



CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 4
February - March 2008

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parents,

As I write this newsletter we are just beginning the second semester of the school year and simultaneously celebrating Catholic Schools Week. It becomes a natural celebration of a successful semester "under our belts" as well as a national celebration of Catholic Schools.

In talking with prospective parents about attending Catholic Central High School I am often engaged in a discussion about the impact that Catholic education will have on the future of their children. In other words, how will my child benefit in their adult life from being at Catholic Central? How will it be different than attending a public high school?

I can immediately refer to the statistics that 98% of the students at CC will go on to college (75% to 4 year schools), that the recent Michigan Merit Exam and ACT scores placed Catholic Central second in the Region out of 58 private and public schools, that students from the Class of 2007 were offered \$7.8 million dollars of scholarship money last year, and that Catholic Central was one of only 11 other Catholic high schools in the United States that was given the Top 50 honor for the 4th consecutive year. These are all academic achievements that can be quantified.

What is more difficult to quantify is how a student's adult faith life is impacted by being in a Catholic high school. I wanted to share with you some information from an article published in the January addition of the National Catholic Education Association's *NCEA Notes* that addresses this question.

A study by Perl and Gray (2005) found that those who were raised Catholic and attended Catholic high school are only 50% as likely to convert to another faith and only 44% as likely to switch to no religious affiliation than those who attended a public high school. The Catholic high school experience clearly diminishes the rate of future disaffiliation from Catholicism.

A recent survey by Gautier (2005) published in the *National Catholic Reporter* revealed a higher percentage of "highly committed" Catholics attended Catholic High School. Highly committed was defined as those who responded that the Catholic Church is the "most important or among the most important part of their life," that they attend Mass at least once a week, and indicated it is "highly unlikely that they would ever leave the church." The same study revealed other significant differences between those who had attended Catholic high school and those who had not, including the importance of the Catholic Church in their lives, the ability to explain the faith, their assessment of parish priests and their household income.

Another study done by Fee, Greely, McCready, and Sullivan (1981) found that attending a Catholic school was a predictor of higher levels of adult Mass attendance, communion reception, involvement in parish organizations, belief in life after death and opposition to abortion.

Clearly, Catholic schools make a difference and we are blessed to be in a community that sees the value of educating each student in Catholic spirit, mind, and body.

As you read through the information included in this newsletter please understand that successful communication between the school and parents relies on the communication going both ways. Our website and infinite campus have certainly improved our outgoing communication and should be checked regularly by parents. These

Important Phone Numbers

Main Office: 233-5899
Attendance: 233-5812
Guidance Office: 233-5810
Athletic Office: 233-5898
Business Office: 233-5976



Steve Passinault, **Principal**
Tom Maj, **Assistant Principal**
Heidi Clark-Smitley, **Director of Guidance**
Mike Neuman, **Athletic Director**
Kathryn Walsh, **Campus Minister**
David Sankovich, **Technology Director**

Principal's Desk Continued

electronic means of communication are being relied on to give you the most current information available pertaining to the school and its activities. As always we encourage you to communicate questions and concerns via email or phone whenever you have them.

As the Lenten season quickly approaches may you grow closer to God during this holy season as we can all look forward to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Our Savior.

Yours in Christ,

Steve Passinault

References

Fee, J.L., Greely, A.M., McGready, W.C., & Sullivan, T.A. (1981). *Young Catholics in the U.S. and Canada: A report to the Knights of Columbus*. New York: Sadlier.

Gautier, M.L. (2005, September 30). Does Catholic education make a difference? *National Catholic Register*.

James, John T. (2008, January). *Catholic school's impact on students' Catholicism*.

National Catholic Education Association, NCEA Notes. Volume 41, Number 3.

Perl, P. & Gray, N.M. (2005). *Catholic schooling and disaffiliation from Catholicism*. Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate CARA).

From the Assistant Principal

Construction Update:

Concrete on the parking garage begins January 29th with an expected completion date in mid-March.

Road construction on Wealthy east of Division begins in mid-March and will last through the summer. North bound traffic on Jefferson and LaFayette will be restricted during construction.

Construction on bus drop off located behind the gym off LaGrave is scheduled to take place during Spring Break.

Classroom cell phone disruptions continue. We will continue to confiscate phones and issue detentions. If you need to get a message to your student, please call 233-5812 and we will send a message to your student.

Sno-Shuffle Dance is February 16, 2008 from 8:30 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. Students are to arrive no later than 9:30 p.m. This dance is semi-formal. Everyone is to be in dress shoes. Ladies are to have modest necklines and dress lengths.

Congratulations to all students who have made the Honor Roll. These students and their parents should be proud of this achievement.

Just a brief **reminder about Spring Break** and school attendance: I am asking for your support of our policy requiring all students to be in school prior to and immediately after scheduled vacations.

This spring we will be having a **"lockdown" drill** during the school day. According to House Bill 4460 (Act 197, Public Acts of 2006) requires schools (K-12) to perform 2 drills in which occupants are restricted to the interior of the building and the building secured appropriate to an emergency such as a hazardous materials release (shelter in place) or intruder on or near premises (lockdown).

Tom Maj
Assistant Principal

From the Guidance Office

Please mark your calendar with the following Guidance events:

REGISTRATION

Monday, February 11- Registration Packet distribution for 2008-09 10th /11th /12th grades

Monday, February 18- Begin registration meetings w/ counselors; completed packets due

Each student will be given the 2008-09 Curriculum Guide. We ask that you review this guide and your student's choices carefully, taking into account your student's past academic achievements, goals for post-secondary education, and areas of interest. For most courses, teacher or departmental approval is required. Parent signature will also be required on the course selection form, and your student will meet with his or her counselor to finalize choices.

June 2008- Final course placement reviewed

Because we plan our staffing needs and master schedule based on student course selections, we cannot stress enough the importance of making these choices wisely, including alternate choices. We will not be able to accommodate requests for schedule changes in the fall unless there is a schedule conflict. Students are not permitted to drop a course once the semester has begun. Students need to be aware of the demands of the higher level courses and be willing to make a year-long commitment to these classes. Catholic Central is rightfully proud of its academic reputation, and we intend to challenge our students in order to insure their solid preparation for college.

If you have questions regarding course selections, please do not hesitate to email the guidance counselor who works with your student.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

March 11, 12 &13- ACT/MME registration & testing for all Juniors

It is most important that your student be in attendance all three days. For those interested, ACT preparation workshops are available. Please check daily announcements online at the Catholic Central website for further details.

February 9 OR June 14- ACT @ Catholic Central

Seniors who have earned the Michigan Merit Award will receive a letter from the State of Michigan asking about the student's college choice. The Merit Award money will be sent directly to the college.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITY

An informational meeting for summer opportunities available to Catholic Central students will take place Tuesday, February 29th in the cafeteria. More details to follow in the April newsletter.

Athletics

As we begin to wrap-up the regular season contests, and enter the MHSAA Winter Tournament season, check the schedules and go to a contest to support our Cougars. We have great kids and coaches working hard together to meet their goals.

Concessions Help Needed—We are in need of parent volunteers for the upcoming Girls Basketball Districts on Feb. 18, 20 & 22. Times for district games are 5:30 & 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 18 & 20 and 7:00 p.m. on Feb. 22. We will need 3 volunteers for each game. Please contact our Concessions Manager, Tricia Rikans at 233-5890 or triciarikans@grcss.org if you are able to help out.

Think **Spring!** Sign-up for Spring sports will be February 20 during lunch periods at school. Announcements will be made. Practices begin on March 10. **Your student must have a physical exam, dated since April 15, 2007, on file in the athletic office before they can participate in tryouts or practice.**

Summer Planning: Catholic Central coaches will not schedule any athletic activity from **June 28 to July 6, 2008**. No conditioning drills, no camps, no open gym—nothing! Facilities are closed.

Athletic schedules are available at www.grcatholiccentral.com. Go to “Sports”, then “schedule”. Information regarding MHSAA state tournaments is available at www.mhsaa.com. Take advantage of these information sources.

The CAT Fieldhouse is nearing completion. We will begin indoor workouts at this superb facility as soon as we take ownership. Please plan to attend the March 15 – **Big Blue Auction** event to have a close-up look at the Fieldhouse.

As we close out the **City League** this year, a special event is being planned to celebrate the history and tradition we have enjoyed for many years. Joel Passinault and Kevin Hubert represent CC on the planning committee. More to follow.

Coordination with our new conference, the **Ottawa-Kent (OK) Gold Division** is well underway. Gold Division schools are: CC, Forest Hills Eastern, Ottawa Hills, South Christian, Wayland, Caledonia, Middleville, and Hastings. Many of the 2008-2009 schedules are already on our website.

Undue Influence: In these days of “schools of choice”, Charter Schools, and Home Schools we ask each member of community to be aware of the issue of “undue influence” regarding student-athletes. The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Handbook, Rule 1, Section 10, states:

“The use of undue influence for athletic purposes by any person or persons, directly or indirectly associated with the school, to secure or encourage the attendance of a student, or the student’s parents/guardians as residents of the district, shall cause the student to be ineligible ...for a maximum of one year.” The school and/or coach can also be punished.

If you believe a student or family is interested in Catholic Central, please direct them to the Principal’s Office or the Guidance Office. Do not contact a Catholic Central coach, and by no means may you suggest or offer any incentive to a student or family.

Thank you to all the students and parents who have contributed to an atmosphere of “*Good Sportsmanship*” at our contests. As Cougars, we understand that the value of interscholastic athletics lies in preparing our students for a positive role in their Faith and their Community. Thanks to Senior students Sam Needham and Justin Harvey who organized the Blue Crew for winter contests and have helped keep a “civil” sideline. Good Sportsmanship includes loud and boisterous cheering for **our team**. Banners, posters, etc., in good taste, are welcome at our events. Sportsmanship does not include disrespect toward officials or opponents.

Thank you for your continued support. Help us challenge and expand the Spirit, Mind, and Body of our youth.

WEIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR SALE:

The PE Department is selling weight equipment. Please contact Mark Rasmussen (233-5826) or Tim Rogers (233-5891) for more information or to make an offer on the equipment.

Campus Ministry

Each year we end the month of January with Catholic Schools Week. The theme this year is **Catholic Schools Light the Way**. The Liturgy Planning Class planned the events for the week, emphasizing the national theme by adapting it to each day of the week. Monday was "Catholic Central High School Lights the Way." This day was an introduction to the week and a reminder of all the wonderful accomplishments of our school. Tuesday's theme was "Catholic Central: Our Faculty Lights the Way." We participated in the Diocesan Catholic Schools Mass at the Cathedral and recognized our faculty for all they do for the school. The teachers had a coffee break delivered to their first hour class. Tuesday night was Girls' Basketball against West in our gym. On Wednesday we celebrated Mass as a school with Father Louis Stasker, our Pastor-President. The theme for the day was "...Our Faith Lights the Way." Wednesday night the Fine Arts Presentation was given for parents. Thursday was the Fine Arts Assembly and "...The Arts Light the Way. Friday's theme was "... Our Students Light the Way" and we appreciated the students with a dress down day, and treat bags. The Athletic Department offered free or reduced admission to all home events throughout the week and liturgy planning provided us with "Music in the Halls" during 10 minute break each day!

At the end of the semester we once again total student service hours. Our students have now documented 14,307 hours of service for the time period from June 1, 2006 to Jan. 30, 2007. The individual totals are posted outside my office. Students can check them by grade level. I am always humbled by the busy lives our students lead and their ability to still find time for others. Numbers are not our focus in this program, but they help us to realize that our students (your children) are making an impact as Christ in the world.

Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent is February 6. This year is one of the earliest that Easter can be.

Our all-school Lenten project will be raising money for and learning about the work of Catholic Relief Services. CRS is the official international relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic community. They serve the poor in over 100 countries overseas through programs in emergency relief, HIV and AIDS, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. Most of us are familiar with their Operation Rice Bowl Program. Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten Program of Catholic Relief Services. For 33 years, Operation Rice Bowl has called participants to pray with their families and faith communities; fast in solidarity with those who hunger; learn about our global community and the challenges of poverty overseas, and give sacrificial contributions to those in need. These goals will be our community's goals for the Lenten season. In various ways we will Pray, Fast, Learn and Give in community with those in need around the world.

We will offer our All-School Lenten Reconciliation Service on March 5, students will have the opportunity for individual confession on March 6 through Religion classes, Stations of the Cross will be on March 19 and we will celebrate Easter on Easter Thursday, March 27.

For those who look forward to StarSearch, our annual Talent Show sponsored by Peer Ministry, **applications for auditions will be available the week of February 25. Auditions will be March 25 and 26. StarSearch is May 9.** More on that next newsletter.

I hope you will find time to observe the season of Lent with your families – I will pray for the grace of God to enrich the lives of everyone in the Catholic Central community. God Bless.

ATTENTION JUNIOR PARENTS:

Mark your calendars for the Junior Parents Class Party.

When: Saturday, February 9. Where: Tavern on Kraft. Time: 7:30 p.m.

Questions? Please call Randi Wilson (682-9218) or Mary Hendrickson (957-9424).



PLEASE NOTE ~ Calendar Correction:

There has been a change to the February Parent-Teacher Conferences—
Conferences will be Tuesday, February 19th & Thursday, February 21st.

Conferences will run from 6:00-9:00 p.m. each evening.

The conference mailing with sign-up information will be mailed home on Feb. 8th.

CSS Special Events ~ Alumni/Friends

CACHE DINNER EVENT—MAY 8

If you have not place the Caring About Catholic High School Education Dinner on your calendar, you need to do so now. On May 8th, the Catholic Secondary Schools will be hosting a dinner event with Bill Barkeley as the featured speaker. As you may know, Bill was on the cover of the December Faith magazine and his incredible story was told inside. Bill, a 1980 grad of Catholic Central, has such an amazing and inspirational message to share; that you won't want to miss this opportunity to hear him speak. Look for more information in the April newsletter regarding tickets and reservations. Plan to fill a table and be a part of this awesome event.

CATHOLIC BUSINESS DIRECTORY

If you have not yet submitted your ad information to the Catholic Business Directory, you have until February 15 to do so. There will be no new listings taken after that date. Please don't miss this opportunity to advertise your business to the Catholic community. The directory will be published this Spring and will be distributed to Catholic school families, parishes and advertisers.

Please consult the www.gress.org website Alumni/Friends tab for information and an application.

The Brian Bush Award

Enclosed in this newsletter, you will find a nomination form for the Brian Bush Award.

Every year, Catholic Central, with the support of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Bush, offers The Brian Bush Award to a member of the Freshman Class. This award is given annually to a freshman that exemplifies high Christian ideals, has experienced positive academic growth, sees Christ in others and appreciates family. This award was instituted for the 1989-90 school year in memory of Brian Bush, who passed away in 1989 during his freshman year.

This award is considered an honor to those who receive it because it recognizes those characteristics that Brian lived by during his time here at Catholic Central..

If you would like to nominate someone from the Freshman Class (Class of 2011), please use the enclosed form and return it to Catholic Central by Friday, March 14, 2008. A committee of freshman teachers will review all nominations and choose the winner who will be announced at the Honors Convocation in May.

Catholic Education Tuition Assistance Program Timeline 2008/2009

February 1, 2008

Distribution of PSAS forms begins at schools and parishes in the Diocese. The PSAS forms will be available in English and Spanish.

March 14, 2008

Completed PSAS forms with appropriate documentation from families must be postmarked no later than this date and sent to the PSAS offices.

May 15, 2008

By this date, PSAS will notify all schools of the tuition assistance awards granted to students/families in their parish/school. Parents will be notified of the status of their application—award or no award.

We Care News

We Care is proud to present **Jeffrey Freed, M.A.T.** from Evergreen, Colorado. Jeffrey is an educational consultant, therapist and author of the best selling book ***“Right-Brained Children in a Left-Brained World”***. Jeffrey has been featured on TV, radio and newspapers around the world.

Right-brained learners are people who process the world in visual images. Our children are growing up in a culture which is predominately right-brained and visual – TV, XBOX, computers and the internet. Visual learners are often described as:

- Creative
- Been told they need to work harder
- Thinks outside the box
- Disorganized
- Good with people
- Underachieving

Research shows at least 65% of our student population learns best using visual techniques. It is important to understand the way your children think in order to nurture and support them. Come and learn about this right-brained, visual learning style on Wednesday, March 12th at 7 p.m. in the Catholic Central Cafeteria.

**BIG BLUE
FIELDHOUSE**
Grand Opening & Auction Party
 6:30pm March 15 @ The CAT www.grcatholiccentral.com

Fieldhouse Opens With “Big Blue” Grand Opening Auction Party

Catholic Central families and friends will celebrate a new era of athletic accomplishment with the **Big Blue Fieldhouse Grand Opening Auction Party** March 15, 2008 at the CAT.

The Big Blue Grand Opening Auction Party will be the inaugural event at the new CAT Fieldhouse. The party will offer food and fun in the brand spanking new Catholic Central Fieldhouse. Big Blue Auction Partiers will be the first users of the new Fieldhouse, and a highlight of the evening will be exciting silent and live auction items, as well as fun games and raffles. All proceeds from the Big Blue Auction will be used exclusively at Catholic Central for building projects, unfunded equipment and program needs and the tuition assistance program.

Auction guests will tour the new 36,000 square-foot practice gymnasium which features multiple courts with improved side and end lines, a three-ring indoor track, increased equipment storage and a high energy efficiency structure. The new gym will allow Catholic Central to increase the amount of scheduled practice times, and centralize most athletic practices to one geographic facility.

Tickets for the Big Blue Grand Opening Party are \$25 per person, and include admission, themed food stations, and desserts. A cash bar will be available. For ticket information, contact Kim Melcher at (616) 241-0528.

Donate A Gift

Yes, I will happy to provide the following auction item or cash donation to the Big Blue Fieldhouse Grand Opening Auction:

Gift Name	
Gift Description	
Approximate Value of Gift \$	
Donor Name(s)	Contact Phone

Please return this completed form to the Catholic Central School Office. Contact Carol Hickner (957-2359) with questions

ACE RAFFLE—Advancing Catholic Education

One ticket is good for 3 drawings!! Preliminary drawings will be held on **February 29 and April 25**. At each drawing, the winner will receive a \$1000 tuition credit to Catholic Central, West Catholic or any of the partner Catholic elementary schools. On May 8, at the CACHE Dinner Evening, the Grand Prize winner will win their choice of either a 2008 Toyota Prius (hybrid vehicle) or 4 Years of Free Tuition at Catholic Central or West Catholic.

Tickets are \$100 and may be purchased by calling Ces (233-5976) or by filling out and returning the attached order form. Information is also available on the websites.

You will want to buy your tickets soon to be included in ALL of the drawings.

ACE (Advancing Catholic Education) 2008 RAFFLE

TICKET ORDER FORM

SPONSORED BY THE CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF GRAND RAPIDS

**GRAND PRIZE DRAWING TO BE HELD*

*MAY 8, 2008 AT THE CACHE DINNER/SPEAKER EVENING * NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN*

Proceeds benefit West Catholic and Catholic Central High Schools

Grand Prize - 2008 Prius (hybrid vehicle) or 4 Years Tuition

February 29 Drawing - \$1,000 Tuition Credit to Catholic Central, West Catholic or any of our Partner Catholic Elementary Schools.

April 25 Drawing - \$1,000 Tuition Credit to Catholic Central, West Catholic or any of our

Three Chances to Win Prizes

*Please return this form and your check or money order for \$100 each ticket payable to: Catholic Secondary Schools, Attn: **ACE Raffle**, P.O. Box 327, Grand Rapids MI 49501-0327*

NAME

PHONE

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

CHECK ENCLOSED

PLEASE BILL MY CREDIT CARD: (circle one)

Discover

MasterCard

Visa

American Express

Card Number _____ **Expiration Date** _____

No. of Tickets @\$100 _____ **Total** _____

Signature _____

CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Brian Bush Life Award
Nomination Form

Criteria:

1. The student must be in ninth grade and registered for the tenth grade.
 2. The student is to have given service to the Catholic Central community, the Grand Rapids community or both.
 3. It is expected that this student would exemplify the highest of Christian ideals. A gentleness of spirit, an understanding that all people are children of God will be evident in this student's approach to other people.
 4. The student will show positive academic growth in his/her freshman year. The student does not have to maintain a high grade point average but rather shows continued improvements in his/her work throughout the school year.
 5. An enthusiasm for life should be evident in this student's attitude and manner. An understanding of Christ's existence in each of us influences this person's approach to others.
- A genuine appreciation for family should come through in this student's life. Knowing and understanding the necessity of family support is essential here. The student should evidence this in his/her activities and priorities.

I nominate _____ for the **BRIAN BUSH LIFE AWARD**.

My reasons for this nomination are:

In my opinion _____ is a worthy candidate for consideration.

Signature

Date

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

_____STUDENT____TEACHER____PARENT____PRIEST/MINISTER____FAMILY FRIEND

Please return to the Catholic Central MAIN OFFICE by Friday, March 14th