

January 19, 2006

Dear Members of the Catholic Schools Community of the Archdiocese of Detroit:

From January 29 through February 4, 2006, in union with 7,800 other Catholic schools around our nation, here in the Archdiocese, we will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week. I want to take this occasion to acknowledge and thank all those who are involved in this great endeavor.

First and foremost, I want to thank the teachers and administrators who give daily of their time and talent to make our schools academically excellent, spiritually-based, with a structured and disciplined environment that affirms the dignity of each person, and calls forth the best potential of each student.

Secondly, I would like to commend all those who choose Catholic schools, particularly parents and guardians who have made the choice to commit their resources so as to allow their sons and daughters the opportunity to learn in a faith-based setting with a curriculum centered on living out the Gospel values taught by Jesus Christ.

Obviously, I also want to rejoice this week with the 38,400 students currently enrolled in our 122 Catholic elementary and secondary schools of the Archdiocese. In the setting of a Catholic school, you are experiencing a "second home," a place where you are learning directly and indirectly three important things: "character, compassion, and values," the very things being highlighted for our Catholic schools observance this year.

I also want to salute and thank those who offer their talents and assistance in a variety of ways: pastors and parishioners, volunteers and benefactors. The great work of Catholic education is the result of the investment of countless individuals over the decades. As the United States Bishops affirmed in our July 2005 statement, *Renewing our Commitment*, Catholic schools are "vital to the future of our young people, our nation, and most especially, our Church."

On this happy occasion, let us give thanks to God for the rich heritage of our Catholic school tradition and let us all renew our commitment to continued quality Catholic education here in the Archdiocese of Detroit!

May the Blessed Virgin Mary guide us all in the privilege and joy we share in forming and shaping our youth according to the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Adam Cardinal Maida
Archbishop of Detroit