

Spiritual opportunities abound for education in our archdiocese

Dear Friends of Catholic Schools,

Ever since I can remember, the readings for daily and Sunday Masses during Lent have been very special to me. From the time I was young, I always felt such a closeness to our Lord during this time because the readings just seemed to make His life so tangible to me.

I am told by our school leaders who have had the wonderful opportunity to participate in pilgrimages to the Holy Land led by Mike Scherschligt, Holy Family School of Faith director, that they experience similar feelings while in the Holy Land. One principal said, "To walk the actual path of Jesus, to literally walk in His footsteps, was one of the most profound experiences of my life." I have heard this sentiment from others, as well. Others have commented on how the experience has deepened their prayer lives in ways they could not have imagined and how this has positively affected how they lead their schools in the mission of making disciples for Jesus and his Church.

This year, all of our school leaders received an extraordinary invitation to accompany Mike on another pilgrimage. Due to the generosity of some very special benefactors, approximately 30 more school leaders will be travelling to the Holy Land at the end of May. They are so grateful and humbled that they are beneficiaries of this beautiful gift. When they talk about the trip, they are like kids in a candy shop! When this group of school leaders completes the pilgrimage, nearly every Catholic school leader in this archdiocese will have been to the Holy Land and walked where Jesus walked.

As I reflect on this, I am overwhelmed by how blessed we are in this archdiocese. God has graced us with such goodness! For a small archdiocese in the middle of the country, we have been privileged to have so many spiritual opportunities, and our Catholic schools are richer as a result. Our students are taught by faculty who receive on-going faith formation in community; our principals receive support for their primary role as spiritual leaders in the schools; parents recognize and appreciate the mission of Catholic schools. I strongly believe that this is the reason why our schools and staff receive the external recognition that they do. When we are focused on our evangelizing mission and are supported in this focus, the Holy Spirit ensures that good fruit comes forward. The success of all of our students, especially those with special needs, is but one of these fruits.

Thank you to all who are supporting our Catholic schools! May the Lord bless you always.

¡Vaya con Dios!