



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF FARGO

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January 16, 2019

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Throughout our history, Catholic education has always been one of the most important apostolates of the Church. Here in the Fargo Diocese, we have a long tradition of Catholic schools, and I am happy to join in this year's celebration of Catholic Schools Week. Our diocesan Catholic school family includes schools in Belcourt, Devils Lake, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Langdon, Rugby, Valley City, Wahpeton, and West Fargo—a total of fourteen schools.

In a special way, I want to thank the parishes that give such faithful support to these Catholic schools. Our schools are a great blessing to our families and community, and I see Catholic schools as one of the most important investments we make in handing down (cf. St. Luke's Gospel passage for today) to our young people the faith that comes from the Apostles.

The national theme for Catholic Schools Week 2019 is "*Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.*" Indeed, our Catholic schools are known for consistently high academic achievement, and our students are challenged to excel. We offer opportunities for every student to develop their gifts and talents in service and leadership. But most importantly, our Catholic schools have the freedom to incorporate our faith into every aspect of a child's education. On a daily basis, we invite our young people to a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and to a better understanding of the Gospel and the joy and hope it brings. We help them to integrate faith into their own lives, and to make that faith their own. We are preparing the youth of today not only to be good citizens in the world, but also to be citizens of heaven. In the words of St. John Paul II, we want to help our students "be all that God created them to be." That is the ultimate success story.

To all our families, I want to personally invite you to consider Catholic schools for your children. I am fully aware that this commitment requires some financial sacrifices, but our schools strive to work with any family seeking to obtain a Catholic education for your sons and daughters. I had the blessing of a Catholic education in my youth, and I want all of our children to experience that same blessing. Please pray for the ongoing success of our Catholic schools, and know that I am praying for each one of you and your families. God bless you!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

†Most Reverend John T. Folda
Bishop of Fargo