

Have you considered a Catholic School education for your child, grandchild?



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The end of January through the beginning of February is National Catholic Schools Week – a time set aside to celebrate Catholic education in the United States. Schools across the country and here in our diocese celebrate with special Masses, open houses, service projects, and fun activities for students and families.

It's a week when Catholic school students and parents are invited to speak at their parishes during weekend Masses about the benefits of a Catholic school education, and encourage families to consider a Catholic school education.

Several years ago, my son and I had the opportunity to speak at our parish; my husband and I now have four children attending Catholic school. The points I shared include the following:

As parents, my husband and I have high expectations when it comes to academics, but there are many schools where our children could get a good education. We enrolled them in a Catholic school because they and their teachers are free to talk about God and their faith in the classroom.

Our boys hear each day that they are a gift, that they are loved and that God has a plan for their lives. In the same way, they recognize that each one of their classmates is a child of God, who must be treated with dignity and respect.

The students are learning St. Thomas Aquinas' teaching of the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity

and the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, which are being used to encourage good behavior or correct behavior in a positive way.

They are each called to achieve their personal best and have the incredible blessing to learn history, math, and science in a classroom where a crucifix and a statue of Mary are also welcome.

The children participate in service and outreach projects with an understanding that they are doing so as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Each day begins with prayer, and students participate in Mass as a school during the week. There are times when students pray for a classmate, a family or a specific intention during the day. The school family is without a doubt strengthened around the Faith.

The many benefits of a Catholic school education include superior performance on state and national testing, excellent programs in the arts and sports, self discipline and a safe environment. Nevertheless, enrollment in Catholic schools nationwide has been declining for decades. Our local

communities have experienced the same, and there is no single reason for the drop.

While many discussions take place about the varied reasons not as many children are enrolled in Catholic school today, a group of committed Catholics in our diocese decided to take action. One of the best ways they said they could support Catholic schools is to offer tuition assistance to families.

I hope you will read about the St. Gerard Society on page 18, and their generous efforts to make Catholic school education possible for more children. The story also provides a sense of the Catholic school family – which lifts up and supports each other, even going so far as to donate a kidney to a member of the family in need.

If you haven't done so before, prayerfully consider a Catholic school education for your child, grandchild, niece or nephew.

Visit the diocesan website, Saginaw.org, to find a listing of Catholic schools and open houses, or schedule a private tour. All are welcome!

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, pray for us! †

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Erin".



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