



# 2023

APPEAL FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: A GUIDING FORCE FOR LIFE



## LIVE A LIFE OF MEANING

My dear friends in Christ,

Why is support for Catholic schools part of the mission of every Catholic, not just that of parents with children in our schools? After all, this is not the late-19th century or early-20th century America, a time when Catholic children of immigrant families faced many obstacles when entering public schools.

A simple sign hangs in every Catholic school: "Christ is the reason for this school." Let us not be fooled. To practice and pass on an authentic Catholic faith in the classroom is becoming increasingly necessary in our society. We are called to be instruments of evangelization in society by being witnesses to the love of God.

We often hear that many community and business leaders in Central Massachusetts are products of Catholic schools. Their alma maters did not boast the fanciest buildings, or the most expansive after-school programs, or even the flexibility to express one's individuality in daily attire. What they did offer and continue to offer to this day, is attention to the individual student, sound academic and social formation and, most importantly, being formed in the Catholic faith (or in Catholic values for those of other faiths) in order to learn what true success in life really means beyond how to make money.

Each year we remind ourselves that religion is not just one topic among



*Bishop McManus*

*Bishop - continued*



# COMMITTED TO BE AUTHENTICALLY CATHOLIC: MIND, BODY AND SOUL

*Bishop – continued*

others in Catholic schools. The relevance of our faith can be discussed in the context of every single topic taught in our classrooms, including science, math, history, literature and languages. Faith is also a guiding force in after-school programs, sports and the arts. The Catholic school student learns that to live the good life is to live a life filled with meaning, which is not the same as living a life focused on self-indulgence or self-importance.



We recognize how difficult it is for many parents to pay tuition while often paying taxes that support public schools, but they know they are investing in their child's future, both temporal and eternal. For many families, especially new immigrant families, increased access to financial aid is the only way they can consider a Catholic school. It takes everyone sharing in solidarity with our Catholic school families.

What more can you do? Talk to family and friends about the value of the Catholic school option in our communities. Support their decision to choose a Catholic school. And, never forget the power of prayer to support the work of our teachers, administrators and staff who are dedicated to the ministry of Catholic school education, a ministry which makes tangible the love of Jesus in the life of each student they encounter.

Thank you for considering prayerfully how support of Catholic schools, in whatever way you can, will help today's students become tomorrow's leaders in both society and the Church.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*+ Robert J. McManus*

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus  
Bishop of Worcester



**"Probably the best part of a Catholic education is what we are taught in our religion class."**

– Gavin Pintarich  
Seventh-grader

*Our Lady of the Valley Regional School, Uxbridge*



**"The children realize that they're loved and they're not judged by their academic achievement, their athletic achievement. In this world today, where do you get messages like that? I just think that's a message that all children need. I think this is a wonderful school. Catholic schools are such a treasure."**

– Judy Castaldi  
Grandmother

*Our Lady of the Valley Regional School, Uxbridge*



**"I grew up in a really poor community. The education here, I think, it's way better. The classes are smaller. The teachers are more involved with the kids."**

– David Salas  
Parent of student  
*St. Bernard Elementary School, Fitchburg*



**"I'm a product of Catholic education and it formed me as the person I am today. I experienced, and I see, we educate the whole child in faith, academics and values. ... We are a community. At this time, it is more important than ever to be part of a Catholic community."**

– Deborah Welch Wright  
Principal

*St. Bernard Elementary School, Fitchburg*



**"I think the best part is that we develop not just the minds of the students, and their bodies, but it's really about the spirit. And I love that kids know that God loves them and that he is an active presence in their lives."**

– Karen Fuller  
Assistant principal for student life  
*St. Paul Diocesan Jr./Sr. High School, Worcester*



**"I can tell that this environment not only helps my daughter sharpen a lot of her skills and gain knowledge, but, at the same time, grow in faith. What I have seen in Catholic education that I didn't see in other places is integration of faith-based activities and community service."**

– Ana Coulouras  
Parent of student and social studies teacher  
*Saint Paul Diocesan Jr./Sr. High School, Worcester*



**"Aside from children getting a core education in a pretty rigorous school, they're also able to get a regular education surrounding our core Catholic values. And that's something that I want them to carry with them in life, something as basic as respect and being kind to one another."**

– Kerri Consigli  
Mother and Parents Guild member  
*Our Lady of the Valley Regional School, Uxbridge*



**"I've been in Catholic education my entire life – all through college and then 23 years teaching in Catholic schools. I think the best part of Catholic education is bringing Christ into everything we do, making him the center of our daily life."**

– Karen Remillard  
Teacher, grades 5-8  
*Our Lady of the Valley Regional School, Uxbridge*

Dear Benefactors,



As we complete the first month of the 2023-24 school year, I would like to take a moment to give thanks to God for the health and successes of our Catholic schools. Over the last several years, Catholic schools in the Diocese have responded to the call of both families and society to expand and adapt. Whether through in-person learning during the pandemic, faith-centered school environments during a time of increased concern over mental health and wellness, or through our continued focus on academic excellence, our Catholic schools have provided students and families with a safe haven during a tumultuous time.

With a publicly funded education available for no cost, why do parents seek out a Catholic education for their children? The answer to this question is perhaps clearer now than ever before. As American culture becomes increasingly secular, our schools serve perhaps as the last bastion for an educational environment that simultaneously emphasizes mind, body and soul.

Thus, we have an obligation to be authentically Catholic. It is not merely a saint's name on a building or a requirement for students to wear uniforms. Our Catholic faith is at the core of who we are and Jesus Christ is present in all that we do. And this is the case whether we are in the classroom, on the stage, on the playing field or celebrating Mass. The educational experience is grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition such that students are encouraged to be self-motivated learners, seeking the truth and developing capacity to make ethical and moral decisions. Our students leave our schools prepared to enrich those they encounter with the values of the Gospel.

As part of cultivating an authentically Catholic experience in school, our educators serve as role models to our students. Their dedication to the vocation of teaching and leadership is critical to the success of our mission and deeply valued. With parents as the primary educators of children, teachers and administrators develop trusting relationships with students with a focus on intellectual growth in concert with physical, religious and spiritual formation. Together with clergy, alumni, and other school supporters, a community of faith is formed that helps to lay the foundation for continued growth of our young people into and through adulthood.

We strive to make a Catholic education available to all that desire one. Each year, we keep tuition rates as low as possible so that families can afford to give their children the gift of a Catholic education. Thanks to generous giving of contributors like you, we are able to provide students with some need-based financial aid. Each year, however, there are families whose children cannot attend for financial reasons. Please know that your contributions make a difference and I prayerfully request your continued assistance and generosity by giving to this year's Catholic School Appeal.

Wishing you all God's merciful blessings,

*David Perda*

David Perda, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

**HOW YOU CAN RESPOND:**

**ONLINE:**  
[schools.worcesterdiocese.org](https://schools.worcesterdiocese.org)

**BY MAIL:**  
Send in the convenient envelope with your donation.

**IN PARISH:**  
Partake in the second collection at your parish or make a donation directly to the Catholic school of your choice.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL FACTS:**

**AVERAGE CLASS SIZE**  
**Elementary and Middle School:**  
**17** students  
**High School:**  
**18** students

**Daily Attendance Rate:**  
**96%**  
**High School Graduation Rate:**  
**100%**

**High School Graduates Attending 4-year College:**  
**94%**

Courtesy of The Catholic Free Press





## 2022 Catholic Schools Appeal (\$81,879)

School, Town/City	Designated Distribution
All Saints Academy, Webster	\$3,100
Assumption School, Millbury	\$2,518
Holy Family Academy, Gardner	\$4,105
Our Lady of the Angels School, Worcester	\$2,853
Our Lady of the Valley Regional School, Uxbridge	\$4,948
St. Aloysius Catholic School, Gilbertville	\$2,142
St. Anna Catholic School, Leominster	\$4,398
St. Bernard's Elementary School, Fitchburg	\$1,687
St. Bernadette School, Northborough	\$6,907
St. Joseph School, Webster	\$7,300
St. Leo School, Leominster	\$2,168
St. Mary School, Shrewsbury	\$3,148
Saint Paul Diocesan Jr./Sr. High School	\$925
St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School, Worcester	\$3,655
Trinity Catholic Academy, Southbridge	\$2,331
Staff faith formation, curriculum and professional development	\$19,629
Other: Cost of promotional material production and postage	\$10,065



## CHRIST IS THE REASON

Catholic school students learn shared values that transform their minds and hearts to be the face of Christ in all that they say and do from classroom learning to extracurricular activities, athletics, community service and beyond.

