

# FOCUS

Faith & Knowledge for a Brighter Future



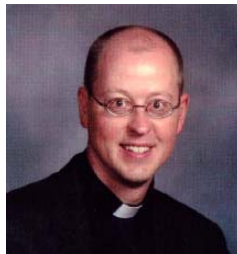
My good friend in  
Christ Jesus,

January 28<sup>th</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup> we celebrated Catholic Schools Week. Each year we take time to turn our attention to the vital role that our Catholic schools play in the lives of our children.

I am the product of sixteen years of Catholic Education. I attended St. Mary's and Central Catholic schools in Grand Island. I also have family members who are currently teachers and administrators in Catholic schools in Grand Island and in Omaha. Catholic schools are a large part of my life.

I am so grateful for the formation and education that was afforded to me by Catholic

schools. I am also very aware of the sacrifice of my parents to ensure that all ten of their children enjoyed Catholic education. That sacrifice was worth it!



I know that my vocation to priesthood was encouraged and fostered through my experience of

Catholic schools. I remember being impressed with the dedication and faithfulness of my teachers. I enjoyed having the opportunity to learn about our faith in the classroom and in the hallways. Catholic schools are one place where we are helped to make connections

between the faith we profess and the life we live.

In the North Platte area we are blessed with a K-12 Catholic school system. Our goal is to continue to strengthen our schools and our endowment so that they will be here for a long time. Catholic schools are to compliment the primary role of parents in educating their children. Our schools should be accessible and affordable to all. They should have a strong Catholic identity. We hope that they work to evangelize the culture and serve the common good of our community.

May God bless our efforts.

Fr. Jim Golka

Pastor of St. Patrick's Church

## The Good News in Education — Salute to Catholic Schools

Washington, D.C.—National Catholic Register  
The nation's nearly 8,000 Catholic schools will celebrate Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 28-Feb.3. This year's theme is "Catholic Schools: the Good News in Education."

The theme was chosen because of its appeal to Catholic schools and for the strong message it sends to parents and supporters. Catholic Schools Week is an activity of the National Marketing Campaign for Catholic Schools, a joint project of NCEA and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. "Catholic Schools do good work all year around, but on this week we want to focus everyone's attention on the fact that Catholic

schools are good news," said Karen M. Ristau, NCEA President. "In addition to learning reading, writing, and arithmetic,



students also learn responsibility—and how to become persons of character and integrity." Father William Davis, USCCB interim secretary for education said: "High achievement rates, high retention rates, high moral values and high

student and parent satisfaction are the distinctive marks of a Catholic school. That's the good news and we want to share it."

The 2007 Catholic Schools Week logo features an open book, symbolizing both the Bible and knowledge and underscoring the Christ-centered, religious foundation and academic excellence of Catholic schools.

In Washington, a delegation of more than 150 Catholic school students, teachers and parents will visit Capitol Hill to meet with congressional leaders to promote Catholic schools and provide a background package on Catholic schools to every congressional office.

# Kindergarten Classrooms — A Dream Come True



January 2, 2007 was a day when a dream came true. It was the first day of school in the NEW "building." Dr. Jeff and Connie Brittan of North Platte built the facility for the school for additional classroom space and to house Boy Scout Troop 292.



At the Open House on January 14, Fr. Jim Golka from St. Patrick's parish and Fr. Art Faesser from Holy Spirit parish Blessed and Dedicated the facility. This beautiful facility was named in honor of Martin A. Cordes, long time teacher and educator at St. Patrick's School and who also served as a Scout leader.

The progress of the (MAC) building has been documented on the Endowment web site, [www.npcset.org](http://www.npcset.org). The facility features two large classrooms, bathroom facilities, small kitchen area, large playroom, craft area in the mezzanine, and considerable storage area.

We have been truly blessed with the generosity of the Brittan family, talented craftsman, folks who participated in helping to match a \$25,000 Kindergarten Matching Gift, wonderful teachers, and for all the prayers on behalf of our Catholic School System.



## Irish Fest — March 25

**I**RISH FEST is coming Sunday, March 25 in the St. Pat's Gym. If you have items for the Silent Auction please call the Endowment Office (534-5939) ASAP. If you are not sure we can use the item(s) you have in mind, please call and ask.

Last year we all had a lot of fun

with the games, prizes, jumping room, bake sale and silent auction besides a great lunch. We will do it again this year.

The information plus raffle tickets will be sent home with your children in early March. This year the raffle items will include CASH (amounts to be determined).

Start watching for BIG GREEN SHAMROCKS around town.

**"May the Luck of the Irish**

**Bless Ye'**

**Today and Forever!"**



## GREEN Motors On!

**Winner of the GREEN 2007 Ford Focus**

**Mr. Martin Cordes**

**GREEN raised \$78,353**

**for St. Pat's & McDaid.**



## TECH – knowledge Corner

Many thanks to everyone who has helped fund the new technology equipment and software for the school:

- 1 - Adobe Photoshop CS2
- 6 - iMac 17" Dual Color
- 6 - Microsoft Office Suites
- 2 - HP laser jet printers

## 30th Anniversary/Testimonial Dinner

The cost of operating St. Pat's and McDaid schools in 1977 was \$341,410. It is now \$1.8 million. In the past thirty years, the school budget has multiplied five times.

The per pupil cost for St. Pat's in 1977 was \$745.

Today it is \$4,184.

In those 30 years, the Endowment has raised and contributed millions of dollars to the school. The existing schools have

been improved and a new grade school has been built. We have an excellent faculty, facility, students and generous supporters.

The school has been open for 115 years. That period of time includes depressions, droughts, wars, etc. ... People who lived during those times somehow maintained the school and permitted its growth to the point where we can truly claim that we have a school system that ranks among the best and deserves our continuing

support.

I have intentionally omitted mentioning individuals who have contributed time, money and service. They're the "Unknown Soldier" who served with such distinction and sacrifice. Our Unknowns have been the solid core of supporter and many continue to this day. They did their job and we can do no less.

Every one of those Unknown contributors saw the need and answered the call. But they won't last forever. Now their children and grandchildren are picking up the banner as have many friends and rallying to the call. We can and will continue to support our Catholic School System. *We will succeed. No one said it would be easy. Nothing good ever is.*

Thanks for your effort for all of these years.

*Jim Schneider, Director Emeritus  
North Platte Catholic Schools  
Endowment-Trust, Inc.*

**Endowment 30th  
Anniversary &  
Testimonial Dinner  
Dinner/Theatre  
With Tim Murphy  
April 28th**

## Levi Lawson—St. Pat's Grad Making His Mark



Levi Lawson is a 2005 graduate of St. Patrick's High School and is a sophomore at Butler Community College in El Dorado, Kansas.

To order a CD by Levi, call 308-534-7692  
Broadway \$12

Christmas Favorites \$7  
Sacred Celebrations \$7

If you have a recent graduate whose achievements that you would like to highlight, e-mail, [director@npcset.org](mailto:director@npcset.org).

## Giving for the Future — Now with your IRA

Within the Pension Protection Act of 2006, Congress has created a \$100,000 exemption from income tax consequences for any person over 70 1/2 who wants to roll over their IRA to a charitable organization. To qualify as a nontaxable distribution, a transfer must be made directly by the IRA trustee to an eligible charitable

organization. This is effective for the balance of 2007. There are some very good reasons to take advantage of this special opportunity.

1. You may be looking for a good opportunity to make a major gift;
2. You take the standard deduction and would like extra benefits;

3. It is the only way to avoid paying income taxes when rolling-over an IRA by giving it to a charitable organization.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity, please call the North Platte Catholic Schools Endowment-Trust, Inc. at 308-534-5939 or at [www.npcset.org](http://www.npcset.org).

## Planned Gifts for Catholic Education

On behalf of our Catholic School students, we wish to thank Pat McNamara and Lucille Boltz both of North Platte as the newest members of the St. Patrick Legacy Society. They were presented with a St. Patrick Legacy Society statue from the North Platte Catholic School Endowment-Trust.

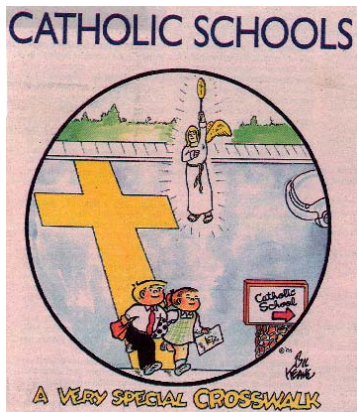
Likewise to the Brown Family Estate for an exceptionally large gift in memory of Donald F. Brown, Joseph J. Brown, Robert A. Brown, William & Dorothy Brown, and Sylvia Brown.

Also to the Kent Boyer family who established the Kent Boyer Scholarship for a St. Patrick graduating senior. Their generous gift doubled the size of the funds available to a graduating senior this year.

North Platte Catholic Schools  
Endowment-Trust, Inc.  
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North Platte, NE 69103-0057  
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308-534-6471—Fax  
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## You Count!

These are challenging times to be involved in Catholic school education. Parents and school boards today are asking the same question, “How do we ensure the future of our Catholic schools?”

This newsletter is sharing “The Good News of Catholic Education” to encourage you to give back to the school that gave you your start and/or your children their start. You counted then and you count now.

Please return the enclosed envelope with a generous annual fund gift.

Thank You!



## St. Pat's 8th Graders Compete in Science Fair

(North Platte Telegraph/February 13) Thirty-four students in the eighth grade science class at North Platte Catholic schools competed in the school's annual science fair, Wednesday, in the cafeteria at St. Patrick's High School.

The young scientists selected their topics in December after receiving curricular instruction

on the steps of the scientific method and how to construct data using tables and graphs. Students were also given instruction on how to do print and internet research. Progress on the project was monitored at checkpoints throughout January and the students presented a practice demonstration of their projects to the science class.

Judging criteria during the science fair is proper application of the scientific method to answer a question or solve a problem. The judges are local community representatives and a St. Pat's National Honors Society anatomy student.

Judge Brian Karre is a 1998 graduate of St. Pat's High School. He is currently a UNMC medical student working at Midlands Family Medicine. Judge Kelly Beffert is also a Creighton University medical student serving at Midlands Family Medicine.

Twenty-six of the 34 students were selected to attend the Science Fair sponsored by the University of Nebraska Medical Center and Nebraska Junior Academy of Sciences, which will take place at Mid-Plains Community College on March 29.

Thirteen students received gold ribbons for their projects: Brianna Wieseler, Alexa Gutschentritter (inset photo), Emmy Keenan, Taylor Hoeft, Zach Smith, Nicole Stadler, Marissa McHugh, Cruz Setliff, JoBeth Nozicka, Amber Thalcken, Abby Bonta, Dani DeTurk and Sean O'Malley.

Ribbons of excellence were presented to Brianna Wieseler, Zach Smith and Ryan Deertz for their projects