

December 2016

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



OCS UPDATE

FEATURED PASTOR

Name: Rev. Lawrence Duris

Parish: St. Ailbe on the south east side of Chicago since 2009; previously a pastor at St. Lawrence for 11 years and St. Philip Neri for 18 years.

Background: Oldest of five children from Skokie; attended Quigley, Niles College, and Mundelein Seminary; ordained in 1969.



Photo courtesy of
Catholic New World/Karen Callaway

UPCOMING EVENTS

12/12: Catholic Schools
Today Radio Show on
Relevant Radio

12/13: AMEN Webinar

12/23-12/26: OCS Closed

12/30-1/2: OCS Closed

WELCOME FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Pastors,

Welcome to the first "Pastor's Update" from the Office of Catholic Schools (OCS) of the Archdiocese. As per the letter you should have received last month, the purpose of this Update is to provide you with news and announcements related to the Catholic schools and the OCS. It is extremely important to me that we foster a partnership in support of our schools. I believe passionately that our schools are a vital ministry in forming the faith and academics of our children. We are building the future of our Church through our Catholic schools, and our relationship and mutual communication is essential in this work.

I hope you will read this information carefully. If you have questions or concerns, know you are very welcome to contact me or any member of the OCS staff. The best ways to reach me are via my email address: jrigg@archchicago.org or my office phone: 312.534.5212.

Having personally visited about 120 of our schools, I have witnessed the enormous impact of our educational ministry. Thank you for your leadership, partnership, and support!

Yours in Christ,

Jim Rigg, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Chicago

New Catechetical Certification Process

The *National Directory for Catechesis* states, "The Catholic school's effectiveness as a community of faith and a center for evangelization and catechesis depends to a large extent on its teachers of religion" (n. 9c). Due to this fact it is essential that our teachers engage in ongoing faith formation in their professional and personal lives. We are deeply committed to helping our teachers grow in faith and love of Christ in order to fully actualize the mission of Catholic education. Therefore, we have introduced a new catechetical certification process that is offered through the online platform, *My Catholic Faith Delivered*. The Office of Catholic Schools requires all full-time and part-time teachers, Catholic and non-Catholic, to seek Level I Catechetical Certification, which involves a series of online courses and retreat focused on spiritual, theological and ministerial formation. We ask that teachers complete Level I Catechetical Certification within one school year. While we only require Level I Catechetical Certification we encourage all teachers to continue their formation through Level II and Level III Catechetical Certification. More information on this process will be shared in future Updates. If you have any questions, please contact Bob Rabe at rrabe@archchicago.org.

Schools Strategic Plan

In a letter to pastors in October, Dr. Rigg outlined the purpose, process, and timeline for the new strategic plan for Catholic schools. The strategic plan continues to take shape, and we are anticipating a release of the plan in the spring of 2017. The strategic plan will provide clear guidance for the next 3-5 years of how we will foster strong, faith-filled, excellent Catholic schools. By design, the plan will work in tandem with the *Renew My Church* initiative, as we seek to revitalize our local presence. If you have any particular questions about the plan, please contact Dr. Rigg or your Regional Director.

Spotlight on Schools

- [Catholic Schools Today November 2016 Radio Show](#)
- [Three Catholic Schools Awarded Blue Ribbon Distinction](#)
- [NCEA Monthly Feature School: St. William School](#)
- [Schools on the Front Lines Heal Their Wounds Post-Election Featuring Northside Catholic Academy](#)
- [St. Stanislaus Kostka Celebrates 'Leader in Me' Lighthouse School Status](#)
- [National Catholic Board on Full Inclusion names Principal Katie Garden of Saints Faith, Hope & Charity with their second Dandy Award](#)

Principal Transitions and Contracts

In December, school pastors will receive a memo from the OCS outlining the process and timing of principal contracts for the 2017/18 school year. As you prepare for this memo, remember that all principals are required to receive an annual performance review. Your Regional Director from the OCS should be in contact with you about the review process. If you have serious concerns about the performance of your school principal, it is vital that you speak to your Regional Director as soon as possible. Likewise, if you feel that your principal will leave at the end of the school year (for whatever circumstance), it is likewise important to contact your Regional Director. Principals have an enormous influence on the quality and vibrancy of their school. We want to partner with pastors in recruiting, supporting, and evaluating our school leaders.

State Recognition Visits

To maintain Illinois state recognition, several of our Catholic schools will be visited by the state this school year. Gary Greene from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will facilitate a meeting to help schools prepare for these site visits. The meeting will be held on Monday, December 5 at the Quigley Pastoral Center from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. This meeting is required for schools going through the ISBE recognition visit this year. All Archdiocesan schools need recognition status.

Schools interested in joining the meeting should contact Janice Bailey at jbailey@archchicago.org to confirm attendance by Friday, December 2.

Preschool for All Program for 2016/17 School Year

Preschool for All is the state of Illinois' initiative to ensure high-quality preschool programs are available to 3 and 4-year old children. The Preschool for All program is a five-hour, five-day a week program provided to eligible families at no charge.

Schools also offer a supplemental preschool program after the five-hour Preschool for All program ends. The supplemental preschool program extends the preschool day to the end of the regular school day. All Preschool for All-eligible students may voluntarily participate in the supplemental preschool program offered by a school. Payment is required for participation in the voluntary supplemental preschool program. The payment is proportionate to the amount of non-Preschool for All time a student spends in the supplemental preschool program.

The above mentioned Preschool for All guidelines provide clarity around program expectations. The Office of Catholic Schools is working closely with principals to reinforce and comply with the mandated Preschool for All guidelines. If you have any questions regarding the Preschool for All Program, please contact Julie Ramski, Director of Early Childhood Education, at 312.534.3868 or jramski@archchicago.org.

Office of Catholic Schools

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