon developing: charity toward all, an open heart, service to my community, and acceptance of any person I would meet.”

When she was in the first grade at Holy Trinity School, Divine told her mother that she wanted to be a teacher.

“I never wavered from that goal, which was consistently reinforced each year because of the loving education I received from the Sisters of St. Francis.

“Catholic education teaches one to love others. St. Mother Theodore Guérin said it well, ‘Love the children first, and then teach them.’ Even in the most trying situations I encountered in teaching, I would always stop and reflect on her words.”

As parents, Divine and her husband made sure their daughter Katie received a Catholic education at St. Pius X School and Bishop Chatard High School, both in Indianapolis.

“We never regretted that decision.”

Special memories, a lasting influence

One special memory stands out to Cecelia Kiley from her Catholic education at the former Holy Trinity School, the former St. Mary Academy and Marian University, all in Indianapolis.

“One of the greatest school memories that endeared me to the Catholic faith was the annual May crowning,” she says. “It was a royal occasion which took place outdoors on a shrine erected for Mary. At 7 p.m. sharp, bells began ringing, classes lined up along the street, and eighth-grade servers led the procession around the neighborhood while May hymns were sung accompanied by the school band.

“Neighbors lined the streets to watch the spectacle and the eighth-grade girl slowly marched up to the shrine and placed the crown atop the Virgin’s head. In all my years, I have never witnessed a more beautiful school crowning.”

Kiley also has special memories of her eighth-grade teacher.

“Sister Mary Sharon had the greatest influence on my faith journey. Sister could be seen playing four-square with the kids out on the playground and many times she won. In me, she created a desire to study harder and to enjoy praying. A devotion to Mary that lingers today began in the eighth grade because of her.”

The influence of a Catholic education has continued through the years for Kiley, now a member of St. Elizabeth Seton Parish in Carmel, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

“Going into high school and college, I took with me the moral groundwork put down throughout my grade school years: respect for authority, morality between the sexes, education about our Catholic beginnings, frequent reception of the sacraments, and friends who shared the same faith.

“The love I have today for our Catholic faith can definitely be attributed to having a Catholic education in all three levels.” †



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How can we AFFORD CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

Understanding Tax Credit Scholarships and Indiana School Vouchers

My child is enrolled at a Catholic school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- My family is between 100% and 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP

CHOICE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INCOME LIMITS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR				
# of Persons in Household	69% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility Annual Household Income Limit for a 90% Choice Scholarship*	100% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility Annual Household Income Limit for a 90% Choice Scholarship**	150% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility Annual Household Income Limit for a Tax Credit Scholarship (of 50% Choice Scholarship)***	200% of Reduced Lunch Eligibility Annual Household Income Limit for a Tax Credit Scholarship (of 50% Choice Scholarship)****
1	\$16,288	\$23,606	\$35,409	\$47,212
2	\$22,007	\$31,894	\$47,841	\$63,788
3	\$27,726	\$40,182	\$60,273	\$80,364
4	\$33,444	\$48,470	\$72,705	\$96,940
5	\$39,163	\$56,758	\$85,137	\$113,516
6	\$44,882	\$65,046	\$97,569	\$130,092
7	\$50,600	\$73,334	\$110,001	\$146,668
8	\$56,319	\$81,622	\$122,433	\$163,244
9	\$62,038	\$89,910	\$134,865	\$179,820
10	\$67,757	\$98,198	\$147,297	\$196,396

Number Include All Adults in Household

Note: Income levels are determined in accordance with the *Income Verification Rules* document available at www.doe.in.gov/choice.

For a household size of 11 or more:

*Add \$5,719 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "90%" scholarship.

**Add \$8,288 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "90%" scholarship.

***Add \$12,432 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "50%" scholarship.

****Add \$16,576 to the annual limit for each additional member for a "50%" scholarship.

What are Tax Credit Scholarships?

The Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship Program provides scholarship support to families who want to enroll their children in the Catholic school of their choice. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive a minimum of a \$500 Tax Credit Scholarship.

Who qualifies for a Tax Credit Scholarship?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
- A student who is enrolled in an eligible Catholic school.

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Current Catholic school students CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.i4qed.org/sgo.

Additional local scholarships may also be available. Contact your local Catholic school.

I'm moving my child in grades K-12 to a Catholic school from a public school.

I meet these eligibility requirements:

- Indiana resident
- Apply before September 1, 2021
- My child attended public school the previous year (two semesters) OR received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher the previous school year.

AND one of the following:

My family is at or below 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

My family is at or below 150% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level (see chart).

My family is at or below 200% of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Income Level and my child qualifies for an IEP.

K-12 SCHOOL VOUCHERS

What is an Indiana School Voucher?

A Voucher is a state-funded scholarship that helps cover the cost of tuition at a private school. Qualifying students in grades K-12 can receive up to 90% of the local per-student state funding amount.

Who qualifies for a Voucher?

- A student whose family meets the income eligibility guidelines for Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (see chart), AND
- A student in grades K-12 who is coming to a Catholic school after attending at least one year (two semesters) in an Indiana public school, AND/OR
- A sibling received a Tax Credit Scholarship or Voucher, AND/OR
- A sibling living in an "F" school area, AND/OR
- A current Catholic school student in grades K-12 who has received a Tax Credit Scholarship in a prior year, AND/OR
- A student who qualified for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Why should I apply now?

If your family qualifies for assistance, but you do not apply when your child first enters school, you may lose the opportunity for a Voucher or Tax Credit Scholarship for the next 12-13 years. Students enrolled in a Catholic school CAN receive a Tax Credit Scholarship, making them eligible for a Voucher the following year.

How do I apply for an Indiana school Voucher?

1. To see how much tuition assistance you are eligible for, first register at your Catholic school of choice.
2. To apply for funding, visit www.doe.in.gov/choice.

Pre-K vouchers are available in all counties throughout Indiana. For more information, log onto www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/4932.htm.



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