

January 30, 2010

My Dear Friends in Christ:

Each year during Catholic Schools Week, January 31 to February 6, 2010, we celebrate what makes Catholic education special and pay tribute to those who foster our schools' excellence. "Dividends for Life" is this year's theme as we focus our attention on the good work done by the nation's Catholic schools. In these challenging times, the theme also reminds parents that the dividends of a Catholic school education—students prepared in faith, knowledge, morals and discipline—last a lifetime. There is no better way to invest in a child's future or the future of the Catholic Church.

Our vision is clear: our Catholic schools are a vital part of the teaching mission of the Church. Catholic schools continue to be the most effective means available to the Church for the education of children and young people who are the future of the Church. We are all challenged to follow the renewal of Catholic education by making schools available, accessible and affordable to all Catholic parents and their children.

Here in the Diocese of Superior, the burden of supporting our 16 Catholic schools should no longer be placed exclusively on the individual parishes that have schools and on parents who pay tuition. This will require all Catholics, including those in parishes without schools, to consider their stewardship of the greater Church.

As we observe Catholic Schools Week, we continue the tradition begun last year of a special diocesan-wide "free-will" offering that will provide immediate and direct funding assistance for our schools. Although this is but one initiative to address many of the challenges facing our schools, the Catholic Schools Week Collection will provide an additional source of support for schools based on the number of students.

Please know that no gift is too small. Our response to this appeal is an expression of our discipleship and our unity with Catholic school communities throughout northern Wisconsin. It is my hope and prayer that each of us will participate in our Special Collection for Catholic Schools that will help ensure a vibrant Church well into the future.

Thanking you for your life of stewardship and faith, I am

Gratefully yours in the Lord,

Bishop Peter Christensen

Bishop's letter is to be attached to the parish bulletin, or read from the pulpit. It will also be published in the Catholic Herald Kinesiology

