

## President's Remarks

It is Catholic Schools Week – a special opportunity to celebrate the many blessings and graces showered upon Muskegon Catholic Central by a loving God. We are successful at challenging our students to mature and grow in spirit, mind, and body. This holistic approach to learning allows us to provide an environment built upon a foundation girded by important values – Catholic character, opportunity, effort, and excellence.

As a part of my preparation to share my thoughts with you about Catholic Schools Week, I opened the National Catholic Educational Association website. I found a page that listed [a dozen reasons to choose a Catholic school](#). I found them to be important benchmarks for MCC. My guess is that you will read them and do as I did. Instead of reading the generic “We,” I read “MCC” at the beginning of each sentence. This allowed me to assess each statement, comparing it in relation to Muskegon Catholic Central. My personal reaction was positive about our compliance with these statements. We work with great diligence and intent to fulfill our Mission of providing excellence in Catholic faith formation and academics. I thank you for choosing Muskegon Catholic Central as your Catholic education partner.

I thought you would like to read the dozen reasons to choose a Catholic school as I read them.

1. MCC offers an education that combines Catholic faith and teachings with academic excellence.
2. MCC partners with parents in the faith formation of their children.
3. MCC sets high standards for student achievement and helps them succeed.
4. MCC provides a balanced academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture, and life.
5. MCC uses technology effectively to enhance education.
6. MCC instills in students the value of service to others.
7. MCC teaches children respect of self and others.
8. MCC emphasizes moral development and self-discipline.
9. MCC prepares students to be productive citizens and future leaders.
10. MCC has a greater than 99 percent high school graduation rate. Ninety-three percent of our graduates go to college.
11. MCC cultivates a faculty and staff of people who are dedicated, caring, and effective.
12. MCC provides a safe and welcoming environment for all.

## Chaplain Appointed

Over a year ago, I approached Bishop David Walkowiak concerning the opportunity for a chaplain to serve Muskegon Catholic. About the same time, Fr. Matt Barnum notified both me and the bishop with his desire to serve the Muskegon Catholic Central family as chaplain. A job description was developed, conversations continued among all parties, and the Bishop agreed. Last week, Bishop Walkowiak appointed Fr. Matt Barnum to serve as chaplain to us at Muskegon Catholic Central. This assignment will be in addition to his present appointment as pastor of Our Lady of Grace Parish and St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish. I am excited about adding Fr. Matt to the staff – even in a part-time capacity. Please join me in welcoming Fr. Matt as our chaplain.

In a meeting on Monday afternoon, Fr. Matt shared his excitement about the appointment. He asked to share a few words in this President's Remarks. He writes:

*Dear MCC Family,*

*It's with great excitement that I take on new official responsibilities at Muskegon Catholic Central as the chaplain! In many ways, my appointment as the chaplain to MCC by Bishop Walkowiak is a formalization of a role I've grown to fill over the course of the past years. With this new duty and responsibility, I'll be spending even more time with our students and staff. In addition to celebrating the weekly school Mass and hearing confessions during Advent and Lent, I'll begin offering confessions on Tuesdays at 6:40 a.m. and holy Mass at 7:00 a.m. for any and all MCC families and staff who would like to join. After Mass (with a big cup of coffee in hand!), I'll greet our students as they start filing in for school, and I'll make classroom visits all morning.*

*Please keep me in your prayers as together we manifest Faith Moving Forward at MCC!*

*Pax,*

*Fr. Matt, chaplain*

Please Note: Fr. Matt's service as chaplain will begin on Tuesday, February 6. He will be available to hear confessions in the Mullally Family Memorial Chapel at 6:40. Mass will begin at 7:00 a.m.

### **Catholic School Week Masses**

Yes! It is true that we will gather as a faith community twice to celebrate Catholic Schools Week. How wonderful is that?

- On Friday, February 2, we will gather at 9:30 a.m. in the Cioe Gym for Mass. Our new chaplain, Fr. Matt Barnum will preside.
- We will gather again on Wednesday, February 7, at 9:30 a.m. in the Cioe Gym. Bishop David Walkowiak will preside. All regional pastors, priests, deacons, and sisters have been invited to participate.

It is my hope that you will be able to join us for one or both of these special Masses.

I appreciate all you do to help us fulfill our mission of excellence in Catholic faith formation and academics. Your comments and insights are important to me. I can be reached via phone at 231.291.0234 or via email at [krap@muskegoncatholic.org](mailto:krap@muskegoncatholic.org).

May St. John Paul II pray and intercede for all Crusaders! Now and Forever!

Peace!

Ken R. Rasp, President  
Muskegon Catholic Central