Welcoming a new school year ‘Anchored in Faith’

BY MICHELLE PRIAR
Superintendent of Schools, Diocese of Evansville
Special to The Message

Annual Back to School Mass kicks-off new school year

BY MEGAN ERBACHER
The Message assistant editor

Bishop Joseph M. Siegel told Catholic School teachers, administrators and priests that they have a special privilege and responsibility to help parents fulfill the commitment they made in baptism to form their children in the Catholic faith.

Bishop Siegel celebrated Mass for about 600 Catholic educators from all 26 diocesan schools who gathered July 31 at St. Benedict Cathedral in Evansville to celebrate the annual Back to School Mass to kick-off the 2023-2024 school year. Twenty-one priests of the diocese concelebrated Mass with the bishop.

Aaron Schmitt, principal of Evansville’s Reitz Memorial High School, served as lector for the Mass. Deacon Dan Niemeier, president of Evansville’s Mater Dei High School, assisted at Mass and proclaimed the Gospel. Gift bearers for the Mass were Kassandra Spindler, the new principal of St. Joseph School in Princeton; Dominican Sister Catherine Stewart, the new principal of Westside Catholic School’s St. Agnes Campus in Evansville; and Laurie Schopmeyer, interim principal at St. Benedict Cathedral School in Evansville.

Catholic Center conference rooms renamed

Special to The Message

Three conference rooms on the first floor of the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Center have been renamed in honor and memory of three Catholic pioneers in Indiana who have close connections to the Diocese and who have either been canonized or are in a stage of the canonization process.

In announcing the changes, Chancellor Dean Happe explained that the move reflects Bishop Joseph M. Siegel’s vision to highlight the rich Catholic heritage of Southwest Indiana and invite our people to look to the intercession and example of these holy ones who went before us. It is also part of the continued enhancement of the Catholic Center facility for the benefit of the many diocesan and community groups that use the meeting spaces through the year as well as those who work in the building.

Dean also thanked Joel Padgett, Director of the Diocesan Office of Catechesis, for his input regarding the renaming effort.

World Youth Day pilgrims visit Fatima

In an update posted to Facebook July 25, Jeremy Goebel, Diocesan Director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, said the Diocese of Evansville World Youth Day pilgrims arrived safely in Portugal and made their way to the chapel of the apparitions in Fatima to prepare for Mass and a candlelight vigil. Goebel said the experience was wonderful. The photo shows our pilgrims at the candlelight vigil. Goebel said they couldn’t think of a better way to begin their pilgrimage. World Youth Day was Aug. 6-16 in Lisbon. The diocesan group visited other important sites during their pilgrimage, including a stop at the site of the Eucharistic Miracle of Santarem. Several local churches also housed the relics of blessed and saints who are patrons of WYD. The pilgrimage concluded with Mass with Pope Francis and pilgrims from across the world. The group arrived home Aug. 8. The Message will have coverage of our pilgrims’ trip to World Youth Day in the August 18 issue.