NEWS

Dec. 1, 2010

ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

- **Holy Cross School in Rochester to re-open; Mother of Sorrows School, Cathedral School at Holy Rosary to be consolidated into Holy Cross School**
- **Majority of diocesan Catholic schools to be parish-operated by Fall 2011**
- **Changes in 6th grade instruction coming in 2012/13 school year**

ROCHESTER, New York – **Holy Cross School** in the City of Rochester will re-open as a parish-operated preK-6th grade Catholic school in the fall of 2011, Catholic Schools Superintendent Anne Willkens Leach announced today. Instruction at nearby **Mother of Sorrows School** in Greece and the **Cathedral School at Holy Rosary** in Rochester will be consolidated into the larger Holy Cross facility. The Cathedral School at Holy Rosary and Mother of Sorrows will no longer be operated as Catholic schools after the end of the 2010/11 school year in June. The need for relocation of the Cathedral School had been announced previously to parents due to the sale of the now-closed church property for the construction of senior housing.

"We believe that this consolidation of two schools into a larger facility at Holy Cross with far more amenities for students – including a bigger campus, larger classrooms, a gymnasium and hot lunch program – not only will benefit our students but also help us find the efficiencies we need to continue to operate with a balanced budget," said Anne Willkens Leach, superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Kathleen Dougherty, who currently is serving as principal of Cathedral School, will serve as principal of Holy Cross School when it re-opens.

Holy Cross is conveniently located in the city of Rochester (Charlotte), approximately 2.5 miles from Mother of Sorrows, and approximately 6 miles from the Cathedral School. It is expected that the centrally located Holy Cross site will not only serve the students from Mother of Sorrows and Cathedral School but will also draw additional students from other areas. Parents at Mother of Sorrows and the Cathedral School at Holy Rosary also will have the option of choosing another Catholic school.

A School Open House *hosted by Rev. Thomas Wheeland will be held at Holy Cross School on Thursday, Dec. 9, 2010, from 7 to 9 p.m. The Open House will include tours for parents and students, school information and refreshments. The school is located on the Holy Cross campus, 4492 Lake Ave.*

Both Mother of Sorrows and the Cathedral School have suffered significant enrollment declines in recent years and are operating at below capacity.

Diocesan elementary schools in Monroe County to become parish-operated

Reversion of our schools to parish-run schools was a key recommendation of the Monroe County Schools Task Force appointed by Bishop Clark in 2007. Members recommended the Diocese return schools to parish operation because they believed they would be more economically efficient over time and create stronger bonds between parishes and on-site schools.

In a recent survey of Catholic School parents conducted for the Catholic Schools Office, respondents overwhelmingly expressed a strong preference for parish-run schools, feeling schools would benefit from on-site control.

The successful reversion of St. Joseph School in Penfield and St. Lawrence School in Greece this past school year confirmed this. Thus, we are reverting all Monroe County Catholic Schools to parish-operated schools by Fall 2011, with the exception of the regional junior high school Siena Catholic Academy and Christ the King School (Christ the King will revert in 2012).

The Catholic Schools Office will continue to oversee curriculum, academic assessments, professional development and personnel at each school and each will still be under the overall authority of Bishop of Rochester Matthew H. Clark. Tuition rates will be announced soon by each school and will include a diocesan multi-child discount for students attending Siena Catholic Academy with siblings at reverted diocesan schools. In addition to St. Joseph's, St. Lawrence and Holy Cross, the schools to be parish-operated in the fall of 2011 are: **St. Louis School**, Pittsford; **St. John Neumann School**, Irondequoit; **St. Pius Tenth School**, Chili; **St. Rita's School**, Webster; and **Seton Catholic School**, Brighton.) Siena Catholic Academy in Brighton is a regional school and will not revert.

Parish-operated schools are certainly not new to the Diocese of Rochester. From the earliest days of Catholic Schools in the mid-19th Century until the formation of the MCCS system in the '90s, all diocesan schools were parish-run. All schools in the diocese outside Monroe County remain so.

6th Grade instruction changes coming in 2012

Effective in the **Fall of 2012:**

- **6th grade instruction at all of the elementary schools operated by the Diocese of Rochester in Monroe County will be moved to Siena Catholic Academy.** The school is located on the campus of St. Thomas More in Brighton. Siena currently serves students in grades 7 and 8 from throughout the Greater Rochester area. Diocesan elementary schools will operate as preK-5 schools beginning in fall 2012. The establishment of a central middle school at Siena will provide more academic and student-centered opportunities for grades 6-8, as well as bring the Diocese in line with the majority of public school districts in the area.
- **Parents with 6th grade children in school year 2012 may also have a second option:** Bishop Clark has given approval for each of the local Catholic high schools – Aquinas Institute, Bishop Kearney High School, Our Lady of Mercy High School and McQuaid Jesuit High School – to add a 6th grade beginning in the 2012/13 school year, if they wish to do so. The high schools currently serve grades 7-12. Diocesan and high school officials collaborated on this initiative with the aim of providing families with a K-12 Catholic education..

Willkens Leach expressed thanks to the Diocesan School Board, which reviewed and recommended the schools initiatives to Bishop Matthew H. Clark. The Bishop subsequently approved them.

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