



The Diocese of Knoxville

Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee

Catholic Schools Office

Catholic Schools Week 2017

Dear Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s):

As we begin this week in thanksgiving and celebration of our Catholic schools, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for entrusting your children in our care and for partnering with us in their education. I am grateful for the commitment you have made and am very aware that this commitment comes with sacrifice. I believe that the rewards of this sacrifice may not be fully realized in this lifetime, but are of eternal value.

I have to say I find certain enjoyment and a bit of irony while reviewing the activities and events planned by the schools during Catholic Schools Week. Some of them often seem contrary to our common practices and beliefs (e.g. things such as out of uniform or no homework days are opposite to the typical expectations of Catholic school academic rigor). In any case, these things are embraced with great joy, a joy described by Saint Paul in his letters as that good feeling in the soul produced by the Holy Spirit when we see the beauty of Jesus in the world.

Our Catholic schools are truly places where the message of Jesus Christ's love is proclaimed and celebrated. They are places of community and fellowship. They are also institutions of academic rigor and excellence where students learn the importance of service and ministry. This week gives us pause to celebrate the precious gift of Catholic school education through our students, our faculty/staff, our parents, our parishes, and our place in our community. Our schools will continue to strive to be faithful to our mission to develop scholars, leaders, and ultimately saints. This provides another opportunity to renew that commitment.

Our Catholic schools have the lofty aspiration to build the kingdom of heaven one student at a time, but first they are providing the gift of education to one student and the gift of hope to one family at a time. Thank you for being a part of our Catholic school families. Have a blessed Catholic Schools Week!

Because of Jesus,

Sister Mary Marta Abbott, R.S.M.

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Superintendent of Catholic Schools

