



## **DIOCESE OF CHARLESTON**

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January 15, 2010

Dear Parents,

The gift of a good education is one of the greatest blessings parents can give their children. Quality education is an indispensable foundation for a healthy society, which explains why the mission of the Church in education is rooted on the need to provide education that will engender a total person.

Catholic education differs from secular education because it helps students to focus on the presence of God and the importance of the Church in their lives, while simultaneously attaining valuable academic skills and intellectual development. The quality of education a child receives, both spiritually and academically, has far reaching ramifications on their adulthood.

Here in our diocese, we are fortunate to have nationally acclaimed Catholic schools. With four high schools, and twenty eight diocesan and parochial elementary schools spread across the state of South Carolina, our mission to provide quality education has remained a strong commitment to the people of God we serve.

It is indubitable that Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Charleston are superior places for Catholic Christian formation, places where students can be in communion with God. We believe this mission to educate and to guide the next generation of Catholics is a veritable foundation for a better future for our children, families, diocese, and our world.

As a former teacher and now bishop, I know and appreciate the vital role Catholic schools play within a parish community, a diocese, the Church, and the society as a whole. From time immemorial the Catholic School System has been and remains a catalyst for qualitative education. In South Carolina, the diocese, together with our dedicated faculty and staff, strives to retain the superior academic excellence of our schools, especially in a state that continues to struggle with education.

We take cognizance of the need to maintain a strong Catholic identity in each of our classrooms, so that our faith will continue to permeate every aspect of life in our schools. We do not allow our schools to be simply “private” schools; but beacons of hope and light. Parents want the very best for their children; they want their children to benefit from the excellent education the Catholic Church offers - that explains why parents who have noted the quality of our schools offer their children the invaluable benefits of Catholic education.

As we mark the Catholic Schools Week, I encourage you, parents, to take advantage of the valuable opportunities our schools provide, by enrolling your children in Catholic Schools near you. Talk to your families, friends and neighbors about our schools, and cooperate with our team of dedicated Catholic educators to help guide our future leaders through a lifelong quest for knowledge and discipleship.

In the Lord's Peace,

Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmo  
Bishop of Charleston