

# COURIER-JOURNAL

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SPECIAL SECTION

## BACK TO SCHOOL

### Schools Need Participation Of Everyone

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

As so many of us prepare for the beginning of a new school year I ask you to take a moment to consider these brief thoughts.

The basic goal of Catholic education is to form a community in which culture and knowledge are enlightened by faith in a spirit of love and trust.

That lofty goal is not easily achieved. To do it we need schools of high academic quality in which there is ongoing effort to evaluate and improve programs. These must be geared always to preparing our young people to take responsible roles in society.

Our schools must be centers also of teaching the Gospel message. This will be accomplished through classroom instruction, lived out in the example of the men and women who teach, expressed and deepened through community celebration.

For all of this a price must be paid. I do not speak of the financial one, although that is always a challenge. Rather I refer to the spiritual challenge which calls all concerned about Catholics schools to do their part in deepening the values mentioned above.

Finally, I invite all concerned — parents, pastors and pastoral staff, school administrators, faculty and students — to do all possible to promote the active participation of our young people in parish life. It is my conviction — growing firmer as I come to know better the young people of the diocese — that they have powerful spiritual gifts to offer us.

I hope we can work together to help our parish communities experience the gifts of our young. Parishes will surely be enriched.

At the same time the visible presence and participation of the young in our parish communities will be a strong a very attractive advertisement for our schools.

### Catholic Education Is Essential For Growth and Development

By Sister Roberta Tierney, SSND  
Director of  
Division of Education

As we move toward the final weeks of summer recess we look forward to the return of formal educational programs. One of the realities of being a "Western New Yorker" is that one learns to adjust to and grow with changes, be they seasonal or related to life styles or work.

The seeming slowdown of the summer becomes an opportunity for evaluation and planning. Although, through the cooperation of the Courier-Journal, we have traditionally called this the "Back to School Issue," I prefer to take the opportunity to offer an overview of our formal education programs.

In a few weeks young people throughout our diocese will begin or return to a Catholic elementary or secondary school or will participate in a program of religious education sponsored by the parish. We believe that the opportunity

and experience of a quality Catholic education is essential for the growth and development of our young people. The success and effectiveness of such programs depend upon the cooperative efforts of those who plan and design programs, those who teach through example as much as through content, and the parents who share their responsibility.

We also extend the opportunity to continue religious education through programs for adults. This year emphasis will be given to growth in our sacramental lives through the implementation of the recently developed and approved Diocesan Sacramental Guidelines.

Our programs for continuing education for ministerial personnel has experienced a change in location and affiliation from St. Bernard's Seminary to St. Bernard's Institute of Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Programs are being planned and will be conducted in various areas of the diocese.



SISTER ROBERTA

Another element of education which is available is that of Parish Council development and training.

Workshops have been scheduled for chairpersons of councils and committees  
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### New Philosophy Mercy Updates Stated Purpose

Our Lady of Mercy High School will begin the new school year with a new philosophy. Last year a committee headed by Father Vincent Panepinto, chaplain, decided it needed updating. The new philosophy

emphasizes that Mercy is a Catholic private secondary school for girls. Because of the changes in the roles of women in today's society, it takes into consideration the spirit of women in the world today and the changing trends of women

in the Church. Input came from many areas, including faculty, students and parents.

Another change for the school year will be a new schedule for Mercy students. According to Sister Mary

Bonaventure, principal, the new schedule will get away from the modular system and go to a seven-period day, with a six-day rotating cycle. Classes will be lengthened to 45 minutes with a 5-minute change time between classes.

#### PHILOSOPHY

Our Lady of Mercy High School is a Catholic, secondary school for young women. Its goal is to foster personal/spiritual growth and intellectual development in its students.

Since the school is dedicated to Our Lady under the title of Mercy, the special spirit in the school is that of concern for one another and respect for all persons.

Out of this concern, the school provides a climate of Christ-centeredness in its programs, so that Christian values

may be effectively imparted in the context of Catholic tradition.

Intellectual development along with spiritual and personal growth is a shared responsibility among students, faculty, parents and administration.

Because this school is dedicated to the education of young women, emphasis is placed on the identification of the roles of women in today's society, in the light of Christian values.

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to develop an awareness in our students that personal, spiritual and intellectual growth are lifelong processes.