

TO TEACH WHO CHRIST IS

A Newsletter for the Campaign for Parishes, Catholic Education and Faith Formation October 2020

Archdiocese Schools Receive Blue Ribbon Awards

With the school year well underway, the Archdiocese of Chicago recently announced that seven schools in the archdiocese Catholic school system – St. Andrew School (Chicago), St. Clement School (Chicago), St. Francis Xavier School (La Grange), St. James School (Arlington Heights), St. John of the Cross School (Western Springs), St. Paul of the Cross School (Park Ridge), and School of St. Mary (Lake Forest) – have been recognized this year by the U.S. Department of Education with Blue Ribbon Awards.

The National Blue Ribbon Award is presented to schools based on a school's overall academic excellence or the school's progress in closing student achievement gaps. In addition, Woodlands Academy (Lake Forest), an independent Catholic school was recognized with a 2020 National Blue Ribbon. Catholic schools in the archdiocese have received 117 Blue Ribbon Awards.

It's through your generosity that many students are able to attend archdiocese Catholic schools by receiving tuition assistance from the Caritas and Phoenix scholarships, both funded through the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign. During the 2019/20 school year, over \$40 million was offered in financial assistance to students attending archdiocesan schools.

St. Ferdinand Family Has Hopes Their Children Will Reciprocate the Generosity They've Received

The Garczynski family's children, Julia and Kacper, both attend St. Ferdinand Catholic School, located at 3131 North Mason Avenue in Chicago, and are recipients of the Phoenix Scholarship. They applied for the scholarship through the school when their financial situation became difficult and tuition was too high for them to keep their children in Catholic school.



Pictured above is the Garczynski family

“As a result of receiving the Phoenix Scholarship, Julia and Kacper are able to attend a school where Catholic values, excellent education and a safe environment are a priority,” said Agnieszka Garczynski, mother of Julia and Kacper. “Because English is their second language, our children were very shy and insecure in the beginning, but the wonderful school community, including the teachers, staff and other families, helped make this new experience so much better. Our children feel safe and they are able to receive all the help they need.”

Catholic faith has always played an important role in Agnieszka's life, and providing her family with an education that incorporates religious lessons, church activities and Catholic teaching was always important to her.

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“We were floored by the generosity of the donors of this campaign and are extremely happy that our children were able to receive the scholarship,” said Agnieszka. “We are forever grateful for this opportunity to give our children hope for a better future. Words cannot express our gratitude to all who help in this process. We pray one day our children will be able to repay this generous gift.”

The Phoenix Scholarship ensures access to Catholic education for families throughout Cook and Lake counties and is eligible to families with children in any school listed in the Official Catholic Directory for the Archdiocese of Chicago who demonstrate financial need and meet certain other criteria established by the Trust Board. For more information about the Phoenix Scholarship, please email Clare Sullivan, director of scholarships, at csullivan@archchicago.org.

COVID-19 Update: Support Your Parish and the COVID-19 Relief Fund

Please visit archchicago.org/support to support parish offertory, the COVID-19 Relief Fund or both as your means allow. Your generosity is needed now more than ever.

Thank you for your support.

St. Ann Catholic School Students Affected by COVID-19 and Grateful for Cartias Scholarship

The Esparzas are a close-knit family who enjoy weekly movie nights, exploring museums, baking and attending Sunday Mass together. Kimberlyn and Rigo Esparza are devoted parents to their five children, Lea, Emma, Ava, Ian and Xavi, and have been a part of the St. Ann Catholic School (located at 2211 West 18th Place in Chicago), family for seven years.

“Our girls, Lea and Ava, absolutely love attending St. Ann,” said Kimberlyn. “We have so much respect for the teachers and staff. They are all very caring and their dedication to educating the students is the reason we chose to enroll our kids at the school.”

Kimberlyn and Rigo describe the staff at St. Ann as an extension of their family and appreciate the way everyone has welcomed them and maintained a meaningful relationship with both of their girls. About three years ago, the staff at St. Ann let them know Lea had been granted a partial scholarship and they went through the process of applying. This year, shortly after re-applying for Lea, they received an email that Ava had been granted a scholarship too.

“My husband and I always knew we wanted our children to grow up being close to God,” said Kimberlyn. “Providing our children with a Catholic education has coupled well with the way we raise them. Catholic school not only gives them the opportunity to receive a better education, but it helps shape the way our children see and understand things. They often talk about God, their relationship with Him, how He would feel and what He would want them to do in certain situations.”

Sadly, when the COVID-19 pandemic began, Kimberlyn lost her job and continues to look for employment.

“I wasn’t sure how we would make payments this year and it’s thanks to both of our girls getting approved for the scholarship that we can continue sending them,” said Kimberlyn. “We are so beyond grateful and it brings us so much hope during this difficult time.”

To learn more about St. Ann, please visit stanncrusaders.org.



Kimberlyn Esparza (pictured above) recently lost her job due to the COVID-19 global pandemic and is extremely grateful for the scholarships her daughters have received through the campaign.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Overall Campaign Goal: \$350,000,000

Total Raised to Date: \$424,929,224*

Percent of Goal Pledged: 121%

Pledges Paid to Date: \$261,824,386

Percent Paid to Date: 75%

*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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