



NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION CONVENTION

'At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity'



Criterion staff report

After a year's worth of hard work and preparation, the excitement builds as the Archdiocese of Indianapolis welcomes more than 8,000 delegates to the 2008 National Catholic Educational Association Convention, Exposition and National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors Convocation on March 25-27.

It's the first time in the 105-year history of the association that the convention will be held in Indianapolis.

One of the city's nicknames—"the Crossroads of America"—serves as the heart of the theme for the convention: "At the Crossroads: Where Challenge Meets Opportunity."

"We really believe that the work of our catechists, teachers and administrators makes a difference in the lives of children, parents, our world and the Church," says Kathy Mears, an associate director of schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and a member of the convention's organizing committee.

"That work, however, can be challenging," she continued. "Our convention is going to address those challenges that are facing Catholic education because we believe that our faith-filled educational system is definitely part of the answer to issues that are facing our country and the world."

The convention is also committed to a "green" theme, recognizing the integrity of the Earth. Recycling and other "green" practices will be emphasized at the convention.

"This is one of the great challenges facing our Church and the world, and we want our teachers to understand and learn different ways to help make our students more environmentally aware," Mears says. "As Catholics, we want to make sure that we are leading the way in modeling how to be good stewards of the Earth."

More than 400 workshops and 500 educational exhibits will be available at the convention, which will be held at the Indiana Convention Center. The convention is open to anyone who works or is interested in Catholic education, including teachers, clergy, administrators, parents and students.

On March 25, Most Rev. Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of Cincinnati, is scheduled to concelebrate the opening Mass with the Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., and chairman of the

Students and faculty at St. Simon the Apostle School in Indianapolis are all smiles after being recognized as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005. Read about the archdiocese's outstanding track record in education on page 2. (Submitted photo)

NCEA board of directors.

On March 26, the Most Rev. Blasé Cupich, bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota, will deliver the opening keynote address.

On March 27, a keynote address will be delivered by Daniel Pink, author of *Free Agent Nation* and *A Whole New*

Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future.

Attracting the NCEA annual convention to Indianapolis is important and exciting, said Bob Desautels, a senior manager of convention services for the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association.

"This is a very prestigious convention," Desautels said. "You can't overstate the importance of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and specifically the Office of Catholic Education, in successfully conducting this convention."

Many local events are planned for convention week co-sponsored by the archdiocese and various partners.

On March 24, up to 50 delegates may travel to St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, the home of St. Theodora Guérin, Indiana's first saint, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. Tours of historic St. John the Evangelist Church in downtown Indianapolis will also be available.

On March 25, a reception will be held for 500 guests at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway sponsored by Catapult Learning, and a Sacred Sounds Concert will be held at St. John the Evangelist Church, featuring the musical talents of archdiocesan students.

Health Day will be held on March 26. Delegates will be able to "travel" through a model heart and learn how to be more heart-healthy courtesy of St. Vincent and St. Francis hospitals of Indianapolis. Free health screenings will be offered, and participants will also be invited to donate blood on site for the Indiana Blood Center.

March 26 will also feature a tour of Roncalli High School in Indianapolis for 40 delegates, and a free "Teachers' Night Out" at the Marriott Hotel Ballroom with music and dancing sponsored by QSP/Reader's Digest.

College Day is March 27 and features a special "Catechists' Track." College students and volunteer parish religious educators may attend all sessions, including special offerings for catechists for only \$25 (registered in advance). A reception for 300 will be held that evening at the

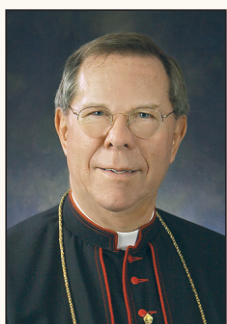
See WELCOME, page 3B

Welcome educators to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Dear Catholic Educators:

I extend to you the warmest of welcomes to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and its See City. We are excited and proud that you chose to hold the 105th Annual National Catholic Educational Association Convention here at the "Crossroads of America." I also welcome all the parish catechetical leaders who are here to take part in the National Parish Catechetical Directors Convocation.

Educators all, you are key to the future of our Church, and the future of our society. You have the privilege—and the serious responsibility—of shaping future generations.



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

Due to chemotherapy treatments I will be unable to attend the convention, but I will pray that your time in Indianapolis will be inspiring and that you will return to your local parishes energized in your commitment to be good stewards of our most precious resource: our children, youth and young adults.

I hope during your convention that you will draw inspiration from St. Theodora Guérin, who was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006. St. Theodora is truly a model for today's educators. St. Theodora came to the Indiana frontier in 1840 with five Sisters of Providence and almost no resources, but within a year she had established a motherhouse, a

novitiate and an academy and soon thereafter began opening Catholic schools throughout Indiana.

Let's pray that we continue to follow St. Theodora's wise counsel: "Love the children first, then teach them."

God bless all of you for all the good work you do and may God be with each of you this week!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein, A

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Archdiocese of Indianapolis schools set Blue Ribbon record

By G. Joseph Peters

When U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced the 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools in September 2005, 11 schools in Indiana received the award. Five of those were Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

An awards ceremony was held in Washington, D.C., in November. Two representatives from each school—the principal and a teacher—participated in the ceremony, and received a plaque and a flag signifying their school's Blue Ribbon status. Only 295 schools nationwide were honored for 2005, including 50 private and religious schools.

The story has been similar each fall for five years. Four schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received Blue Ribbon awards in 2003, six schools in 2004, five schools in 2005, six schools in 2006, and one in 2007 for a total of 22 awards in the past five years. Before 2003, eight schools had received Blue Ribbons under the former Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence (BRSE) program.

Since the first Blue Ribbon was awarded in 1985, 24 Catholic schools in the archdiocese have earned 31 national Blue Ribbons. There are 71 Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

Holy Family School in New Albany, Ind., received its second Blue Ribbon award in 2005. St. Jude School and St. Lawrence School, both in Indianapolis, and Cathedral High School, a private school in Indianapolis (2004), also have been honored twice. Roncalli High School in Indianapolis has earned the honor three times.

Schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis received more awards during the last five years than any other diocese. We believe that no other diocese in the nation has had more schools honored in the history of the national Blue Ribbon Schools program.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap or whose students achieve at very high levels. The schools submit an extensive application and are selected by a panel based on one of three criteria:

- Schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance on state tests.
- Schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent of their state on state tests.
- Private schools that achieve in the top 10 percent in the nation.

Encouragement to participate

Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director of Catholic education and faith formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was principal of St. Mark School in Indianapolis, the first school in the archdiocese to earn a Blue Ribbon in 1985, just after the first national program began.

As executive director since 1997, she has encouraged principals to participate in the

program as a way to have the excellence of their schools affirmed by a significant third party. She personally reviews and signs each application.

Dr. Ron Costello, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, noted that the performance requirements have changed drastically under the new NCLB Blue Ribbon Program.

In the former program, school performance was considered, but the final award was determined by evaluation of an extensive application that covered many areas and required an onsite visit to verify the application.

There is still an extensive application, but no site visit, and Costello said that "merely to apply, school performance must be improving dramatically, which is often difficult to measure, or the students' overall performance must surpass the 90th percentile in the state as measured on standardized tests."

Because all schools in the archdiocese are state-accredited and all students take the required ISTEP+ tests, the State of Indiana certifies private schools in the top 10 percent of all schools in Indiana as eligible to apply for a Blue Ribbon through the Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

Costello believes that his sharing of the eligibility information with schools has helped spur the number of applications in the past few years. There is now "... a great desire to participate and a healthy competition among the schools, which also involves a willingness to help one another through the process."

Expectation of high standards

Sister James Michael Kesterson, a Sister of Providence and principal of St. Jude Elementary School in Indianapolis, led the efforts to earn two Blue Ribbons for St. Jude School in 1996 and 2003.

In 2005-06, she gave four regional presentations in the archdiocese to potential Blue Ribbon applicants and helped two schools with their applications. She also served as a Blue Ribbon School visitor under the former Blue Ribbon program, and believes that she helps other schools by sharing what she learned on those visits.

As a longtime administrator, she said that the Blue Ribbon process has energized her, and she hopes to apply for St. Jude to receive a third Blue Ribbon.

Jerry Ernstberger is another two-time Blue Ribbon School principal at Holy Family School in New Albany.

He noted that Holy Family has earned the award under the two sets of criteria.

"The first award was recognition for high quality in several components of school life; the second is based more on our students' high achievement on standardized tests."

Ernstberger added, "I think there is an expectation of higher standards that comes with receiving the honor, especially the second time. Parents, teachers and even students realize that we have to be more accountable than ever because of the recognition we have received."

"So, we expect to work even harder and we have to be more creative and more collaborative. I think that attitude and commitment will promote continued success for our students," he said. "Parents make many sacrifices to provide the highest quality Catholic education and faith formation for our children, and the Blue Ribbon is a huge public recognition for them."

Joe Hollowell is the longtime president and former principal of Roncalli High School, and Chuck Weisenbach is the principal. They and the Roncalli team have sought and earned three Blue Ribbons, a record in Indiana.

"I believe that being selected as a Blue Ribbon School adds a level of credibility to any school's claims of excellence in academic and co-curricular programming," Hollowell said. "It is a credible third party—the U.S. Department of Education—confirming that a school has met a certain standard of excellence."

"The designation can't be purchased or won through glitzy advertising. When parents are looking at today's tuition costs, there is a new degree of scrutiny as to whether or not the investment made will pay dividends in the life of their children," Hollowell said. "The Blue Ribbon designation helps parents see past the school's public relations claims to detect the potential of a real return on investment for their children."

Hollowell added, "In 1993, the first year we received the Blue Ribbon recognition, our enrollment was 724 students. This fall, 15 years and three Blue Ribbons later, we began with an enrollment of 1,147."

Department of Education visits

For the past five years, Kristine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education regional representative, has visited each of the 22 schools in the archdiocese that earned a Blue Ribbon award.

She meets with administrators and teachers, visits classrooms and speaks to the student body at an assembly, affirming their Blue Ribbon status with a special certificate. She always stays to observe student prayers, performances and cheers.

This has been no small undertaking on her part with so many schools to visit and distances between schools that are 100 miles or more apart in the archdiocese.

The special events with Cohn allow the children to celebrate *their* achievement. It helps students to "... see themselves as part of a larger picture—a larger community," according to Lentz, who has accompanied Cohn on the many of the school visits.

Cohn told students and teachers at St. Michael School in Greenfield, Ind., that there are four things that make up a good school: "... committed community, excellent teachers, involved parents and great students. You are one of only 11 schools in the state to be honored as a Blue Ribbon school, which means that all those involved with the school have taken a leadership role to do what is right."

Former Indianapolis Mayor Bart Peterson proclaimed Nov. 7, 2005, as "St. Thomas Aquinas School Day" in the city in recognition of that school's Blue Ribbon.

In presenting the proclamation, the mayor said, "This means you're the best of the best. ... You have great teachers ... great involved parents ... the school is well-run, [and] each of you students works really hard every day to do your best."

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has experienced great success in having a large number of schools recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools over the years. This has not been because of a formal program, but through subtle encouragement, supplemented by healthy peer pressure and peer support in a demanding process.

Archdiocesan officials like to think that our archdiocesan curriculum improvement efforts have also contributed significantly to student performance. The new NCLB criteria for the Blue Ribbon start with a "gateway."

Archdiocese's national Blue Ribbon schools



Christine Cohn, U.S. Department of Education official, celebrates with St. Christopher students in Indianapolis after their school was named a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

2007

St. Pius X, Indianapolis

2006

Christ the King, Indianapolis
St. Bartholomew, Columbus
St. Lawrence, Indianapolis
St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
St. Monica, Indianapolis
Shawe Memorial High School, Madison

2005

Holy Family, New Albany
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Indianapolis
St. Michael, Greenfield
St. Simon the Apostle, Indianapolis
St. Thomas Aquinas, Indianapolis

2004

St. Barnabas, Indianapolis
St. Christopher, Indianapolis
St. Luke, Indianapolis
St. Mary, New Albany
St. Mary, North Vernon
Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

2003

St. Jude, Indianapolis
St. Louis, Batesville
St. Paul, Sellersburg
Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

2001

Holy Family, New Albany

2000

St. Charles, Bloomington

1999

Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School, Clarksville

1997

St. Jude, Indianapolis
Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1994

St. Lawrence School, Indianapolis

1993

Roncalli High School, Indianapolis

1988

Cathedral High School, Indianapolis

1985

St. Mark School, Indianapolis

Schools must pass through the gate—with high standardized test scores before any other criteria are considered. Schools need to know when they are eligible through good management and sharing of test data.

The Blue Ribbon brings public recognition, but also accountability and even higher expectations for performance. It places the school's achievements in a larger context—on a bigger stage. It is a great public "thank you" to parents who pay the bills, and it affirms their investment in Catholic education.

(G. Joseph Peters is associate executive director of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at jpeters@archindy.org. This story is adapted from an article in *Momentum*, the official journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, April/May 2006. Used with permission. Contact: Barbara Keebler, NCEA, at 202-378-5762.) †

Congratulations!

Annette "Mickey" Lentz

The 2008 Recipient of the F. Sadlier Dinger Award



This award recognizes Mickey's outstanding leadership and dedication to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for nearly five decades as classroom teacher, principal, archdiocesan administrator and, since 1998, serving as the Executive Director, Secretariat for Catholic Education and Faith Formation.

Named for the former Chairman of the Board of William H. Sadlier, Inc. in 1980 to honor his lifelong dedication to the Catholic Church and to catechetical ministry, the F. Sadlier Dinger Award recognizes a person whose work in catechetical ministry has had a significant and long-lasting impact.

Congratulations, Mickey, and thank you for your dedication to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Office of Catholic Education!



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana

Archbishop of Indianapolis guides nation at crossroads

By Ken Ogorek

Catholic education, in particular religious education, is at a crossroads of sorts.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis continues to help guide the authentic renewal of faith formation in schools, parish catechetical programs and various other settings for education in religion nationwide.



Ken Ogorek

A national leader

When the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* became available in the mid-1990s, our American bishops sprang in to action establishing their “Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.”

Simply put, this committee’s work has greatly improved the doctrinal content of textbooks and other resources used to teach religion in various settings.

Archbishop Buechlein was instrumental in this effort and continues to fill a major role in spearheading efforts to provide reliable materials for truly excellent religious education.

Our own Catechism

Archbishop Buechlein was deeply involved with the process that gives us our own *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*.

Why do we need an official American catechism?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* suggests that groups of bishops throughout the world produce local catechisms—articulations of the Catholic faith that accurately express the doctrines in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, yet communicate them

in ways that speak directly to people of specific regions, cultures and nations.

With Archbishop Buechlein’s involvement, our U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has blessed us with a great resource for adult religious education—a very important area of faith formation.

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, then, will guide teacher training, catechetical certification and overall adult religious education for decades to come.

Local leadership, national impact

In southern and central Indiana, Archbishop Buechlein has overseen the implementation of strategies for religious education that are in turn used by several dioceses throughout the U.S.

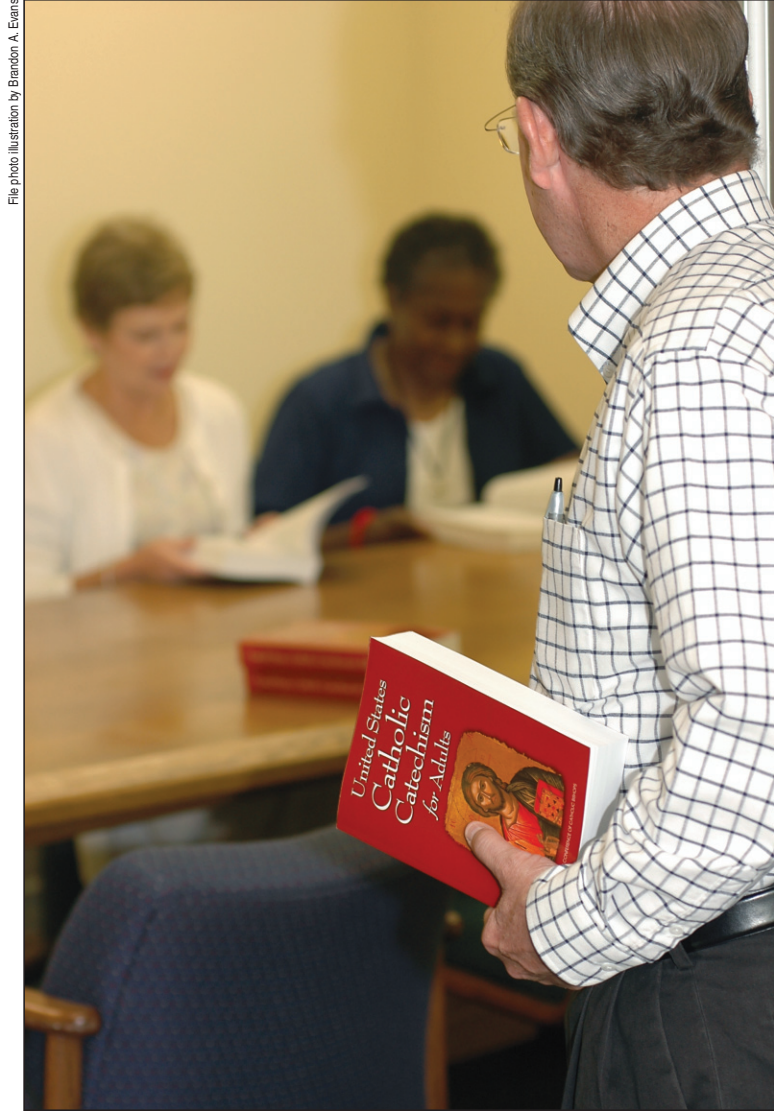
For example:

- Our Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guidelines, used both in schools and parish catechetical programs, answer the important question of “What am I supposed to teach?” in our archdiocese and several other dioceses.

- The Faith 2000 assessment instrument for religious education, developed by our Office of Catholic Education, provides helpful feedback in the area of faith formation—for school and parish programs—throughout southern and central Indiana as well as in dioceses other than our own.

Information on these and other resources is available on our Office of Catholic Education Web site, www.archindy.org/occe under Our Curriculum.

The *National Directory for Catechesis*—another document that Archbishop Buechlein helped to bring about—guides all of our Catholic education efforts from curriculum and assessment through approval of textbooks to teacher and catechist formation and



File photo illustration by Brandon A. Evans

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* (USCCA) expresses the doctrines contained in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in a way that speaks directly to American society and culture. Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis has been a leader in faith formation in the United States by helping guide the crafting of the USCCA and earlier leading the Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.

certification.

Decisions at a crossroads

From the late 1960s through the early 1990s, some methodological gains were made in religious education even if its doctrinal content wasn’t as clear as it could have been.

Without losing those gains, we have an exciting opportunity to bring greater clarity to Catholic education in light of documents

like the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Efforts like Archbishop Buechlein’s are meeting the challenges that can arise when courageous decisions must be made for authentic renewal to spur genuine progress.

(Ken Ogorek is director of catechesis in the Office of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. E-mail him at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Youth ministry in action: ‘Ding Dong, Ditch and Run’ builds community

By Rose Lehman



Several years ago, our youth team at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind., was looking for a way to show our appreciation to some elderly parishioners who had been very involved in the life and growth of our parish.

Thus was born the “Nativity Set Delivery” program or what is now referred to as “Ding Dong, Ditch and Run”—3DR for short.

For 10 days in the middle of December, one figure from a Nativity set and part of the Nativity story are delivered to parishioners’ homes one at a time. With each delivery, the Nativity story grows.

Each day, a group of youth and family members stop at the houses of the

parishioners. They ring the doorbell and run back to the car—“ding-dong, ditch and run.”

“It’s been such a joy when the doorbell rings to see what unfolds in the little packages,” said 3DR recipients Betty Jo and Gene Murphy.

“Initially, I heard people wondering what was going on,” commented Father Sonny Day, pastor of Holy Family. “People like the mystery of it.”

The youths have fun trying not to get caught, and the recipients have fun trying to catch them.

“It was really funny to see how all the senior citizens tried to catch us each night,” said youth participant Katherine Finn. “I think they enjoyed it as much as we did.”

On the last day, the youths and families deliver the stable and the Baby Jesus, along with cookies, and sing Christmas carols to those they have served.

The first year, Holy Family delivered Nativity sets to the

homes of two parishioners. Last Christmas, the program’s sixth year of existence, six sets were delivered.

Recipients say it brings both joy and meaning to the Christmas season.

(Rose Lehman is youth minister at Holy Family Parish in New Albany, Ind. For more information on youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, contact Father Jonathan Meyer, archdiocesan director of youth ministry, at jmeyer@archindy.org.) †



WELCOME

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Indianapolis Museum of Art sponsored by 11 colleges and universities in the region.

On March 28, a special symposium on urban education models will be held at the Convention Center. Details for all local events can be found at www.archindy.org/ncea or at the local hospitality booth at the convention.

The NCEA is the largest private, professional education association in the world, representing more than 200,000 educators serving 7.6 million students at

all levels of Catholic education—pre-school through college.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis reflects the NCEA’s commitment to faith-filled education. The archdiocese has 151 parishes serving more than 230,000 Catholics. Its 60 elementary and 11 high schools educate more than 23,000 students. Another 17,000 students are in parish religious education programs in 39 counties of southern and central Indiana.

Catholic schools in the archdiocese have also earned 31 national Blue Ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education, including 22 in the past five years, more than any other diocese. †

RCL Benziger

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Special to The Criterion

On the journey: Good schools to great schools!

and by modeling new methods for teachers to enable them to develop new skills.

Through a school improvement grant from Lily Endowment Inc. and supporting archdiocesan benefactors, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis implemented Project EXCEED, a comprehensive, measurable and sustainable initiative that has provided increased opportunities for academic achievement for more than 23,000 archdiocesan students. The project's three overarching goals are to:

1. Recruit, retain, develop and reward the best teachers and administrators.
2. Raise the level of students' performance and report their progress; and
3. Reach out to those students with special needs—those who have advanced capabilities, who struggle with traditional modes of teaching and learning, who use English as a second language or who fight to overcome the challenges of poverty.

Project EXCEED's success stems from the interrelated nature of the innovative programs and approaches.

Project EXCEED has led to true systemic change in the methods that educators use to reach students, the manner in which student and school progress is reported, and the way in which educators respond to results in central and southern Indiana's Catholic schools.

Key to the success of Project EXCEED was the piloting of TAP, the Milken Family Foundation's *Teacher Advancement Program*.

We all want the best possible education for our children, and research has shown that the single most important school-related factor for student success is having a talented teacher in the classroom.

Through Project EXCEED, the archdiocese works to ensure that all children receive the high quality education they need and deserve from well-trained and caring educators.

Better teachers

The Milken Family Foundation created the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), a bold new strategy to attract, retain, develop and motivate talented people to the teaching profession.

Because of its broad-based support, results and high demand, TAP is now operated by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET), a public charity.

TAP's goal is to draw more talented people to the teaching profession—and keep them there—by making it rewarding to be a good teacher.

TAP provides the opportunity for good teachers to earn higher salaries and advance professionally, just as in other careers.

At the same time, TAP assists teachers in reaching their highest potential by providing them with the opportunity to learn and practice better teaching strategies and by holding teachers accountable for their own performance.

TAP is based on four elements:

1. Multiple career paths.

Under the current system, the most common way for good teachers to increase their salaries is to become administrators. Unfortunately, this removes them from the classroom, where they often are most needed.

TAP allows teachers to pursue a variety of positions throughout their careers—career, mentor and master teacher—depending upon their interests, abilities and accomplishments. As teachers move through the ranks, their qualifications, roles and responsibilities increase, and so does their compensation.

This allows good teachers to advance in their profession while still functioning within a classroom setting.

In the archdiocese, TAP schools employ master and mentor teachers. These teachers work to support other teachers by providing appropriate professional development, helping to identify student needs, suggesting and assisting with appropriate strategies and interventions to improve student learning.

Photo by Mary Ann Woyden



Central Catholic School third-grade teacher Rachel Brubaker helps Cedric Georges with a reading assignment.

Jan. 10 at the Indianapolis South Dealey grade school. Cedric and his sister, Sabrina, a fifth-grader, moved from Cape Hallett, Hall, to Indianapolis last August with their mother, Rose Georges, and have excelled in their school work thanks in part to English as a New Language classes.

Performance Pay

The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) calls for pay for performance as one of its major elements. The TAP program has been implemented in 13 schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis through Project EXCEED and the plan is to implement the program in additional schools as funds become available.

TAP teachers are evaluated and rewarded based on performance standards for professional growth, classroom achievement gains and school-wide achievement gains. Student results are measured through the value-added assessment model developed by Dr. William Sanders, which determines growth in student achievement by measuring individual student progress from one year to the next, rather than just measuring one school against another.

Pay for performance, while controversial at first, has proven to be a very popular and effective incentive in the TAP Schools, and it is something that businesses, corporations and foundations are willing to step up and support.

Read more about it at: Performance Pay: A Case for Corporate and Foundation Support at www.archdiocese.org/nceapress.html.

Value-Added Assessment

Catholic educators are called now more than ever to be able to demonstrate that students are proficient and achieve more than a year's growth during a school year, because they attend Catholic schools.

William Sanders found that classroom teachers are the most important factor in achieving gains in student achievement. But, most standardized tests tell us little about how the teacher affects student achievement and growth.

The assumption of the value-added model is that for a student to show growth, the student must achieve a "gain score" that is greater than one-year's growth—value added.

This year the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will provide both growth and proficiency reports for all 67 archdiocesan schools so teachers can plan to modify instruction. It has been interesting to see high-performing schools show significant growth in performance, even though this is harder to accomplish when schools are already performing at very high levels.

The goal of all Catholic educators should be to demonstrate that they have achieved growth and proficiency for all students. Meeting this goal should help convince people about the value of excellent teachers in our Catholic schools.

To read more about teacher impact and value-added assessment of academic growth, please see Teacher Impact on Student Proficiency and Growth at www.archdiocese.org/nceapress.html.

(Adapted from an article in *Momentum*, the Official Journal of the National Catholic Educational Association, November/December 2006. Used with permission.) †

Archdiocese of Indianapolis recommended for district accreditation

By John Staughneser

Catholic education in the archdiocese recently received a special distinction when the world's largest educational community recommended that the archdiocese be approved for district accreditation.

"This is a major accomplishment for our archdiocese and our schools," said Amentie "Mickey" Lenz, the archdiocese's executive director of Catholic Education and Faith Formation. "We are quite pleased."

The recommendation means that the archdiocese will become just the third diocese in the country to receive district accreditation from AdvantED, the world's largest educational community that is "committed to advancing excellence in education."

"I think I can speak with confidence that all of us were extremely impressed with the quality of education being offered by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis," said Eddie Krenson, senior vice president of non-public school services for AdvantED.

As part of the accreditation process, Krenson led a quality assurance review team of 12 educators from across the United States that spent four days in February in the archdiocese.

The team visited schools, reviewed archdiocesan documents and met with more than 300 students, parents, administrators, teachers and business partners. In making its recommendation for district accreditation, the review team noted the strengths of the archdiocese's school system and also included a list of recommendations for continued improvement.

The strengths cited by the review team included the vision, leadership and commitment of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein to the success of Catholic schools in the archdiocese.

The review team also commended the way that the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Education uses professional development efforts to support teachers' growth and impact student learning.

Another strength is the way the archdiocese uses systems-wide data to improve schools and teach students. The review team also cited the leadership of administrators, teachers and staff throughout the archdiocese, including Lenz, Superintendent of Schools Ron Costello and the staff of the Office of Catholic Education.

"The archdiocese's commitment to continuous improvement was cited at an exemplary level," Krenson said.

The report from the review team also listed three major recommendations for the archdiocese. The first recommendation involved developing strategies to recruit and keep effective teachers, principals and administrators, with a special focus on

providing improved compensation, health insurance and other benefits.

The second recommendation called for the creation of a long-range, system-wide marketing plan to increase enrollment, support educational programs and promote the Catholic mission of the schools.

"More needs to be done," Lenz said. "We need to shout our identity of Catholic culture through the rooftops."

The review team also recommended developing funding strategies that would support new and existing programs, provide just compensation for employees and create equal funding for all schools.

The archdiocese will have two years to submit a report outlining its progress in meeting the review team's recommendations.

"The recommendations we made, we felt the archdiocese had already recognized as priorities," Krenson said. "When we look at these recommendations, what we're looking for is progress—a serious, authentic effort to address them. We have every confidence as a review team and as an organization that the archdiocese will take these recommendations seriously, and they'll seek ways to implement them."

The recommendations were not a surprise to Lenz.

"They all fell in the area of recruitment and retention of good educators," she noted. "We have been working on this area for a long time with, I think, good results."

"Plans really are in place for all of the recommendations. Some are in varying stages from others. Again, there were no surprises. We have two years to work on these recommendations."

Costello said the archdiocese has to continue to develop ways to showcase the strengths of its schools.

"We have a good message as to what happens when students stay in our schools," Costello said. "For kids staying in Catholic education, our graduation rate is very high and it helps the student to continue in post-secondary education."

For Lenz, the accreditation recommendation is all part of the archdiocese's efforts of striving to offer the best of Catholic education in this always trying to get better.

"I continue to be proud of the work we are able to do and are blessed to do," she said. "I have an excellent school's team for whom I am most grateful. They work hard and are totally committed to the mission of Catholic education in this archdiocese."

(For more information, see "Archdiocese of Indianapolis recommended for district accreditation" at www.archdiocese.org/nceapress.html.) †

Project EXCEED, Goal One: Recruit, retain, develop, and reward the best teachers and administrators

- Developed strategies for educators based on the four main principles of the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)
- Trained school staffs and implemented TAP principles in 13 schools
- More than 5,000 staff members participated in over 350 professional development activities
- Established a 52-hour Teacher Mentor Certification Program consistent with state standards
- Performance-based pay supported by 83 percent of staff from TAP payout schools
- Payouts valued at more than \$380,000 to 334 teachers
- Teacher payouts range between \$400 and \$2,900

Project EXCEED, Goal Two: Raise the level of students performance and report their progress

- Implemented value-added assessment model in all 67 archdiocesan schools
- 26 schools completed audits, developed school improvement plans and enhanced data collection
- Maintained growth in ISTEP test scores—20 percent higher than state average
- Demonstrated student performance on standardized tests increased over time
- Achieved a high school graduation rate of 97 percent (state average 75.5 percent)
- 56 schools achieved accreditation by the North Central Association, Advanced
- Archdiocese achieved NCA Advanced District Accreditation
- Total of 22 Blue Ribbon Schools in five years from US Department of Education

Project EXCEED, Goal Three: Reach out to students with special needs

- Achieved a 20 percent increase in the number of students served with special needs
- More than 669 participants attended 38 training sessions on topics related to special needs
- 222 teachers and principals participated in a Multi-sensory Reading course
- 22 schools received state-of-the-art technology, including new computer labs and classroom PCs
- Successful Latino Outreach programs in center city schools are now expanding to other schools

A new era of standards, assessment and accountability in Catholic education

Catholic schools have always been committed to providing strong academic environments, and administrators.

At the heart of this new attitude is what we have learned from the TAP experience that can be applied in other schools.

Project EXCEED has successfully transformed schools and individual students into achievers beyond their expectations. Goals have been set and met as students and teachers have succeeded and exceeded expectations.

These important experiences in the original 33 Project EXCEED schools have led to new aspirations for the future of Catholic school children in the archdiocese.

The future is bright, and it is with great hope and expectation that we are meeting the "challenges" at the crossroads."

(The full Project EXCEED report is available from Ron Costello, superintendent of schools, at rcostello@archdiocese.org. The Teacher Advancement Program and TAP are trademarks of the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. For more information, go to www.talentdevelopment.org/tap/whatsup.html.) †

Touching Hearts with the Gospel Message Three K-8 Religion Programs

Visit us at the NCEA 105th Annual Convention 6 NCEA Convention Booths 617-6341

Mother Theodore Catholic Academies vital to center-city education

"We carry out the mission of educating center-city school children not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic."

—Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

Special to *The Criterion*

As Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein's words resonate, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has long realized the vital importance of the ministry of Catholic education in the center-city.

In 2004, Archbishop Buechlein formed a consortium of center-city schools that were not economically viable to remain operating on their own. The result is the now-named Mother Theodore Catholic Academies (MTCA).

This consortium approach assists the schools in operating more efficiently by consolidating and coordinating such areas as finance, maintenance, school improvement, Catholic identity and marketing.

"It's not just [a sharing of] financial resources, but human resources," said Tony Watt, MTCA chairman of the board.

One of the goals of the MTCA is to extract the principal from non-academic tasks. There is now a team of three principals for the six schools with campus directors at each site. This change in governance has brought about great efficiencies, good stewardship of resources and the empowerment of educators to do what they do best.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, named for Indiana's first saint, St. Theodora Guérin, are Holy Angels Catholic School, Holy Cross Central School, Central Catholic School, St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy, St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Philip Neri School, all in Indianapolis.

St. Theodora was known for her dedication and selflessness in administering to the needs of others. Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are open to children of all religions, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. Our schools remain anchors to the neighborhoods they serve.

The Mother Theodore Catholic Academies are committed to closing the achievement gap for low-income and minority students. Our focus is to provide rigorous academic programs that will lead students to secondary and post-secondary education.

Our programs provide the foundation for ongoing academic achievement to students of diverse backgrounds:

- One-third of our families have annual household incomes below \$13,000.
- 75 percent of our students are of minority culture.
- 72 percent of our students are low-income and qualify for the school lunch program.
- 47 percent of our students are non-



**MOTHER THEODORE
CATHOLIC ACADEMIES**
Shaping Spirits, Minds, and Futures

Catholic.

Although our center-city schools have widened the gap in long-term performance growth compared to their public school counterparts, the archdiocese is committed to value-added assessment to bring even higher levels of account-

ability and performance into the academies. This method measures both achievement and the child's growth from one year to the next.

Several programs have been added to the MTCA's educational model to ensure the best education for our students.

• **The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)** provides our schools with a systematic approach to professional staff restructuring and evaluates the impact of

instruction on student achievement. (See the story on Teacher Impact on Student Proficiency and Growth on page 4B.)

• **WIC-R Strategies** (grades 3–8) enables students to become competitive academically through learning activities that build mastery in writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading.

• **Reading Mastery** teaches literacy skills to students in pre-school through grade 2.

• **Crecer** class addresses non-English speaking students, grades 3–8, who are new to the U.S.

• **Latino Support Services** are available at three of our schools.

• **21st Century Community Learning Grant** (Project RELATES) with focus on reading, enrichment in after-school and summer programs for the MTCA Schools.

• **GATTE** (Gaining Access to Tomorrow's Education).



Ruth Tinsley, principal of St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy and Central Catholic School in Indianapolis, helps pre-kindergarten student Chya Jennings with her classroom work in this 2006 file photo. Both schools are part of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies.

Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education set for March 28

If you are interested in learning more about the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies and other urban elementary school models from around the United States, please join us for the "Symposium on Catholic Urban Elementary Education" from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 28.

The symposium will be held at the Indiana Convention Center, following the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) Convention, which runs from March 24 through March 27.

The symposium fee is \$125 which includes the conference, continental breakfast and lunch.

(For registration information, call Sarah Ley at 317-236-1513 or 800-382-9836 ext. 1513 or e-mail her at sley@archindy.org. You can also go to our Web site at www.archindy.org/ncea/symposium.html.) †

- Provides tutoring and development of organizational skills.
- Helps middle school families and students transition to high school.
- Offers high school and post-secondary education site tours.
- Provides information regarding post-secondary education and career opportunities.

"Our approach is about providing a high-quality education with a strong moral base, which will lead students of all faiths and economic levels to secondary and post-secondary education," explained Connie Zittnan, director of MTCA.

"We want our students to be leaders in the community and role models for those who come after them."

Financial support for the MTCA schools has come from the archdiocese through the generous contributions of corporations, foundations and individuals.

(For more information about Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, please call Heidi Nightingale at 317-592-4067 or 800-382-9836, ext. 4067. E-mail her at hnightingale@archindy.org.) †

St. Theodora Guérin: A saint for Indiana and a role model for educators

Anne-Thérèse Guérin was born on Oct. 2, 1798, in France.

She was 24 when she entered the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir, France, a community that served as teachers and cared for the sick and poor.

The young sister was asked to lead a small missionary band of sisters to America to establish a motherhouse in the frontier Diocese of Vincennes in western Indiana.

Mother Theodore and five sisters arrived at their mission, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, on Oct. 22, 1840.

Mother Theodore would establish a motherhouse, an academy (now Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College), Catholic

schools and a legacy of love, mercy and justice that continues to this day.

She urged her Sisters of Providence to: "Put yourself gently into the hands of Providence."

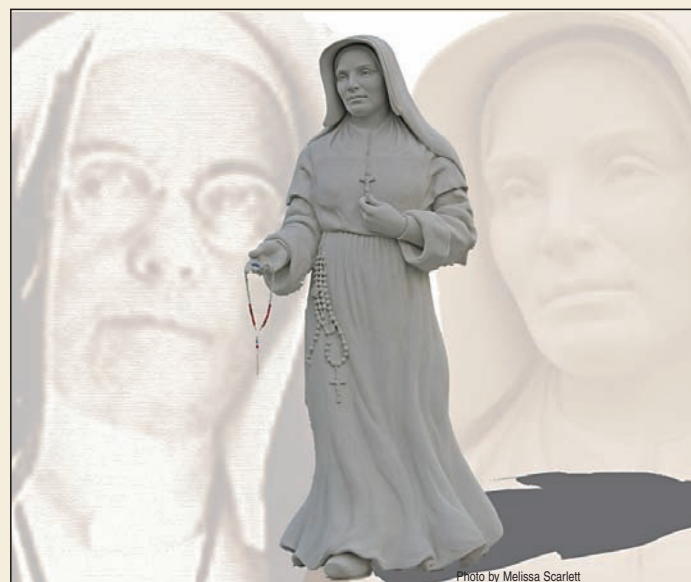
By the time of her death on May 14, 1856, Mother Theodore had opened schools in towns throughout Indiana and Illinois, and the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence was strong, viable and respected.

She was beatified in 1998 and was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on Oct. 15, 2006, in a Vatican ceremony witnessed by hundreds of Hoosier Catholics.

St. Theodora is interred in the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods near Terre Haute, Ind. †



**Indiana's
first saint**



A marble statue of St. Theodora Guérin, the foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, stands outside of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The statue was sculpted by Teresa Clark of Terre Haute and carved by Nicholas Fairplay of Oberlin, Ohio. The statue will be dedicated on May 10.

Photo by Melissa Scarlett

Hispanic outreach program serves needs of families

By Mary Ann Wyand

Educating Hispanic children also means helping their Spanish-speaking parents and other family members with English as a New Language (ENL) instruction.

Margarita Solis Deal, program coordinator of Hispanic outreach for the archdiocesan Office of Catholic Education, has created a series of bilingual classes to help Latino adults acclimate themselves to a new language and culture.

These evening classes held at Catholic schools with a large number of Hispanic students involve the parents in their children's learning environment and help build community among Latino adults who are newcomers in the parish.

"They want to learn English," Solis Deal said. "Although there are other [English language] courses available throughout the city, they feel much more comfortable coming to the school to get that resource."

This family support is especially important for student performance. Many Spanish-speaking parents express concern about not being able to help their children with homework assignments.

Terri Rodriquez, the principal at St. Philip Neri School in Indianapolis, said the school's ISTEP (Indiana Standard Testing for Educational Progress) test results last year indicated that students who did not achieve Level Four or Level Five in English proficiency on the Woodcock-Muñoz language scale also did not pass the ISTEP test.

Elizabeth Berkshire, the Catholic Charities Indianapolis social worker assigned to St. Philip Neri School, also works with Latino parents to help them understand the benefits of computers and dangers of the Internet as well as other cultural issues of concern.

Solis Deal began her bilingual ministry five years ago at center city grade schools in Indianapolis—which are now called the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—with initial program funding through Project EXCEED.

At the time, she coordinated English as a

New Language instruction for Latino students in the schools.

Now that many archdiocesan schools with a significant number of Hispanic students have added an ENL teacher to their staff as well as bilingual teachers, Solis Deal has been able to network more with school staff members throughout the archdiocese as an administrative resource.

"That was the time in which we were getting more and more Hispanic families into the Catholic schools," she explained, "so the archdiocese started this position to look at how we respond to the needs of the families. That essentially was my task."

Five years ago, she said, St. Philip Neri School's enrollment was about 25 percent Hispanic and St. Anthony School's enrollment was about 17 percent Hispanic.

"Currently, those school enrollments have exploded in terms of the percentage of Hispanic families," Solis Deal said. "St. Philip Neri School is now 93 percent Hispanic, and St. Anthony School is now about 70 percent Hispanic."

Recently, Solis Deal worked with staff members at Holy Name School in Beech Grove, St. Ambrose School in Seymour and St. Louis School in Batesville to help them with educational services for Hispanic students. She also talked with the principal at St. Lawrence School in Indianapolis about specific needs there.

Solis Deal presents a teacher orientation session titled "Welcoming the Latino Student into Your School: Things to Consider."

"I will go out and do workshops and training sessions," she said, "or work with the principals to see how they are getting their schools ready to support the Latino families."

"We're finding that the size of religious education programs increases tremendously in terms of working with the Hispanic population," Solis Deal said, "but many of the schools are still very limited [in resources]. The center city schools [in Indianapolis] receive financial support, but many schools in other areas [of the archdiocese] are challenged by the needs of



St. Philip Neri School students pose for an informal class picture on their way to lunch on Jan. 10 at the Indianapolis East Deanery grade school. Campus minister Mary McCoy stands in the hallway behind them. This year, 93 percent of St. Philip Neri's students are Hispanic. Five years ago, that figure was about 25 percent. English as a New Language programs and bilingual teachers are helping Latino students and their families acclimate to a new language and culture. (Photo by Mary Ann Wyand)

Hispanic families."

The former English as a Second Language program was renamed a few years ago, she said, to reflect the fact that many newcomers who immigrate to the U.S. already speak two or more languages.

"Someone from Guatemala speaks Spanish and may also know their Mayan dialect, their native language," she said. "Now they are learning a third language here."

It's also important to recognize cultural differences among Latinos who are English language learners, Solis Deal said. "We have people moving here from Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador. All these different people bring their own cultural traditions, and we need to be cognizant of that. We also work with the teachers on cultural awareness."

Last year, she developed six workshops for administrators and educators about teaching strategies for English language learners that also address cultural issues experienced by Latino families.

She said Hispanic parents who know very little English struggle with the

language barrier when raising their bilingual children and that creates stress in the home. Many parents also are working two jobs and have very little time to participate in English classes.

"That's a struggle that many [Latino] families face, especially when families come into the country with older students," Solis Deal said. "Sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade students come here and fit into their new culture quickly. They pick up the language and other new ways, and their parents don't understand how they do that."

Families who immigrate to the U.S. do so to seek better opportunities, she said. "They're coming here to make a living and support their kids to give them a better life. They want to put food on the table."

Because Latino cultures are very family-oriented, Solis Deal said, "when you accept an Hispanic student you also accept their family. It's really important to connect with the parents so they feel included in their children's education."

(For more information contact Margarita Solis Deal at msolis@archindy.org.) †

St. Mary's Child Care Center helps children reach their potential

Special to The Criterion

For more than 45 years, St. Mary's Child Center in Indianapolis has been a leader in providing a full range of services for children who are desperately in need.

St. Mary's Child Center believes that every child deserves a childhood that allows the child to be successful in early years, in school and as adults.

Through its programs, St. Mary's Child Center, in partnership with the family, enables children to reach their potential.

The Diagnostic Clinic at St. Mary's

provides evaluation and diagnosis of learning problems for more than 110 children ages 6-18 annually. A plan for school success is developed with the children's families based on the results of the evaluation.

St. Mary's Early Childhood Program provides direct services daily to 208 children age 3 to 5 who are impacted by poverty, abuse and violence. Transportation, nutrition services, social work services, play therapy and home-based family support is provided.

The program is of the highest quality. It is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and inspired by the pre-primary programs of Reggio Emilia of Italy, heralded to be the best early childhood program in the world by *Newsweek* magazine.

In addition, St. Mary's Child Center offers professional development opportunities to our community and beyond.

The Seminar Series introducing the Reggio approach is offered each semester, and one-to-one mentoring is offered to other programs serving poor children.

St. Mary's Child Center provides financial support for educators working with children in poverty.

St. Mary's is a member of the Indianapolis Reggio Collaborative (Butler University, Warren Township Early Childhood Program, Lawrence Township Early Learning Centers and St. Mary's Child Center) and participates in the Butler

Summer Institute, drawing educators from all over the Midwest.

Significant, positive, lifelong outcomes are experienced by children who participate in a high quality early childhood program, particularly children who face extreme barriers to development.

Research studies show compelling evidence that children involved in these programs have higher IQs, achievement scores and graduation rates. They are less likely to be retained, enrolled in special education or incarcerated later in life.

No child has ever been denied services at St. Mary's Child Center because a family is unable to pay. The clearly defined mission has the support of the entire community. Individual donors, foundations and the

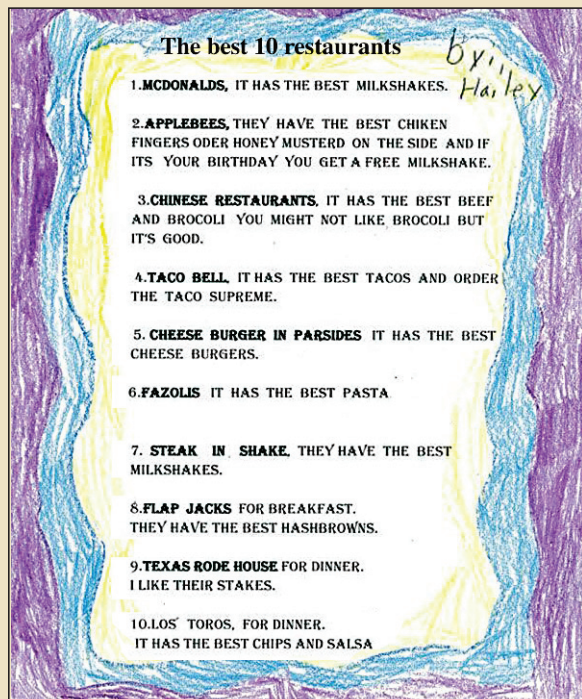
corporate community fund the programs.

Many of the largest companies in Indianapolis support St. Mary's Child Center and its approach to educating the whole child. Through the collaboration of these businesses, the leadership of the center and the archdiocese, St. Mary's is able to serve the neediest of children in the city.

These same businesses have extended their support to the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in the center city that also work to provide educational opportunities to the economically disadvantaged children of Indianapolis.

(For more information contact Connie Sherman, St. Mary's Child Center director, at csherman@stmaryschildcenter.org.) †

Children's restaurant review



Thousands of archdiocesan school children recommended their favorite restaurants to convention attendees.

FAQs About RCL Benziger

The merger of these three respected names—RCL, Benziger, and Silver Burdett Ginn Religion—is a significant moment in Catholic publishing. We want to share our enthusiasm and tell you a little bit about our new company.

Who owns RCL Benziger?

RCL Benziger is owned by CFM Religion Publishing Group, LLC. CFM also owns Standard Publishing in Cincinnati which is a non-denominational Christian publisher. However, the companies are independent and RCL Benziger continues to serve the Catholic market with Catholic materials. All our catechetical programs are submitted to the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee to oversee the use of the Catechism for conformity review.

Why is Silver Burdett Ginn Religion not in the new company name?

We regret that we must phase out the use of the name Silver Burdett Ginn. Pearson Education publishes other academic products under the Silver Burdett Ginn imprint.

What products will continue to be available?

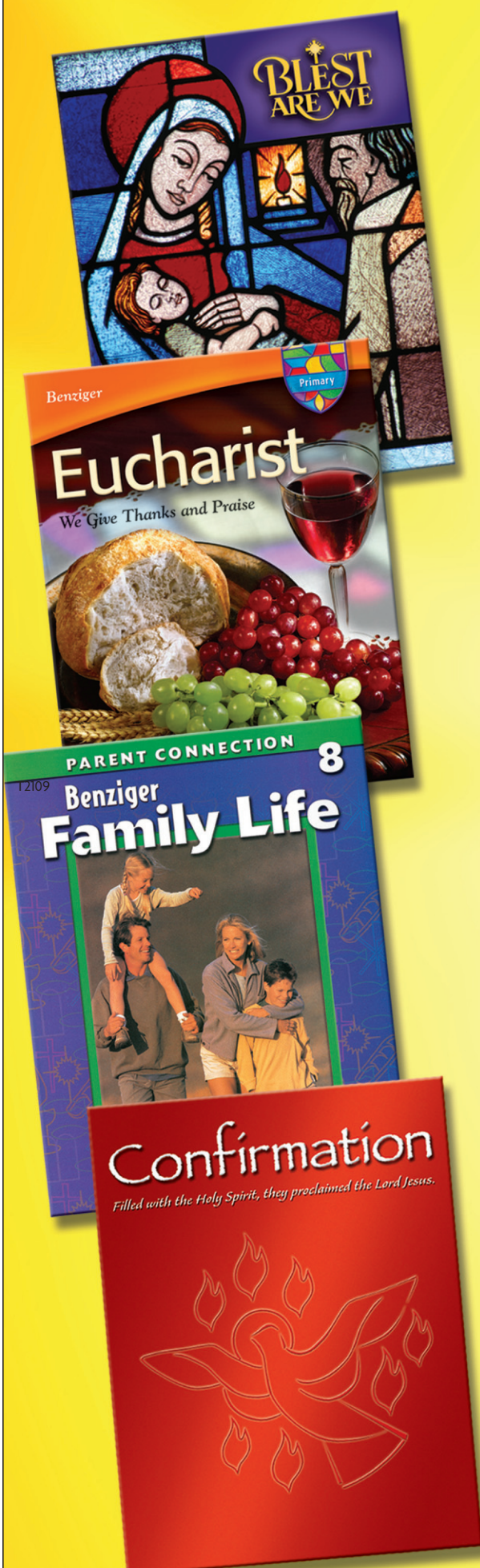
All the current product lines from RCL, Benziger, and Silver Burdett Ginn Religion are and will continue to be available. This includes all three K–8 series: *Blest Are We*; *Faith First*; and *Christ Jesus, the Way*.

Who is my local RCL Benziger sales representative?

You can find your local representative listed at RCLBenziger.com. Each sales representative is committed to providing you with the highest quality service.

How do I place an order?

For your convenience, you can now order materials from all three product lines by calling one toll free number—**1-877-275-4725**. Our customer service representatives are eager to help you.



Call toll free 1-877-275-4725
or visit RCLBenziger.com

Visit us at the NCEA 105th Annual Convention & NPCD Convocation booths 617–624!

