STRONGER THAN EVER

Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Schools
2019 - 2020 Annual Report
VISION
Catholic schools transform our local and global communities into centers of faith, hope and charity by educating students to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

MISSION
Schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee are committed to educational excellence, student diversity and a Catholic culture that fosters faith, service and personal responsibility, all in the name of Jesus.

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*PLEASE NOTE: Some photos within this annual report were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Masks and social distancing were not required during this time, and are not represented in images taken before March of 2020.
We need Catholic education more today than ever before. Our schools give students the knowledge and skills to view global issues through the lens of the Gospel and Catholic social teachings. As we form young men and women to be disciples of Christ, we reinforce the virtues that create productive members of society.

This year, we were challenged to build character and academic capabilities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am grateful for the powerful response across our archdiocese — from school administrators, teachers and staff, as well as families and community supporters.

As the nation’s 12th largest system of archdiocesan Catholic schools, we have the opportunity and the responsibility to shape the future of our Church and our communities. We build God’s kingdom in our midst. Join me in celebrating and promoting the continuing success of Catholic schools.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend
Jerome E. Listecki
Archbishop of Milwaukee

The 2019-2020 school year was more than just its final four months, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic, those are the months that many people will remember. In more than 50 years as an educator, I’ve never seen a challenge like this — but, at the same time, I’ve never seen such resilience, innovation and commitment.

Teachers and school leaders found new ways to help students grow in mind, body and spirit. Families wove daily instruction and formation even more tightly into home life. And, donors enabled us to continue to excel.

Because of this firm foundation, with Jesus Christ as our rock, we are stronger than ever. I invite you to learn more about what our students, staff and families have accomplished — and to join us in our vital mission as we build on 177 years of proven success.

With gratitude for all who carry the mission forward,

Kathleen A. Cepelka, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
STRONGER THAN EVER

Through this challenging year, Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee has not only survived, but thrived. Even when we were physically distanced, our schools continued to develop the whole child, deliver a robust academic curriculum, cultivate community and help those in need.

Generous donors help drive these successes. This report includes results from the new Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) program, which distributed $205,000 to 28 schools. Your support for such programs, through prayer and participation, is key to sustaining the good work of Catholic schools.
Every school in the archdiocese aspires to excellence in all aspects of school life. When the COVID-19 crisis required switching to learning from home, schools quickly deployed a full range of virtual tools to continue guiding students from pre-kindergarten through high school to meet academic, spiritual and developmental milestones. Classes, faculty office hours and conferences with parents moved online. Teachers set up cameras in their homes and backyards to encourage students in wellness activities, music and art. Daily prayers and videos, formation meetings for high school students, and virtual Mass and Zoom rosaries kept Christ at the center. Education also continued for teachers, who met regularly online to pray and support each other. We offered online professional development for teachers as well as guidance for 15 first-year principals. In collaboration with the Saint Clare Center at Cardinal Stitch University, we continued our religious education certification program, “Sustaining the Mission,” for more than 2,000 teachers, principals and staff members. Whether learning in the classroom or the living room, our students continue to experience the highest quality instruction, attention, encouragement and opportunities for growth.

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REASSURING CONTINUITY

Just three days after schools closed due to COVID-19, Waukesha Catholic Schools, comprised of St. William Campus for grades K-2 and St. Mary Campus for grades 3-8, opened virtual classrooms, working to create a sense of familiarity. Students began each day online with morning announcements, the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer led by one of the school administrators. Parish priests read stories and joined with faculty to make videos to reassure students. Events, such as the annual retreat for fifth graders, moved online, as educators continued to affirm each student, guiding them toward learning and virtuous living.

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE CHILD

WELL-ROUNDED APPROACH

St. Jerome Parish School
Oconomowoc

St. Mary Parish School
Menomonee Falls

St. Sebastian | Milwaukee

Holy Trinity | Kewaskum

St. Mary Parish School
Menomonee Falls

Holy Trinity | Kewaskum

All photos by Mark Frohna unless otherwise indicated.
Our Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) program offers schools extra resources to educate students in mind, body and spirit. Here are just a few examples from the program’s first year:

**Prince Of Peace School, Milwaukee,** received $5,000 to promote Catholic identity through religious art. A mural featuring Our Lady of Guadalupe is underway, with plans for classroom art featuring each class’s chosen patron saint.

**St. Eugene, Fox Point,** used $5,000 to stock mobile carts with a 3D printer, robotics, virtual reality goggles and other supplies to develop science, technology, engineering, art and math skills. The cart brings older and younger students together in using the engineering model of project-based learning so they can learn to persevere in solving open-ended problems.

**St. Kilian, Hartford,** received $5,000 in seed money for a new playground. The community raised an additional $77,000 to cover design, installation and other updates to the playground area, which will serve the school and the community.
ROBUST ACADEMICS

EMPHASIZING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools give us a framework for excellence and accountability. Thanks to our focus on academic excellence, our schools already had established core content and skills standards for each grade level before distance learning became a necessity.

Creative, committed staff found new ways to communicate, engage and teach. They distributed learning packets, held live Zoom classes and opened online tutoring labs. For parents, they offered resources such as private Facebook groups to share homeschooling ideas, technology coordinators to assist with computer or internet issues, and email check-ins to assess the effectiveness of online learning.

Every teacher closely monitored class attendance and participation so that every student could benefit from the rigorous Catholic school academics that prepare students for higher education and for life.

Keeping students learning

Each Sunday evening during learn-from-home, students and parents from St. Francis Borgia School in Cedarburg received an itemized schedule outlining the week’s virtual calls, homework due dates and assignment expectations. Classes were held in a virtual classroom with live instruction. Students studied individually and in groups, maintaining academic progress. And virtual field trips and social calls for all grades offered enjoyable interaction to keep students laughing and learning together.

All photos by Mark Frohna unless otherwise indicated.
Educational innovation is one of the four focus areas for our Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) program. Here are two examples from the program’s first year:

**John Paul II Academy, Racine**, received $5,000 to support personalized learning. The school purchased guided reading books that teachers could offer students who needed encouragement to like reading. An investment in MobyMax, an online skills practice resource, further helped the school boost reading scores 8% for 8th grade and 15% for 4th grade, while math scores rose 2% for 8th grade and 8% for 4th grade.

**St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, Milwaukee**, used a $5,000 grant to start a Lego Robotics Club for K-8th graders and a Lego Robotics elective for middle school students. The school purchased Lego Mindstorm EVO robots and sponsored a coding class for students and teachers. A separate 3D printer purchase supports another middle school elective — giving students new ways to express themselves and advance their skills.
In the 2019-2020 school year, we completed the first cycle of a new grants program to help Catholic schools continue to go above and beyond for our students. Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) awards grants in the amounts of $10,000 and $5,000 to schools each year, many which are featured throughout this report.

Schools can apply for grants in four focus areas:

- **Catholic identity** for initiatives such as faculty faith formation, liturgical resources and environmental enhancements.
- **Educational innovation** for creative instruction through new programs and supplemental resources to advance existing programs.
- **Development and marketing** for software enhancements, website upgrades, brand development and other initiatives to support fundraising and recruiting.
- **Project initiation** providing seed money for long-term projects, such as a new K3 program, new staff positions and playground equipment.

The GIFTS grant program is making a difference in our Catholic schools. GIFTS grants fund meaningful projects that advance school programming, increase school capacity and enhance student learning.

Please consider making a donation to support the GIFTS grant program today. Your gift for Catholic education is needed at this especially critical time and will ensure continued funding of important programs at Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

**To donate online, please visit:** archmil.givingfuel.com/gifts
When we chose “We teach you like family” as our Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Schools theme for the 2019-2020 school year, we had no idea how fitting it would become. Given the realities of pandemic learning, our theme could easily be restated as “We teach you with family!”

The connections our schools regularly seek with families and parishioners became the backbone of home-based learning. Schools used a host of virtual tools to maintain a sense of closeness despite physical distancing. Book clubs, video skits, dress-up days and online lunchtime hangouts let students enjoy each other’s company. Daily prayers, web-based Scripture hunts and May Crowning celebrations integrated faith with culture.

Wherever and however we gather, communion and community shape our schools from pre-kindergarten through high school. This is how faith grows. This is how our schools become microcosms of the Kingdom of God, where others are moved to say, “See how they love one another.”

FLOURISHING COMMUNITY

MAINTAINING A SENSE OF CONNECTION

MOVING BLESSING

To emphasize solidarity among all students, past and present, Milwaukee’s St. Pius XI Catholic High School students joined campus ministry faculty in traveling throughout greater Milwaukee, blessing homes of Pius families and alumni.

All photos by Mark Frohna unless otherwise indicated.
Recipients in the first cycle of the Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) program found innovative ways to build community. Here are just a few examples:

**Catholic Central High School, Burlington,** upgraded technology and school security with a $10,000 grant. Better Wi-Fi enables students to share documents and collaborate on projects. They can also access online learning tools, including classes in American Sign Language, Advanced Placement U.S. History and Advanced Placement European History.

**Northwest Catholic School, Milwaukee,** used a $5,000 grant to create culturally relevant literacy circles. Students in grades 4th-8th received up to three books based on interest and reading level. They joined in book club discussions on peoples’ similarities and differences, bridging cultural gaps in a diverse student body. The school also saw improvement in students’ comprehension and critical thinking skills.

**Holy Angels School, West Bend,** received $5,000 to make the school’s website more user-friendly and interactive. Parents can now find the information they need quickly and take advantage of paperless registration and online access to schedules and the school handbook.
POWERFUL IMPACT

SERVING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

As we brought the heart of Catholic education into the home, we also practiced Catholic ideals to help families through unprecedented times. Many school families faced — and continue to face — unimaginable situations; our schools have responded with:

• Pastoral care, emotional support and counseling for families, as well as students.
• Fundraising to provide financial assistance for families in need.
• Meals for those facing hunger.
• Chromebooks to students for access to education and community.

Students also participated in outreach projects, such as holding food drives, collecting hygiene products for shelters and making cards for nursing home residents and essential workers. Even in a remote learning environment, children learned they have the power and the responsibility to make a difference in the world. And, as a true family, through the toughest of times and the most daunting challenges, they learned that they became stronger than ever — together.

SUPPORT BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Most students at Messmer Catholic Schools participate in the Parental Choice program and live in the Milwaukee neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID-19. School staff quickly focused resources on helping families who were affected physically, emotionally and financially. Meals were made available or delivered. Counseling staff reached out to families. Technology experts helped parents navigate internet issues. Also, the school distributed several hundred Chromebooks to students needing electronic devices, boosting online attendance and engagement from 75 to 90 percent.
Divine Mercy Catholic School, South Milwaukee, used $5,000 for a “U.N.I.T.Y.” program to enhance Catholic identity. The program includes community service projects for each grade level and a dedicated space in the school where all ages can gather to pray, discuss and grow in faith. School leaders say the program has changed the school’s focus from looking inward to reaching out to others.

St. Agnes School, Butler, used $10,000 for a Catholic identity program, “Facilitating Encounters with the Living Jesus Christ for Students, Families, Faculty and Parish.” As a Choice school, St. Agnes has many non-Catholic students, and the school recognized an opportunity to evangelize all. By including the wider parish in these activities, St. Agnes promotes appreciation and respect for the increasingly diversified school community.

The Grant Initiatives for Today’s Students (GIFTS) program empowers schools to make a difference in the community at large. Here are two examples launched this year:

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ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools

All Saints Catholic School, Kenosha
Blessed Sacrament, Milwaukee
Blessed Savior, Milwaukee
Burlington Catholic, Burlington
Catholic East Elementary, Milwaukee
Christ Child Academy, Sheboygan
Christ King School, Wauwatosa
Divine Mercy, South Milwaukee
Divine Savior Catholic School, Fiedelonia
Holy Angels, West Bend
Holy Apostles School, New Berlin
Holy Family, Whitefish Bay
Holy Trinity, Kewaskum
Holyland Catholic School, Fond du Lac
John Paul II Academy, Racine
Lumen Christi, Mequon
Mary Queen of Saints Catholic Academy, West Allis
Messmer Catholic Schools, Milwaukee
Mother of Good Counsel, Milwaukee
Nativity Jesuit Academy, Milwaukee
Northwest Catholic School, Milwaukee
Notre Dame School of Milwaukee, Milwaukee
Our Lady of Grace Academy, Racine
Our Lady of Grace Academy, Racine
Prince of Peace, Milwaukee Shephard of the Hills, Eden
St. Aladbert, Milwaukee
St. Agnes, Butler
St. Alphonsus, Greendale
St. Andrew Parish School, Delavan
St. Anthony School, Milwaukee
St. Anthony on the Lake, Pewaukee
St. Boniface, Germantown
St. Bruno, Oconomowoc
St. Catherine School, Milwaukee
St. Charles, Hartland
St. Charles Borromeo, Milwaukee
St. Dominic, Brookfield
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Sheboygan
St. Eugene, Fox Point
St. Francis Cabrini, West Bend
St. Francis Borgia, Cedarburg
St. Francis de Sales School, Lake Geneva
St. Gabriel, Hubertus
St. Gregory the Great, Milwaukee
St. Jerome Parish School, Oconomowoc
St. Joan of Arc, Nachota
St. John Paul II Catholic School, Milwaukee
St. John the Baptist, Plymouth
St. John the Evangelist, Greendale
St. John Vianney, Brookfield
St. John XXIII, Port Washington
St. Joseph, Milwaukee
St. Joseph, Wauwatosa
St. Joseph, Racine
St. Joseph, Big Bend
St. Joseph Catholic Academy, Kenosha
St. Joseph Parish School, Crafton
St. Jude the Apostle, Wauwatosa
St. Katharine Drexel School, Baier Dam
St. Kilian, Hartford
St. Leonhard, Muskego
St. Lucy, Racine
St. Margaret Mary, Milwaukee
St. Mary, Menomonee Falls
St. Mary, Mayville
St. Mary, Kaukauna
St. Mary Parish School, Menomonee Falls
St. Mary’s Springs Academy, Fond du Lac
St. Mary’s Visitation, Elm Grove
St. Matthew, Campbellsport
St. Matthew, Oak Creek
St. Matthias, Milwaukee
St. Monica, Whitefish Bay
St. Peter, Stinger
St. Peter, East Troy
St. Rafael the Archangel, Milwaukee
St. Rita, Racine
St. Robert, Shorewood
St. Robert Parish School, Milwaukee
St. Sebastian, Milwaukee
St. Thomas Aquinas Academy, Milwaukee
St. Vincent Pallotti, Milwaukee
Waukesha Catholic School System, Waukesha
Wauwatosa Catholic, Wauwatosa

High Schools

Catholic Central, High School, Burlington
Catholic Memorial High School, Waukesha
Chesterton Academy, Menomonee Falls
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Milwaukee
Divine Savior Holy Angels High School, Milwaukee
Dominican High School, Whitefish Bay
Marquette University High School, Milwaukee
Messmer High School, Milwaukee
Plus X Catholic High School, Milwaukee
St. Anthony High School, Milwaukee
St. Catherine’s High School, Racine
St. Joan Antida High School, Milwaukee
St. Joseph Catholic Academy High School, Kenosha
St. Lawrence Seminary, Mt. Calvary
St. Mary’s Springs Academy, Fond du Lac
St. Thomas More High School, Milwaukee

* a Seton Catholic School
** a Siena Catholic School
We are pleased to acknowledge the following donors and sponsors for their generosity and support of Catholic education through contributions to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Your donations continue supported important programs at Catholic schools throughout the 10 counties of the archdiocese.

This listing includes donors and sponsors who contributed to the following programs that benefit Catholic education: the Catholic Schools Dinner in 2019 and 2020, the Solex for Catholic Education Walk in 2019 and 2020, and the GIFTS grant program in 2019 and 2020.

The Office for Development has made every effort to list donors and sponsors completely and accurately. Should there be an error in your listing, please accept our apologies and call (414) 798-3530 so that we may correct our records.
Total Enrollment
OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
21,362

Total
ELEMEN TARY &
MIDDLE SCHOOL
Professional Staff
1,959

Total
SCHOOLS
in the PARENTAL
CHOICE PROGRAM
65

Total Enrollment
OF HIGH SCHOOLS
6,703

177
YEARS OF
service

1,959
SECONDARY
SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL
STAFF

102
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS

1,959
PARENTAL
CHOICE PROGRAM
RURAL: 18
SUBURBAN: 37
URBAN: 47

Archdiocese of Milwaukee ranked 12th in total number of students in Catholic schools among all the archdioceses/dio ceses in the United States & 9th in total number of schools.

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