



CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHRONICLE

NOVEMBER 2014

FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT . . .

November is a month of thanksgiving for God's blessings. We remember the Thanksgiving Feast of 1621 when the Pilgrims gave thanks to God for surviving the harsh conditions in the New World. They invited the Wampanoag Native Americans to join them in a three day celebration. Abraham Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1863 officially setting aside the last Thursday of November as Thanksgiving Day. The celebration of Thanksgiving on the last Thursday in November officially became law in 1941. The concept of giving thanks is not a new one. The bible is filled with references to the gifts that God gives us as well as the prayers and psalms that were created to thank Him. Remember to thank God daily for all the blessings that have been bestowed on you. Don't wait to thank Him once a year on Thanksgiving.

On November 1st, we celebrate **All Saints Day**. As Pope Benedict XVI said, *"Nothing can bring us into close contact with the beauty of Christ himself other than the world of beauty created by faith and light that shines out from the faces of the saints, through whom his own light becomes visible."* **The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day)** is celebrated on November 2nd. *"If we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection."* (Rom 6:5) *"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live."* (Jn 11:25)

Just before Thanksgiving is the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. This is the last Sunday of the liturgical year. On Sunday, November 30th, we begin the liturgical season of Advent as we prepare for the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. May the peace of Christ be with all of you. Happy Thanksgiving!

..... DIOCESAN SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT . . .

St. Barnabas Catholic School has been educating young men and women for 56 years. It began as a means to educate the parish children in the Catholic faith and train them for the reception of the Sacraments. At the National Congress on Catholic Schools for the twenty-first century, Archbishop James Lyke said that Catholic schools are to serve: "All Catholic families who want their children in Catholic school, and those of other faiths who understand what our schools are all about and who want them for their children." The latter is one reason for schools in today's predominantly non-Catholic urban settings.

St. Barnabas is a K-4 through 8th grade Catholic school teaching the mission and message of Jesus Christ to those who want that for their children. We begin every morning with community prayer, offering our lives to Jesus and then asking for the Holy Spirit's Wisdom. We give the students an opportunity to pray for their own special intentions before asking them each morning to live their Faith that day. As we transition into our school day our Kindergarten classes start a morning routine that will challenge and excite them as they delve into Rowland Reading's SuperKids phonics-based reading program that integrates reading, spelling, listening, and speaking. This reading program follows our students through second grade as they strengthen the necessary reading skills for student success. Our math curriculum offers real world math skills as every grade level builds on the previous. Our youngest learn about God's creation of our world, and that God loves us. While the older students are learning Church history as part of a comprehensive religion program designed to teach them the need for Jesus' teachings in today's world.

St. Barnabas has grown from less than 100 students in recent years to 167 students in this current school year. St. Barnabas now has K-4 through eighth grade with two K-5 classes. We have ten accredited teachers with five holding Masters in their subject areas. St. Barnabas Catholic School believes that the Fine Arts are a part of the beauty of Gods world and offers Art, Music, and Drama as a means of inspiring our students' creativity. Our Physical Education program has something for everyone, and the teacher diversifies the program as needed to be all inclusive. We have basketball teams, track, and cheerleading available for any student who meets the grade requirements of the scholar/athlete.

We invite you to visit St. Barnabas Catholic School to witness our students living their Faith.

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DID YOU KNOW?

There are 50 tips designed to help principals (new and seasoned) fulfill their leadership roles:

1. **Maintain a positive attitude** – You set the stage for your school just as your teachers set the stage for their classrooms.
2. **Pick your battles** – Realize that not every issue needs to be addressed. Identify what you stand for and fight for what is important.
3. **Be your own cheerleader** – Constantly tell yourself, "You can do it!" Find within yourself the strength and courage to keep going.
4. **Don't expect to win the popularity contest** – Decisions you have to make will never please everyone. Do what's right, not what will help others like you.
5. **Understand that schools build character** – An effective leader has the power to help students and teachers grow and learn in profound ways.

www.simplek12.com

A NOTE FROM THE ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT . . .

There is a lot to be proud of in the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School System. Our office wants to inform you that Our Lady of Fatima School, has been selected to receive an American Heart Association Teaching Garden. Ms. Chandra Farrier, principal of Our Lady of Fatima School submitted a winning proposal resulting in their school being awarded the opportunity to introduce to some and reinforce to others, the value of planting, growing, nurturing, and eating fresh fruits and vegetables as part of a heart healthy lifestyle.

The American Heart Association is taking a new approach in the fight against childhood obesity. They teamed with noted child, nutrition activist and philanthropist Kelly Meyer to create the American Heart Association Teaching Gardens planted in elementary schools across the country that became real life learning laboratories for students to learn what it meant to be healthy. The garden themed- lessons teach nutrition, math, science, and other subjects all while having fun in the fresh air and working with your hands.

Holy Spirit Elementary School in Tuscaloosa counseling program has been selected to receive the 2014 Recognition of Accountability, Verification and Excellence (RAVE) Bronze Award! The RAVE Award is awarded for state level recognition of your exemplary implementation of the Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Model for Alabama Public Schools which is directly aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Standards. RAVE is a continuous improvement document that provides a school counseling program an opportunity to demonstrate effective communication and commitment to implementing an outcome-based, data driven program. Ms. Paige Yeager, Holy Spirit Elementary School Counselor, played a significant role in leading the School Counseling Support Team and assisting the school with obtaining this prestigious award.

On behalf of the Catholic schools' office, we would like to say congratulations to both schools on their accomplishments!

SACS ACCREDITATION . . .

Our schools have successfully completed all the AdvancED accreditation requirements and using the data for continuous improvement. Now, they are preparing for our External team visit in the spring. Each school is required to provide some evidence for **all** 5 AdvancED standards and **all** indicators. The schools can provide evidence in electronic or hard files. The Catholic schools office will be visiting all schools in November and December to view and assist with providing evidence/artifacts to support all schools' ratings in their Self Assessments. During these visits, the schools will upload their final diagnostics into their Portfolio sections in ASSIST with a Catholic schools' office administrator.

On a System's level, we are in the beginning stages of analyzing Student Performance Data from the following tests: ITBS, ACRE, PLAN, ACT, and EXPLORE. All of this data will assist the System with creating a Strategic Plan/Action Plan for our diocese.

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION . . .

The Office of the New Evangelization and Stewardship is actually six offices in one. In addition to New Evangelization and Stewardship, we have the Offices of Young Adult Ministry, Campus Ministry, Pro-Life, and Family Life. Through New Evangelization, we have offered a number of conferences on evangelization for men and women in both Birmingham and Huntsville. We currently are offering a series of quarterly luncheons, in partnership with Queen of Heaven Radio (AM 1480 in Birmingham) and the Bible Christian Society (www.biblechristiansociety.com), in Huntsville and Birmingham, where we bring in the finest Catholic speakers available today to educate, inspire, and affirm Catholics in their faith.

One of the major activities the Pro-Life Office sponsors is the annual high school bus trip to Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Life in January. This January, we will have over 400 high school students and their chaperones – from the parishes and Catholic schools – travel to D.C. for this event.

We are excited about what is going on with Campus Ministry here in the Diocese. We have tentatively scheduled the first Bama Awakening retreat for April of 2015 for students at UAB, Birmingham-Southern, Samford, the University of Alabama, and other schools. This weekend retreat, run by the students, is responsible for lighting fires of the faith in Catholic campus ministries around the country and we expect the same here. We have also, just this year, brought a FOCUS (Fellowship Of Catholic University Students) missionary team to Birmingham to serve the UAB campus. This team of young, dedicated Catholics is already accomplishing wonderful things in the area of evangelization. Next year we will be bringing a FOCUS team to the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

Through the Family Life Office, we are in the process of bringing the Marriage Encounter retreat – which is designed to make good marriages even stronger - back to the Diocese of Birmingham. We are also promoting Natural Family Planning throughout the Diocese by sponsoring training for couples – in both English and Spanish.

We also sponsor various activities for young adults (ages 22-39) on an on-going basis in Birmingham and Huntsville. Contact **John Martignoni, Director of the Office of New Evangelization** at www.jmartignoni@bhmdiocese.org for more information.



“Leadership is lifting a person’s vision to high sights, the raising of a person’s performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.”

RESOURCES

New Classroom Resources and Administration and Planning Resources for Catholic Educators (Go to www.ncea.or/store)

J is for Jesus Alphabet Book by Meg Deboe
A beautifully illustrated alphabet book provides not only an introduction to letter names and sounds, but to the tenets of faith. It is an excellent resource for teachers to use with their young students.

Leadership Succession Planning in Catholic Education: An Ongoing Plan for Leadership Development, Identification, and Selection by Mary Fitzgerald and Anthony Sabatino The fundamental elements of successful leadership succession in any organization are recognizing the inevitability of leadership change and the necessity of a plan for leadership succession. This book provides a planning guide for board chairs, superintendents, and senior members of religious communities to use when the need arises to hire a new leader.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NCEA Webinars cover trending and need to know topics relevant to your career in Catholic education. All participants will receive the recorded webinar for reference and inclusion among other professional learning resources. See (www.ncea.org)

A Closer Look at the National Standards and benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools: Governance and Leadership Tuesday, November 4, 2014 - 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm

Presented by Dr. Lorraine Ozar, Center for Catholic School Effectiveness, Loyola University Chicago

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Educator Effectiveness Institutes

Disrupting Poverty: Turning High Poverty Schools into High Performing Schools

November 11-12, 2014

Memphis, Tennessee (Doubletree Hilton Memphis Downtown)

(858) 558-1500 ; register online at www.ascd.org/institutes

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Educator Effectiveness Institutes : FIT Teaching. An Introduction to the Framework for Targeted and Intentional Teaching

November 11-12, 2014

Memphis, Tennessee (Doubletree Hilton Memphis Downtown)

(858) 558-1500 ; register online at www.ascd.org/institutes

National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)

Principals Boot Camp

November 12, 2014

Baltimore, Maryland (Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards Hotel)

For more information contact Lucy Shufflebarger at lshufflebarger@ncea.org

National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)

Principals Forum and Presidents Symposium Principals’ and Presidents’

November 13-15, 2014

Baltimore, Maryland (Baltimore Marriott Inner Harbor at Camden Yards Hotel)

For more information contact Lucy Shufflebarger at lshufflebarger@ncea.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Educator Effectiveness Institutes
Building Teachers’ Capacity For Success: A Collaborative Approach For Coaches And School Leaders

November 13-14, 2014

Memphis, Tennessee (Doubletree Hilton Memphis Downtown)

(858) 558-1500; register online at www.ascd.org/institutes

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Educator Effectiveness Institutes
Differentiated Instruction and the New Standards: Helping All Learners Succeed with Challenging Content

November 13-14, 2014

Memphis, Tennessee (Doubletree Hilton Memphis Downtown)

(858) 558-1500; register online at www.ascd.org/institutes

Focused, Organized Minds: Using Brain Science to Engage Attention in a Distracted World

Fall 2014 Learning & the Brain Conference

November 20-22, 2014

Boston, Massachusetts (Westin Copley Place Hotel)

Register at registration@LearningAndTheBrain.com

UPCOMING EVENTS/DEADLINES

- ⇒ November 5th-SACS Steering Committee meeting
- ⇒ November 5th-Principals’ Advisory Committee meeting
- ⇒ November 12th-Principals’ meeting at CSO
- ⇒ November 27th-Happy Thanksgiving



Prayer:
 Lord, let your
 joy and strength
 beautify my life,
 now and always.
 Amen

OUR VISION AND MISSION

OUR VISION:

Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Birmingham provide an excellent educational experience in the Catholic tradition enabling all students to develop their God-given talents.

OUR MISSION:

The mission of the Diocese of Birmingham Catholic School System is to educate our students to seek God in Truth and for loving service by teaching the message of the Gospel, forming a community of faith, providing the whole child with a Catholic and Christ-centered environment, and inspiring all to reach their full academic and spiritual potential.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

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