

Catholic Schools Week is a tradition celebrated each year across the country, beginning the last Sunday in January. This tradition, established in 1974, remembers, reflects, and celebrates the outstanding characteristics and contributions Catholic schools make to our communities and to our world.

During Catholic Schools Week, children and youth, teachers and parents, and Catholics all over the country celebrate the gift of Catholic education. You are a part of a very special community. Catholic schools today welcome all young people. They are safe and friendly communities where youth gather to learn, share, and care for others.

Many people make up your Catholic school community. There are teachers, children and parents. There is a pastor, a principal, a school nurse, coaches and custodians. There are lunchroom helpers and teacher aides. A lot of people help make your Catholic school a special place to learn and grow. At your school you learn about science, math, history, and literature and all of the subjects that students everywhere study. But, what makes a Catholic education different is that every day you learn about God, about being Catholic, and about how to follow Jesus and be a holy person. This is a great gift that you will have for a lifetime!

This year Catholic Schools Week begins on Sunday, January 30, 2010. Every year a theme helps us focus on the gift of a Catholic education. The theme for this year is *Dividends for Life: Faith, Knowledge, Morals, Discipline*. All of the Catholic schools in the United States—there are around 8,000 of them—will celebrate how the faith, knowledge, morals, and discipline that Catholic schools develop in their students helps our world today.

Think about these questions:

Faith is our belief and trust in God.

How am I growing in my faith? What steps can I take to increase my trust in God?

Knowledge is information and truth about life.

What have I learned this year that I didn't know last year ... about life ... about God?

Morals are the habits that help us make good moral decisions.

What are some tough moral choices I've had to face as a young adolescent? How have I drawn on the resource of my Catholic education to help me make the right choices about my attitudes and actions?

Discipline is choosing activities and habits that will help us follow Jesus more closely.

How do I live my Catholic faith?

Your Catholic school helps you live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Our Father, or Lord's Prayer, is a summary of the Gospel. Praying the Our Father teaches us to pray and to live as disciples of Jesus.

This week, begin each day by praying the Our Father and reflecting on one part of the prayer.

Sunday, January 30, 2010

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

For reflection:

We do not pray *my* Father but *our* Father. We belong to God as his children. God is our Abba. God, our Father, is glorious and majestic. He is above everything and everyone else in this world.

Monday, February 1, 2010

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

For reflection:

Hallowed means "very holy" and "very honored." We want all the peoples of the world to know and love God, the Creator and Redeemer of the universe.

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

THY KINGDOM COME

For reflection:

We live in hope and wait with trust for the day when God's kingdom of justice and peace, of love and wisdom announced by Jesus will completely take hold of our world.

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

THY WILL BE DONE

For reflection:

God's will is that all will be saved in Jesus. We pray that we will follow God's will and live as Jesus taught us to live.

Thursday, February 4, 2010

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

For reflection:

Each day and every moment of our lives we depend on God to give us life. We place our trust in him.

Friday, February 5, 2010

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.

For reflection:

We ask God to forgive us. We promise to forgive all people who hurt us.

Saturday, February 6, 2010

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

For reflection:

We ask God's grace to overcome whatever and whoever would separate us from him.