



DIOCESE
OF
MADISON

OFFICE OF
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS

Catholic Schools: Our Faith, Our Future

Summer 2011

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ST. JAMES SCHOOL WINS GRAND PRIZE IN ENERGY CONTEST

As first reported in the [Catholic Herald](#), a team of eight students from St. James School in Madison recently were declared one of two grand prize winners of the fourth annual Lexus Eco Challenge, awarding them with \$30,000 in grants and scholarships. This award is in addition to the \$10,000 in grants and scholarships the team earned earlier this year in the first round of the challenge.

Two teams in teacher Gina Pignotti's eighth-grade science class entered projects in the Lexus Eco Challenge. One of the teams, which is also raising \$7,000 to install a solar panel on the school, received the award

and a chance to compete with other winners for the \$30,000 grand prize in the Final Challenge.

"What has been fun for me is to see them really engaged in it and their willingness to put their energy into it," said Ms. Pignotti.

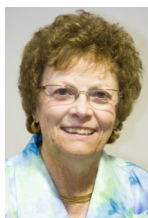
The challenge's benefits have gone beyond the monetary rewards for the winning team. Pignotti said the projects were a good learning experience for her whole class. The experience has also deepened the students' understanding of their role in protecting God's creation. Student and team mem-



ber Andrea Wright said, "Being stewards of the earth and protecting the environment is important." Savannah Wallace, another team member, adds, "Praying helps build you spiritually, but then you have to go out and take leadership of doing something for Him and protecting what He made."

TWO LONG-TIME PRINCIPALS RETIRE

Arlene McMorran announced her retirement after 27 years as principal of Beloit's Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) School. In 2010 she was presented with an award honoring her as an Outstanding Catholic Educator. At a special Mass and celebration, Father Gary Krahenbuhl presented a gift from the parish to McMorran and cited her commitment and compassion to the school and parish. When asked what the past 27 years have meant to her, Arlene answered, "I've been blessed." In an interview for the [Catholic Herald](#), Arlene



said, "For me, serving at OLA has been a remarkably rewarding and fulfilling adventure. It's a privilege to inspire, lead, guide and teach the 'good news' of the Gospel to students each day." Mrs. McMorran said that she believes God is "calling her in a new direction" and "it is time for her to pass the baton to a new leader who will love and lead OLA into a bright future."

Sr. Georgianna Dorsey O.P.



came to the Diocese of Madison as a teacher in 1970. After the order moved her to Illinois for a few years, she was able to return to Wisconsin in 1989 and became the principal of St. Rose of Lima School in Cuba City, where she has remained ever since. Over the years, Sr. Georgianna was instrumental in helping new principals acclimate to their positions and provided leadership as a member of the Principals' Association Board for several years. After over forty years of serving Catholic education, Sr. Georgianna is looking forward to retirement, although she won't be far away and likely will remain engaged with young people in some capacity.

We thank you both for your years of dedicated service and leadership! God bless you!



Ed O'Brien
Principal

BROTHER DUTTON SCHOOL CLOSES

Brother Dutton Catholic School closed its doors for the last time on June 7, 2011. Decreasing enrollment and the challenging economic reality, coupled with a diminished ability of families to afford the modest tuition, precipitated the difficult decision to close.

In a January 2011 article for the [Catholic Herald](#), Brother Dutton principal Ed O'Brien said, "It's been my privilege to work here the past four years. I am very impressed with our parents' dedication as well as that of our students, staff, and the St. Jude Parish." He noted that

the school has been "a Beloit community pillar, offering a tradition of excellent education, religious values, and community service."

In order to ensure that a Catholic school education is still available, Our Lady of the Assumption, the other Catholic school in Beloit, has opened its arms to all Brother Dutton families and is actively working with those who want to attend. Toward this end, OLA has extended the lower, "parishioner" tuition to

all St. Jude—Brother Dutton families, as well as those families from the other parishes in the Beloit cluster.

The Office of Catholic Schools will continue to work with St. Jude Parish, Our Lady of the Assumption School and the cluster parishes of St. Thomas and St. Stephen to ensure a smooth transition process for students and their families.



2011 Catholic School Graduates:

Elementary - 676
(44 schools)

High School - 179
(2 schools)

The past school year saw a focus on "Continuous Improvement—Indicators of Excellence," as called for in the strategic plan. Receiving specific attention were the topics of Catholic Identity, quality religious instruction and academics and clear curriculum objectives (See *Revision of Curriculum Standards Underway* p. 3).

Faith Integration

Last November, principals attended a dynamic presentation about infusing Catholic values throughout the curriculum delivered by Deacon Tony Abts, president of the ACES Xavier Schools in the Diocese of Green Bay. This was followed in the spring as teachers, principals, pastors and members from both the Office of Catholic Schools and the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis began work to review and revise the diocesan religion standards. The new standards are aligned with four pillars of our faith as defined in the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#),

ACRE Test

In April, the elementary schools administered the Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) to students in fifth and eighth grades. The ACRE will provide a baseline of students' knowledge of our faith. Since it, like our standards, is aligned with the *Catechism*, the ACRE will provide teachers and principals valuable information regarding the effectiveness of the religious instruction students receive. We are pleased to report that students in the diocese scored higher than the national average for Catholic school students, in each of the four tested areas. As we embrace a culture of excellence through a focus on continuous improvement in all schools, teachers and principals welcome the challenge of improving instruction and raising student achievement.

Financial Models

While much work focused on

academics, efforts regarding school finances were also undertaken. Under the leadership of their pastors, several schools that serve multiple parishes in the same cluster have eliminated the higher, "non-parishioner" tuition for students who belong to a parish in the same cluster. Thus, any family belonging to a parish in the cluster receives a lower "cluster" tuition rate. In the same spirit, many cluster parishes are now contributing financially to the support of the Catholic school in their cluster. While much work remains to be done, these clusters are to be commended for taking the lead and answering the Bishop's call that all Catholics contribute financially to support Catholic schools. The various models being employed, along with others in use in other dioceses, will be presented to Bishop Morlino in the fall as he considers specific recommendations for all parishes.

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OUTSTANDING CATHOLIC EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

May 2011— Miss Margarete Schels, St. John the Baptist, Jefferson

Miss Margie Schels has been named Outstanding Catholic Educator of the Year after winning the monthly award for March. Ms. Schels teaches 8th grade and says the most important role for her as a Catholic Educator is to help students grow closer to Jesus and develop a relationship with him that will

last a life time. Schels has been a Catholic educator for 35 years, the past decade at St. John the Baptist in Jefferson.



Says Schels; "Yes I am an educator, but my primary vocation, my chosen mission in life, is my ministry as a Catholic educator."

Surrounded by students, staff, family and supportive parents, Miss Schels was thanked for her exemplary work and dedication. Principal Mary Kilar nominated Miss Schels. According to Kilar; "She is a living example of Christ in our lives and I think that is the most important thing."

**Over 600
passionate,
dedicated and
highly qualified
teachers work
in Catholic
schools
throughout the
diocese.**

Our Other Outstanding Catholic Educator Award Winners for 2011

FEBRUARY 2011 - Julie Wodarz, St. Mary School, Platteville

The award is sponsored by the Office of Catholic Schools, Relevant Radio AM 1240., Blest Art and Catholic Financial Life.

Any teacher, principal or aide with at least one year of teaching experience in Catholic schools is eligible to receive the award. Nominations may be made by parents, teachers, principals, pastors or parishioners and are submitted to the Office of Catholic Schools through Relevant Radio's website. Nominations are reviewed by the Principals Association Board twice a year (October and January) and the recipients are selected.

JANUARY 2011 - Barbara Wills, St. Joseph School, Hazel Green

You may find out more about it by visiting Relevant Radio's web site. [Relevant Radio AM 1240](http://www.RelevantRadioAM1240.com).

REVISION OF CURRICULUM STANDARDS BEGINS

The current Standards and Benchmarks of the Diocese of Madison were written several years ago as a collaborative effort between the Diocesan Schools Office, administrators and teachers, and were based on the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. Good standards and benchmark documents are fluid and need to undergo periodic revisions in an effort to stay consistent with current educational best practices. In the past two years, the Common Core Curriculum for English Language Arts and Mathematics was released and adopted by 43

states including Wisconsin. This initiative, our diocesan strategic plan, *Guided by the Spirit*, and the desire to continually improve our curriculum and instruction created a need to revise our diocesan standards and benchmarks.

The process of revising our standards and benchmarks began this winter with religion, language arts, and math, and continued this spring with social studies and science. Committees for each subject were created comprised of teachers with content expertise, principals, religious education direc-

tors, and Office of Catholic Schools and Office of Evangelization and Catechesis. Each committee met for two focused days to determine common language, create and/or revise topics, and fine-tune benchmarks. Their work will continue with editing and formatting through additional meeting days and communication using technology forums. Principals and teachers will be introduced to the new standards and benchmarks this fall and will receive ongoing professional development provided by the Office of Catholic Schools throughout the year.

Ria Schmidt and Lynn Koresh, Office of Catholic Schools staff, have been working with teachers from around the Diocese to review and rewrite the standards in all subject areas.

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We're on the Web!
madisondiocese.org



Catholic schools in the Diocese of Madison cultivate a love for Christ and His Church by inviting students, and the entire school community, to meet and know Jesus and embrace a loving God. Catholic schools seek to assist parents with excellent moral and academic formation for their children, developing the talents of all students and fostering a commitment to service, justice, and the sanctity of human life.

KOHL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The Herb Kohl Educational Foundation has announced its 2011 recipients of Teacher Fellowships and Excellence and Initiative Scholarships. Two teachers in the Madison Diocese have been awarded a Fellowship. They are Martha Prellwitz, St. John the Baptist Catholic School in Princeton, WI and Teresa Pickarts, St. Mary School in Janesville. Martha Prellwitz is also the diocesan Outstanding Teacher of the Year for 2010. Recipients received their award at special luncheons held around the state in March and April.

The Herb Kohl Fellowship is a one-time only \$1,000 award to the selected educator, and the educator's school also receives \$1,000. One hundred fellowships are awarded annually. You can nominate an educator in your community for the 2012 Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Fellowship award on line. Go to <http://www.kohleducation.org> Pre-K through Grade 12 Wisconsin teachers must first be nominated by a parent, teacher, student, community member or administrator before they can apply. The purpose of the program is to recognize the contribution of Wisconsin classroom teachers.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS PLANNING UPDATE *(continued from page 2)*

Parish & School Development Seminars

Moving forward with the need for development as indicated in the strategic plan, the Office of Catholic Schools is pleased to sponsor a series of three development seminars facilitated by ISPD. These seminars will present the mission and techniques for starting and sustaining development efforts in parishes and schools. Parish staffs and school Enrollment Management and Development Teams (EMDTs) are encouraged to attend. Parishes and schools are encouraged to send teams of three or more. As new information will be presented in each seminar, teams should plan on attending all three seminars.

SEMINAR #1 Tuesday, October 4, 2011
• 6-8 p.m. St. Joseph, Baraboo
Wednesday, October 5, 2011
• 9-11 a.m. St. Maria Goretti, Madison

SEMINAR #2 Tuesday, November 8, 2011
• 6-8 p.m. in St. Joseph, Baraboo
Wednesday, November 9, 2011
• 9-11 a.m. Queen of Peace, Madison

SEMINAR #3 Tuesday, January 10, 2012
• 6-8 p.m. St. Joseph, Baraboo
Wednesday, January 11, 2012
• 9-11 a.m. St. Dennis, Madison (tentative)