

# Catholic schools offer solid achievements

By Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Next week we'll be celebrating Catholic Schools Week. As we approach that joyful observance, it is a pleasure to tell you that we have made a good deal of progress in our school reorganization.

After 30 years of steadily declining enrollment and rising costs, we have come to a new stability and are now in a good position to plan realistically for the future.

As a result of the hard work completed by our pastors, principals, diocesan staff, and countless volunteers, our most difficult decisions are behind us. Our challenge now is to unify support for our schools and address the financial issues that still loom ahead.

To be sure, we will face many challenges before us in the future, but our community's ability to meet the difficult challenge of reorganization leaves me convinced that we have the ability and the will to meet those challenges. And because we have demonstrated the ability to make decisions that allow us to manage rather than simply to endure change, we are beginning to attract funding not available to us before. To all who have labored so long and hard to bring us to this new moment of hope and possibility, I am deeply grateful.

There is no question that this transition has been painful for many in our community. I am sorry about that pain, and wish to express the hope that such events as Catholic Schools Week will be a step toward the healing and reconciliation we all desire.

In any case we invite and will welcome all interested parties to participate in Catholic



**A** LONG THE WAY

Schools Week events. We have plenty of room for your children should you wish to enroll them with us. And if you are just curious about what our schools are like today, we will welcome your questions. We have high-quality schools and we want everyone to know about them.

I was reminded about that quality recently when I was reading some research findings about Catholic schools in the United States. Among those findings:

In national and science achievement tests at both the elementary and secondary levels, Catholic school students outscored their public school counterparts.

In all subjects, Catholic school students show greater academic achievement gains between 10th and 12th grades than do public school stu-

dents.

Catholic school students from disadvantaged families show no corresponding academic deficiencies in math or verbal achievement, while similar students in public and other private schools show substantial academic deficiencies.

In Catholic schools, minority students from underprivileged backgrounds outperform their public school counterparts.

Three percent of Catholic high schools students drop out of school compared to 14 percent of public school students.

Catholic school graduates of every ethnic background choose a pre-professional college curriculum twice as often as public school graduates.

Eighty-three percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college as compared to 52 percent of public high school graduates.

The graduation rate for all Catholic students is 95 percent and for public schools is 66 percent.

Catholic school students surpassed public schools students by an average of 4.5 percent in math, 4.8 percent in science and 12.5 percent in reading in the three grade levels of the National Assessment of Educational Progress test of the federal government.

Catholic high school sophomores are four times less likely to drop out than their public school counterparts. Once graduated, they are much more likely by 40 percent to go on to college.

Thank you for your interest in our Catholic schools. Thanks for your patience and understanding through this difficult stretch. I think that the future of our Catholic schools will be bright. I hope that you'll be a part of that future.

Peace to all.

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A new monthly calendar will appear in the Catholic Courier on the last Thursday of each month.

## PRAYER REQUEST FOR PRIESTS

WOULD YOU PRAY FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY?

The following prayer was dictated by Our Lord to Sister Josefa Menendez at Poitiers, France, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 3, 1921, with the instruction: "Josefa! Repeat these words every

JESUS PRAYER FOR HIS PRIESTS

O Jesus, by Thy most loving Heart, I implore Thee to inflame with zeal for Thy love and glory all the priests of the world, all missionaries and those whose office it is to preach Thy word, that on fire with holy zeal, they may snatch souls from the devil and lead them into the shelter of Thy Heart, where for ever they may glorify Thee.

Imprimatur: E. Morrogh Bernard, Vic. Gen. Westmonasterii, May 3, 1953

Mass  
Rosary  
Fasting  
Day Offering  
Offering of Sufferings  
Eucharistic Adoration  
Divine Mercy Chaplet

Or whatever the Lord inspires you to offer Him on behalf of His Priests.

**FEBRUARY, 1993**

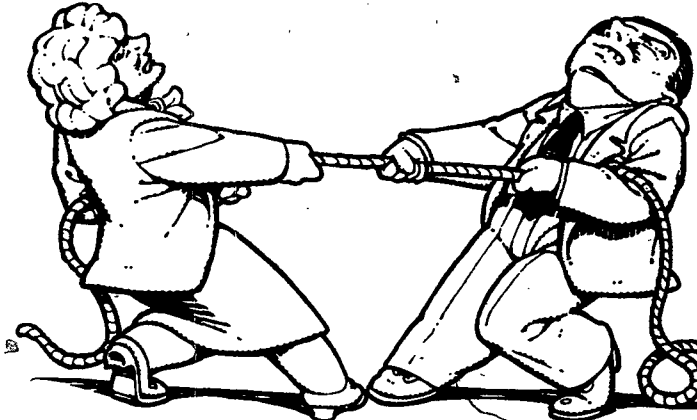
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Look for next month's MPRP CALENDAR in the Catholic Courier's February 25th issue.

There's a Better Way...



Consultation for Parish Staffs  
Conflict Intervention  
Training/Teambuilding

- Is your parish in a time of transition and change?
- Is there tension or conflict among staff members?
- Are people silent in meetings but vocal in the parking lot?
  - Is community/staff a house divided? "
  - Are your feelings and needs ignored?

Conflict can bring growth, resolution and healing. If any of these questions strike a chord within you--parish staff are invited to call for assistance and support:

Sue Staropoli, Department of Personnel Services  
(716) 328-3210, ext. 231

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