



Sustainable Catholic Education for All Who Desire It™

Catholic School Parents/Guardians

A Message from the Blue Ribbon Commission

January 2012

In January, 2011, the Blue Ribbon Commission, appointed by Cardinal Justin Rigali began a comprehensive study of the elementary, special education and secondary schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia as well as the Parish Religious Education Programs in the parishes across the Archdiocese. The Commission identified the critical trends facing the future of Catholic schools in particular which include: declining Church attendance and contributions, shifting demographics, diminishing enrollment and rising tuitions as well as underutilized school buildings. Above and beyond the tuition, fees and fundraising, the Archdiocese as well as its parishes has provided over fifty million dollars to underwrite the costs of providing quality, Catholic education. In fact, over the past ten years, that accumulated figure is \$751,000,000.

As a result of this study, the Blue Ribbon Commission developed a comprehensive strategic plan focused on the ability to provide quality, affordable and sustainable Catholic education for present and future generations across the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Expecting each school to provide this outcome on its own has become much more difficult over the years as you have heard from the announcements of school closings each June.

At a meeting for priests, school administrators and directors of religious education on January 6, 2012, the Blue Ribbon Commission will provide the specifics of their plan. This renewed vision provides great hope for the future of Catholic schools and their service to the children and families in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The time is here for all of us to step forth with the support, good will and ongoing involvement enabling our long held tradition of Catholic Schools to be here for our children and for the children of future generations.

A copy of the Blue Ribbon Commission report will be available on Friday, January 6, 2012 on the following website @ www.faithinthefuture.com. The site will become available after the Press Conference on January 6, 2012 which will begin at 4 PM. You can view the Press Conference on line which will be streamed live at www.archdiocese-phl.org.

***Saint John Neumann and Saint Katharine Drexel pray for us
in this time of transition and change in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.***