

Diocese of San Diego



Office for Schools

December 2016

Dear Catholic School Parents,

Blessings to you in this beautiful time of Advent.

In this time of waiting, **National Catholic Schools Week** is also nearly upon us. Our annual celebration of Catholic education in the Diocese of San Diego runs from **January 29-February 4**. Schools across the diocese will be planning week-long activities to showcase our students' accomplishments and celebrating the educational community we have built to educate tomorrow's citizens and church leaders.

This year's National Catholic Schools Week theme centers on community: "*Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.*" The theme highlights the fact that schools are not only communities themselves; they are also part of many other communities, including families, parishes, towns/cities and our country.

The theme also focuses on key elements of Catholic education: faith development, academic excellence and dedication to service. These elements set Catholic schools apart from other educational options. I am certain this is why families like you make sacrifices to provide your children with a Catholic education.

With or without schools, I have asked for total parish support across the diocese during this National Catholic Schools Week to promote this important ministry of our church. Your role as a parent is equally paramount to the success of our Catholic schools. Our Catholic school parents are our greatest ambassadors. Your ability to reach the broader community with the message of Catholic school mission in San Diego and Imperial is immeasurable, and our mission is essentially this: *Educating in the image of Christ for our Church and for our world.* I would encourage you to encourage others who may be considering Catholic education for their children to schedule a tour and make a visit. Speak to your friends about the advantages of investing in Catholic education. 12 reasons for choosing a Catholic school, as reported by the National Catholic Education Association, are cited on the back of this letter. I hope it can be of assistance to you. If we can help more families attend our Catholic schools, your community will be better for it. I promise.

On behalf of the 15,000 students we serve in our local Catholic schools, I am grateful every day for your your dedication and belief in Catholic education. Thank you!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Galvan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Galvan
Director, Office for Schools

The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) cites the top 12 reasons for choosing a Catholic school:

1. We offer an education that combines Catholic faith and teachings with academic excellence.
2. We partner with parents in the faith formation of their children.
3. We set high standards for student achievement and help them succeed.
4. We provide a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture and life.
5. We use technology effectively to enhance education.
6. We instill in students the value of service to others.
7. We teach students respect of self and others.
8. We emphasize moral development and self-discipline.
9. We prepare students to be productive citizens and future leaders.
10. We have a 99% graduation rate (compared to 97.8% of other religious schools, 95.2% of non-sectarian, and 82.3% of public schools). 85.7% of our graduates go to four-year colleges (compared to 62.1% of other religious schools, 56.1% non-sectarian, and 39.5% of public schools).
11. We cultivate a faculty and staff of people who are dedicated, caring and effective.
12. We provide a safe and welcoming environment for all.