



CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2
October-November 2007

From the Principal's Desk:

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your participation and support of the many fall activities that mark the beginning of a new school year. You have helped us get off to a great start. In my visits to classrooms I am reminded of the great things that are happening in these buildings. The combination of the intellectual curiosity of your students and the faith-filled dedication and knowledge of our staff opens up wonderful opportunities for learning and spiritual growth.

As I briefly mentioned in my Open House address, the students at Catholic Central scored extremely well on the Michigan Merit Exam. Catholic Central students placed at or near the top of the regional Michigan Merit Exam (MME) scores in all categories as reported by the Grand Rapids Press. The MME tests students in their junior year of high school and includes the ACT test as well as individual tests in the areas of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

The new MME is also used to determine if students in the state of Michigan qualify for the \$4,000 Michigan Promise Grant and when they are eligible to receive the grant money. Under the new MME guidelines, any student who takes the exam is eligible for up to \$4,000 for college or technical training. Those who meet or exceed state standards in all categories receive part of the grant money up front. Students who do not meet the standards in all categories will receive the grant money after completing one or two years of higher education.

Student test scores from Catholic Central's current senior class were at or near the top of the West Michigan regional school scores reported in all five categories. The regional report included all 58 private and public schools in Kent and Ottawa Counties. Catholic Central student's composite ACT score of 23.4 ranked second in the region. In the various subject areas, Catholic Central ranked first in the region in English (87%), ranked third regionally in Social Studies (98%), ranked fourth regionally in Science (85%) and ranked sixth regionally in Math (84%). The percentages in each subject area indicate the percentage of students that met or exceeded state standards. A composite ranking placed Catholic Central second overall amongst the 58 regional school score reports.

We believe strongly that alongside our mission of helping students grow in their faith the goal of providing excellence in academics will prepare our students for higher education. Spread the good word to your friends and neighbors who may be interested in Catholic Central. Parents can be our best recruiters. I believe that families throughout West Michigan are recognizing the value of a faith-based education that will prepare their students for college success. This year's incoming freshman class of 228 students was the largest freshman class to enter Catholic Central in six years.

In addition to the academic successes we continue to seek ways to provide opportunities for students to grow in their faith. On September 21st Fr. Stasker joined a group of parents, staff and students to celebrate the opening of the Adoration Chapel. On Mondays and Fridays from 7:45 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. we have the opportunity to pray in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament through the practice of Eucharistic Adoration. Through Religion classes or study halls students may have the opportunity to participate in Eucharistic Adoration and we welcome parents to join us on those days as well.

On Wednesday mornings students are now provided the opportunity to participate in Morning Prayer and Muffins a before school prayer opportunity led by Mark Postma (I.H.M. Youth Minister) and Jeff Duba (C.C. Religion Teacher). Students who would like to participate should meet in the chapel at 7:15 a.m. and will be finished at 7:50 a.m. Please encourage your student(s) to participate.

A strong school relies on excellent communication between parents and the school. As technology has evolved it is important that you use the electronic opportunities available to you to stay abreast of current information pertaining to the school and your students. Please bookmark our website grcatholiccentral.com for the latest news and events that are happening in this vibrant school community and also make sure that you are checking Infinite Campus regularly to stay on top of your child's progress in the classroom.

As always, I thank you for your prayers and support.
Yours in Christ, Steve Passinault

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

From the Assistant Principal

Construction update:

On September 24, 2007 the parking lot used by seniors will be closed for construction of a new parking structure. The structure is expected to be completed by January and will offer more parking for seniors and others.

Parking is available off of Wealthy and Sheldon (The Fish Lot). The parking lot used by juniors and sophomores will accommodate more cars and other facilities will be made available for as many drivers as possible.

Students who can car pool are strongly encouraged to do so.

On September 25, 2007 a construction update will be given by the City regarding their several projects that will affect Catholic Central. I will provide updates on our website as I learn of them.

Road works is expected to begin on LaGrave south of Goodrich to Wealthy on Oct. 1st

Due to construction and bus parking, there is no parking along Goodrich in the afternoon. Please adhere to the "No Parking—Except Buses" signage.

Parents can link to www.grand-rapids.mi.us for updates on road construction/city updates and road closures.

Attendance

Please contact Lisa Doyle 233-5812 by 10 a.m. if your son and/or daughter are absent. For appointments during the day, we can have your son or daughter waiting to be picked up with prior notice. You may call in the morning or drop off a note for appointments.

National Merit Scholarship Competition

Seniors Margaret Kennedy, Shannon Moran and Joseph VanderZee have been named Semifinalists in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Competition. A total of 34,000 Semifinalists were recognized for their exceptional academic promise nationwide.

Smartboards

CC recently added two SmartBoards for classroom use. SmartBoards are interactive white boards that allow for the full range of computer applications to be integrated into a classroom setting. In addition to a data projector, a SmartBoard allows the teacher to make notes on any screen from photos to video and from PowerPoint presentations to spreadsheets. Notes written in the SmartNoteBook program can be saved for students that are absent. SmartBoards help to bring the power of the computer into the classroom environment from virtual dissections to aerial photography and from interactive graphing calculators to classroom web/flexcam videos. (contributed by Matt Harold, CC' Math Instructor)

Both Matt Harold and Jeanine Gasper are using SmartBoards.

Research Class

This first class of students worked with their mentors this summer.

Shannon Moran mentored by Dr. Richard Schwartz, MSU topic: Crohn's disease. Hanh Pham mentored by Dr. Jonathan Levine, U. Chicago, topic: Meteorite slices. Caroline Armbruster mentored by Dr. McInnis and Dr. Saunders, UM; topic: Bipolar disorder. Margaret Kennedy mentored by Dr. Kevin Foley, St. Mary's Hospital; topic: Memory Disorders. Margaret has also been invited to present her findings to the State Bar of Michigan. Katherine Fatum mentored by Dr. Bennink, MSU; topic: Colon cancer. Robert Campau mentored by Dr. Indrek Wichman, MSU; topic: Design and construction of a limiting oxygen index apparatus. Jessika LaPres mentored by Dr. Owen-DeSchryver, GVSU; topic: Autism. David Gostine mentored by Dr. Norman Hord, MSU; topic: Nutritional omics/colon cancer. Michael Fitzgerald mentored by Dr. L. Karl Olson, MSU; topic: Secretion of insulin. Lorene Dreisbach mentored by Dr. Barbara Felt, UM; topic: iron deficiency and neurological behavior. Kevin Green mentored by Dr. Kelly Mix, MSU; topic: child development. Emily Anthon mentored by Dr. Martin Crimp, MSU, in conjunction with the Max Planck Institute fur Eisenforschung, Germany; topic: deformation path. Josh Underhill mentored by Dr. Troy Giambernardi, Van Andel Institute and Dr. Suganthi Sridhar of the Cook-DeVos Center; topic: prostate cancer. Killian Burns mentored by Dr. Jeffrey Wilson, UM; topic: analysis of the relationship between dinosaur families. Maggie Stein mentored by Dr. Linda Selwa, UM; topic: Neurology/epilepsy. Ann Schumar mentored by Dr. Weber and Dr. Brian Duncan of the Cleveland Clinic; topic: heart implants for children. Mary Nguyen mentored by Dr. John Monnier, UM; topic: fiber optic system for telescopes.

From the Assistant Principal

Religion Department

This past summer Catholic Central's religion instructors attended seminars at Notre Dame and the Acton University.

Dave and Mary Koss attended a conference on the new Catholic religion curriculum, and the spiritual needs of students. They heard addresses by Fr. Donald Senior, former President of the Catholic Theological Society, Bishop Blasé Cupich and Gerry Straub

Bob Kennedy and Jeff Duba participated in the Acton University Summer Institute. Topics covered included "Culture, Consumerism, and the Market", "Christian Approach to the Environment", "Freedom and Virtue" and more. World renowned lecturers lead discussions that challenged both intellectually and spiritually.

The duties of faculty members are many and varied. Teaching is the foremost responsibility of our faculty, and so we appreciate our faculty staying current in their disciplines by participating in scholarly professional development. Their own education will redound to the benefit of our students.

Campus security

The campus is locked throughout the day. Parents may enter via the front door intercom.

Thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation during construction. We're excited to be a part of the Cathedral Square Project reaffirming our Catholic presence in the heart of Grand Rapids

Student Activities Update

Greetings from Student Activities!!

Our year is off and running! We have been quite busy trying to keep your students active and apprised of all the activities and goings on! October promises to be just as busy so here is a list of events and opportunities in which your student can participate:

Freshmen First Day—Thursday October 1st —An excellent retreat allowing your freshmen to get know others in their class. This religious retreat is run by senior volunteers and the Religion Department and help right here at CC!

Sophomore Community Day—Monday October 1st —Sophomore retreat that builds on the foundation of Freshmen First day. Part of the religious retreat program, these small group sessions are supervised by the Peer Ministers.

Junior Experience—Monday October 1st and Tuesday October 2nd — Juniors experience team building. Setting for the opportunity to appreciate the gifts and talents God has given to us all.

All A's Walk—Wednesday October 3rd —This student fundraiser helps fellow students attend CC. Please encourage your student to donate to this worthy cause through can collections, babysitting, mowing lawns, etc. and donating their earnings to the All A's fundraiser or through sponsors.

Freshmen Student Congress Candidate Elections—Thursday October 11th —Any Freshmen interested in representing their class on student congress will have a chance to present themselves to their classmates. Voting will follow the next day.

Fall Choral Concert—Sunday October 28th—Make plans now to attend! Our choirs always put on a good show!

If your student missed the Club Sign-up during lunch in September and would still like to join an organization—have them stop by room 504 or 510 before or after school and we can help direct them to the appropriate club advisor and meeting times.

Hope to see you at many of our October events!

Mary Hanks and Jeanine Gasper
Student Activities Co-Coordinators

From the Guidance Office

Catholic Central's annual Testing Day will take place on Wednesday, October 17. Students should come prepared for testing; they will need No. 2 pencils, their Social Security numbers and their calculators. The cost of these tests is included in tuition; Catholic Central students will not be charged any additional fee. Dismissal will be at noon for Freshmen, Sophomores and Juniors. Seniors are strongly encouraged to use this day to visit a college campus.

The Freshmen class will be taking the EXPLORE test – with subtests in Reading, English, Mathematics and Science Reasoning. Individual results are an important factor in appropriate placement of students into sophomore classes, and the class results will be helpful to teachers planning curriculum improvements. Scoring on the EXPLORE test is linked with the sophomore PLAN test, and the ACT college admissions test.

Our standardized test for Sophomores is the PLAN – a test designed to mirror the ACT Assessment taken for college admissions. The scores are primarily used as a career and educational counseling tool. In addition to test sections in English, Math, Reading and Science Reasoning, students respond to some career interest questions and will receive career information along with their scores.

Juniors will take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), which gives them an opportunity to experience the testing format and questions of the SAT. The PSAT is also a scholarship exam (NMSQT); The National Merit Corporation will use these scores to identify National Merit semifinalists next fall. For juniors who consistently score in the 90th percentile for standardized tests, they may want to consider registering for a PSAT prep workshop series October 2,9,16 at CC, 3:15-4:30 pm. Cost is \$50 and includes Barron's workbook. Juniors must register with Mrs. Smitley in Guidance by Wednesday, Sept. 26.

As in past years, we will offer the opportunity to a limited group of sophomores to take the PSAT on the testing day. In order for us to obtain accurate school-wide data, these students will also be required to take the PLAN test, which will given again for them on Friday, October 29. In other words, they may take the PSAT in addition to, not instead of, the PLAN.

We recommend the PSAT for sophomores who may be potential candidates in the National Merit competition as juniors; that is, if they are a student whose test scores would place them in the top percent (99th percentile) of students nationally. The counselors explained this option to the sophomores when they visited classrooms during the last week in September. Sophomores who typically score above the 90th percentile on standardized tests and who are in honors level courses in both English and Math may want to consider taking the PSAT. While they would not be eligible for the scholarship competition this year, the test would serve as a practice for when they take it again during their junior year. The PSAT is designed for students who are juniors, so sophomores would feel prepared for this test if they are advanced in their math curriculum, and are very strong in reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.

In order for a sophomore to take the PSAT, they need to see their guidance counselor by October 10 for pre-approval; they must also have an authorization form signed by a parent, and they must agree to come to school on October 19 to take the PLAN.

Seniors are encouraged to complete their college applications before December 1, for optimal consideration in the admissions process and for scholarship opportunities. Information and reminders for seniors are communicated in the Daily Announcements and on the CC website.

Wanted:

Study Hall classes are looking for previously read, timely issues of school appropriate magazines for use in class. Please drop off any magazines to the Main Office.

We Care News

WE CARE provides safe experiences for the students of CC and encourages networking between parents. Experience has taught us that when parents know each other, kids are safer. Plus the parents have fun too.

This edition focuses on the education activities.

Parenting teenagers is tricky business, and we can all benefit from the shared wisdom of experienced parents and experts. The education committee works to facilitate this sharing of knowledge.

This year started with the freshman orientation. As part of orientation, parents gathered in smaller groups to meet each other and begin the sharing of wisdom.

Shortly after school started, parents gathered during the Peer Ministry dance for a presentation by Sen. Bill Hardiman.

In addition to his duties as state Senator, Mr. Hardiman serves on the Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking. He reminded the large audience that preventing underage drinking is everybody's business--not just parents and not just schools.

Surveys of teenagers show that they make decisions based on the environment where they have lived and currently live. He encouraged us to look at the environment and see if there are any changes that can be made that will help our students stay away from alcohol. Efforts to discourage alcohol use typically focus on these four issues:

- Where youth GET alcohol
- Where youth USE alcohol
- How youth GET AWAY WITH USING alcohol
- Why youth THINK THEY NEED TO USE alcohol

As parents we can influence all four of these factors. Working together, we can reduce the occurrences of underage drinking in our school community.

Two additional events in our Parent Speaker series will be held on Nov. 14th and March 12th. The details are still being arranged, but please mark your calendars. Experienced parents are invited to attend as well as those just beginning the journey of raising teenagers. At the last event, there was time for parents to connect with each other and share their joys and challenges.

WE CARE would like to thank Kathy and Larry Neinhaus for chairing this year's Parent Speaker Series.

If you would like to be involved with the education committee of WE CARE, please contact Kathy MacDonald at wecare@grcss.org or 281-3138.'



Save the Date:

Junior Parent Party on Friday, February 8, 2008. Further details forthcoming.

Please contact Randi Wilson at 682-9218 or Randi5kids@aol.com if you would like to help with the planning, etc.

Athletics

Winter Sports registration will take place in the cafeteria during lunch periods on Thursday, October 25th. Any student intending to participate must have a Physical Exam on file in the athletic office, taken and dated since April 15, 2007. A list of students with approved physicals is posted at the Attendance Office. This is a State rule, not negotiable. Exams are available, for a fee, at various medical stations around Grand Rapids. Students may not tryout or practice without a completed physical examination. Forms are available at school and on the school website.

The 21th Annual Booster Club Golf Outing was another successful event. On September 10th approximately 260 "golfers" enjoyed great fellowship at The Mines and The Elks golf courses. The Outback Steakhouse on Alpine, north of I-96, donated an excellent meal for all attendees. Show them our appreciation by having dinner at their great steakhouse restaurant. We have a superb committee working hard from April to September to organize and run the Cougar Open:

Tom Madison	Larry Larsen	Jerry Rohen	Joe Tierney
Kevin Polakovich	Joe Malewitz	Mike Braun	Mike Kathmann
Fred Braun	Jeff Rohen	Kevin Sullivan	Bob Polakovich
Pat Geary	Greg Lauria	Mike Lauria	

Please thank these gentlemen when you see them, and support their projects. Next years date is Monday, Sept. 8th. Booster Club projects provide over \$50,000 each year to Catholic Central student programs.

The Athletic Code is established to improve opportunities to achieve personal and team goals. The code applies at all times in all places. It does not matter if you are "in-season" or "out-of-season". ****Athletic Uniforms** are not to be worn other than during a contest unless approved by the Athletic Director.** Wearing athletic uniforms in the bleachers, at dances, other contests, etc. is prohibited. This policy prevents damage, theft, etc. of our team uniforms.

Is there a problem? Part of our educational mission is to instill in our students the confidence to approach a coach and discuss an athletic concern. This should be the very first communication step. The dialogue between coach and student is the optimal solution format because they have spent so much time together and should be able to reach an understanding based on facts. A situation may arise where you are concerned about a team policy or action involving your student's team. Please contact the coach directly as a first step in establishing facts. Discussions with the coach should be in private, away from others, and involve only your child. If you are not satisfied with the results of this discussion, please contact Mike Neuman, the Athletic Director, at 233-5898.

Schedules, highlights, cancellations, etc. are available on the school website at www.grcatholiccentral.com Directions to other schools are available by going to www.mhsaa.com under "School Directory". Also, you may call 233-5898 for daily schedules and last minute changes.

Your support is important to the kids and I hope you will find the time to watch them participate. While you are attending, please remember you are watching kids at play. Let the players play; let the coaches coach; let the officials officiate. Be a role-model spectator and focus your energy on supporting our team.

Catholic Central Drama
Presents

And Then There Were None By Agatha Christie

At his invitation, ten strangers end up at the retreat of a mysterious Mr. U. N. Owen for a weekend of fun on Soldier Island. The party no sooner begins when a recording left by Owen accuses each guest of murder and vows revenge. Before the weekend is over, guests are murdered according to an old nursery rhyme found in the house describing the various ways an Englishman could be killed while serving in his majesty's army in India. The twisted ending, an Agatha Christie specialty, insure to leave you amazed!

November 1-3 7:30 p.m.
November 3 3:00 p.m.

@ The Performing Arts Center at Aquinas College

Tickets: \$6 Call: 456-6656

From the Campus Minister:

Dear Catholic Central Family,

The Class of 2008 chose Not Even the Sky as their COREX theme. The Core Team chose this theme to inspire the class to believe they were capable of achieving great things with no bounds. After the three days of COREX they showed that they care about each other and their families and they are ready to be the leaders of Catholic Central during this year. Many thanks to all the parents who came as table/cabin parents, who planned the food, who came to help with a meal, who prayed for us while we were gone. Also many thanks to the 9 teachers who give up much of their summer to work with the Core Team and attend COREX.

The Opening School Mass was a combination of welcoming and blessing as we began this school year with each class, through their class president, explaining their goals for the year and lighting their class candle. After Mass, the seniors showed their spirit by sharing their Memories of Corex and showing their enthusiasm for their class song. Mr. Steve Passinault encouraged the seniors to continue to develop their leadership and to take their place as the leaders of the school.

Volunteering has gone into high gear, as many organizations begin their fall and winter programming. H.O.P.E. Volunteers had more than two hundred students come to the first meeting of the year. Students are signing up for activities and making commitments for many needs in our community. Last school year, our students documented more than 36,000 service hours, an all-time high. This spring, the President's Student Service Challenge honored 68 students who earned the Bronze Award for more than 100 documented hours of community service, 9 students who earned the Silver Award for more than 175 documented hours and 14 students who earned the Gold Award for more than 250 hours of documented service! To qualify for endorsement, freshmen must attain and document 20 hours (no more than 10 hours to home or school), sophomores must attain and document 30 hours (no more than 10 hours to home and school), juniors and seniors must attain and document 40 hours (no more than 10 hours to home or school). The endorsement gives the actual number of hours the student has documented. Endorsements are made yearly and hours are counted from June 1 to May 30 of the present school year. We also keep all service forms until after a student graduates so it is a valuable record for each student. We will continue to provide service opportunities for students. Our goal is to have all students participate in some kind of service during the school year. I think we do a pretty good job, if you include the all-school activities during Thanksgiving, Christmas and Lent.

October 1st will be full of retreats, with freshmen, sophomores, and half of the juniors each having their community building retreats on this day. The rest of the students will be doing service and community outreach for the day. More on that next newsletter and I'll let you know how the day went.

We will offer Eucharistic Minister Training for any interested juniors and seniors who have been confirmed and are willing to participate in this ministry in their parish. This training will be on Tuesday, October 23, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Students had an opportunity to sign up during Liturgy Sign Up in Religion class, but if your student is interested and can't remember signing up, have him/her stop by my office to check.

During the month of November we will be collecting food and clothing for the Heartside neighborhood. The food will go to the Downtown Churches' Food Pantry and the clothing will go to The Cathedral Outreach Clothing Center.

On Tuesday, November 20 we will have our Thanksgiving Mass. And then we will move into Advent and Christmas families!

Thank you again for your commitment and presence in our school.

God Bless, Kathie Walsh

Students! Parents! Grandparents! All Are Welcome!

Help us celebrate the month of Our Lady of the Rosary by circling the CCHS campus with prayer. Join us for the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet as we walk the campus and pray. Meet at the statue of Mary outside the cafeteria at 12:15 p.m. on Thursday, October 11, 2007.

CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS
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