

Education '98



DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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My dear friends,

We in the Diocese of Rochester have a long tradition of quality programs to form adults and children in faith. At this time of year I am reminded especially of the generosity of the thousands of volunteers, parish leadership, and Catholic school teachers who share their faith as teachers of religion. These catechists are a visible sign of God's gifts to our community. They spend many hours sharing their gifts in parish religious education programs, sacramental programs, adult education offerings and Catholic schools. Well over 4,500 volunteers serve as catechists for school aged children in the 12 counties of our diocese. Hundreds of others work in youth ministry, in sacramental preparation, or with adults. Catholic school teachers number over 1300.

These people are the heart of catechetical ministry in our diocese. They are committed to ongoing growth in faith, both for themselves and for others. They are centered in the reality of Jesus Christ and strive to bring the Good News to those they serve. Catechists witness to the power of Christ through their lives and their work. In them, the church is embodied in a special way. Through their work, our tradition is lovingly sustained.

As so many programs resume this fall, I want to express my gratitude to these women and men. Their love of Jesus, their dedication to the church, their commitment to ongoing formation is an inspiration to us all. May they be strengthened in their work, inspired by Jesus' message and blessed by God's abundant love.

Your brother in Christ,

✠Matthew H. Clark
Bishop of Rochester

Dear friends,

It is always a pleasure to write to you as we approach the beginning of another academic year. Catholic schools are thriving. Parish religious education programs are ever more creative in developing new programs to meet the faith development needs of our diverse parish communities. It is the gifts of the Spirit that make our parish and school communities so lively.

For Catholic schools, this will be a year of exploring our Catholic identity. We take very seriously our responsibility to provide an education that is grounded in Gospel values and Catholic tradition. Leading children to understand their own discipleship is part of this commitment. Helping children to grow spiritually is a critical piece of discovering what it means to be Catholic. Principals and teachers will be vital to this commitment.

Exploring the connection between evangelization, catechesis and liturgy will be a focus in parish catechetical programs. Adults and children will continue to discover the power of the Word through study, celebration and witness. All this activity is directed toward bringing people to a deeper understanding of their relationship to God through Jesus and living out the challenges of that understanding. As always, the people who serve as catechists are the navigators on this journey of faith.

Our communities are blessed with a diversity of gifts. In this year of the Holy Spirit, let us be open to the movement of the Spirit in our own lives, in our communities and in the lives of the people we serve. The power of the Spirit will enliven us in wonderful ways as we prepare for the new millennium.

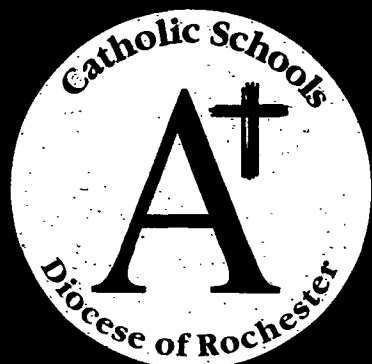
Indeed, there is new energy stirring this fall.

Timothy Dwyer
Superintendent of Catholic Schools,
Co-Director, Faith Development Ministry

Maribeth Mancini
Director, Evangelization and Catechesis,
Co-Director, Faith Development Ministry



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