



Monthly Messenger – October 2021

Monthly Newsletter from the Secretary of Elementary Education



Message from Dr. Andrew McLaughlin

Dear Catholic School Educators,

As we begin the month of October, we thank God for His continued protection and blessings during these challenging times. This month brings to mind a poem that many of us learned in elementary school:

October gave a party—the leaves by hundreds came

Maples, oaks and chestnuts, And leaves of every name. . .

This October, we could give a party to celebrate the outstanding achievements of those schools that have been named Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence as well as those schools soon to be identified as our 2021 Schools of Academic Distinction. We are so happy to recognize their accomplishments.

While this poem literally speaks about the diversity in nature at this time of year, it metaphorically calls us to reflect and respond to the diversity in human nature and human capacity. October is Disability Awareness Month, and, as such, we would like to share with you the efforts that are being made toward inclusion in our schools.

In this messenger, you will find information about the *Rising Together Alliance* which is working to develop strategies to provide Inclusive Catholic Education for all children in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We will also be providing you with links to valuable resources and to a shared drive where teachers will have the capacity to engage as a Professional learning community and share lessons they have developed for the purpose of inclusion. A current commercial on TV ends with the quote, ***“Success starts with the right people behind you.”*** As educators in Catholic Schools, we **are** the right people who will ensure success for these students.

October also brings to mind another poem—“*Lovely Lady, dressed in blue, Teach us how to pray. . .*” During this month of the Holy Rosary, we are again reminded of the need to pray for our families, our country and our world and offer some resources in this issue to guide you in this area. We have so many intentions to pray for. Please make prayer a priority in your classroom. Your students need you to teach them how to pray.

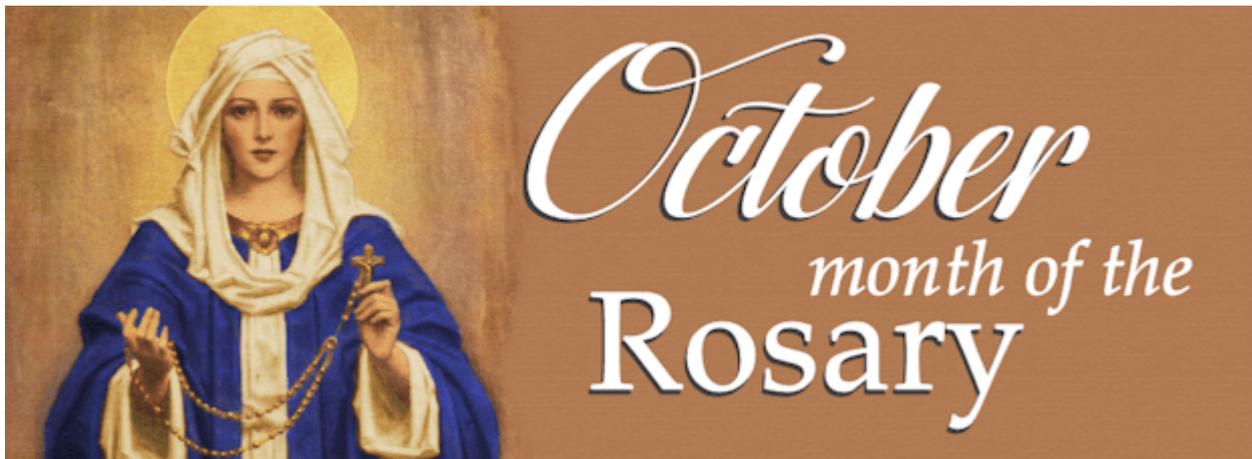
As always, know that we are grateful for all you do. God bless you!

God bless you.

Dr. Andrew McLaughlin
Secretary of Elementary Education

Upcoming Events

- Oct 1 - October Enrollment Count Due
- Oct 12-15 - ESAA Conference - Cape May
- Oct 18-22 - Progress Reports Distributed
- Oct 28 - Signed Special Accommodations Form Due



During the month of October, we celebrate two feasts of Our Blessed Mother — **Our Lady of the Rosary on October 7** and **Our Lady of Fatima on October 13**. Both of these feasts recall for us the importance of the Rosary as a prayer in asking for Mary’s intercession for our families, our country and our world.

The purpose of the rosary is to help us meditate on the great mysteries of our salvation. Pius XII called it a compendium of the gospel. The main focus is on Jesus—his birth, life, death, and resurrection. The Our Fathers remind us that Jesus’ Father is the initiator of salvation. The Hail Marys remind us to join with Mary in contemplating these mysteries. They also make us aware that Mary was and is intimately joined with her Son in all the mysteries of his earthly and

heavenly existence. The Glory Bes remind us that the purpose of all life is the glory of the Trinity.

HONOR THE MONTH OF THE ROSARY

- Pray a decade of the Rosary each day after lunch. The Rosary PowerPoints that were created last year are available on the aopelementary web site.
- Encourage families to pray the Rosary each night. The Office for New Evangelization has a live Zoom feed at 8:00 PM.
<https://zoom.us/j/494480541#success>
- Show the video of the World Mission Rosary from the Pontifical Mission Society: <https://phillymissions.org/about-us/support/world-mission-rosary/>
- Have families join the Miraculous Medal Shrine <https://miraculousmedal.org/home-page-2/virtual-rosary-making-classes/> for a two-part Rosary-making series and have the students learn how to make their very own twine rosaries. For a small registration fee, they will be provided with a Rosary-making kit, Zoom Login information, visual instructions, and other goodies from the Miraculous Medal Shrine. Each series is comprised of two classes:
 - First Class: Learn the Rosary Knotting Technique
 - Second Class: Complete and Pray the Rosary
- In a large area (e.g. school yard or gym) have the students form a rosary and have a “living Rosary” for the whole student body. If done in an area with projector capability, the PowerPoint slides mentioned above could be use while he Rosary is being said.



Secretary Grant Registration Open

The Office of Catholic Elementary (OCE) is proud to provide the Secretary Grant as a resource to support our elementary school teachers who have children that attend an Archdiocesan elementary school. Please note the list below for guidelines and qualifications:

- One parent/guardian must be employed full-time as an Archdiocesan elementary and/or early childhood school teacher ***at the time of submission of the application*** and continue to be employed in the 2022-2023 school year.
- The child/children must attend an Archdiocesan elementary (not early childhood) school in the 2022-2023 school year.
- The grant is applied toward elementary school tuition.
- The grant is based on the number of applicants and the calculated need of each applicant, so award amounts may vary.
- The application process is a two-part process, as follows:
 1. Completion of the [Secretary Grant Application](#). (*This will determine the eligibility of the applicant.*)
 2. Completion of the [FACTS application](#) | [1-866-444-4637](tel:1-866-444-4637). (*This will determine the amount of the scholarship.*)

Please retain a copy of your confirmation for each application filed.

- The deadline for submitting the application **December 31, 2021**. No applications will be accepted after this point. OCE is working to streamline the Secretary Grant process, as we understand that it has been confusing in the past. As we move forward, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us: cjennings@archphila.org.



"An inclusive education finds a place for all and does not select in an elitist way the beneficiaries of its efforts."
— Pope Francis

Principals of Catholic Social Justice

In last month's edition of the *Messenger* we began to reflect on the Principles of Catholic Social Justice. The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is

sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.

Just as the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say "thou shalt not" to a society of exclusion and inequality. Pope Francis, in *The Joy of the Gospel*, said, "Exclusion ultimately has to do with what it means to be a part of the society in which we live; those excluded are no longer society's underside or its fringes or its disenfranchised - they are no longer even a part of it. The excluded are not the "exploited" but the outcast, the "leftovers". (no. 153)

"Inclusion is not a modern invention, but is an integral part of the Christian salvific message." ~ Pope Francis

INCLUSION

Important to Social Teaching; Important to Catholic Schools



RISING TOGETHER ALLIANCE
Inclusive Catholic Education in Philadelphia

Introducing the [Rising Together Alliance](#). Inclusive education is educating individuals with physical or intellectual disabilities in the general educational classroom. With the support of the Rising Together Alliance, several schools have opened their doors to Inclusive education.

What Can You Do?

- Learn more about Inclusive Education by exploring the [Rising Together Alliance web site](#). Make use of the resources and videos provided on the site to increase understanding of the need for inclusion.
- Be willing to open the doors of your classroom to a student who has a disability.
- Support Inclusive Education in the Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese by participating in [Call To Kindness Day](#) which is celebrated during October (Disability Awareness Month).
- Consider becoming a member of a Professional Learning Community to share lessons and teaching ideas for inclusion. Professional Learning Community participants will have access to a shared drive with this information. If interested, sign up here: <https://forms.gle/CdBVixDDHFUHTvgN6>

- Become familiar with the [resources](#) on the [Archdiocesan Office for People with Disabilities](#) website.



Are You a Great Teacher?

If so, share your expertise with others. Our Curriculum Committees are appealing for your help. We need to re-build our curriculum committees so that **every level of every content area** is covered.

Committees generally meet once a month to work on updating the curriculum, evaluating new curriculum materials to be placed on the approved program list, preparing end-of-level assessments and completing other tasks as needed.

With the technology we have been accustomed to over the past several years, meetings are now able to be held on a virtual platform at a time convenient to all committee members. Each committee has a chairperson who schedules the meetings and organizes the work of the committee. As a member of a curriculum committee, you will be a member of a professional learning community.

Because of the research involved in preparing curriculum and assessment updates, we are working on a plan to be able to provide Act 48 credit for those who give service as a committee member.

We sent out an appeal several weeks ago with very few responses—especially from primary and intermediate levels. **Please** consider this important work and sign up at <https://forms.gle/xn5E3sTQhwS4KRpF6> (If you are already a committee member, please update your information using this form.) Know we are grateful.



STREAM Workshops

Registrations will close this weekend for the STREAM workshops to be held during October. This is a two-part series with one virtual session and one in-person session. Participants will receive a classroom STREAM kit on the completion of the workshop. For more details, see the [AOP Elementary web site](#).

National Liberty Museum

The National Liberty Museum's Young Heroes Outreach Program (YHOP) ignites each student's potential to make an impact in their school, community, and the world. YHOP prepares students to identify and investigate social issues and take an active role in implementing civic projects.

This year-long initiative empowers students in grades 4-8 in the areas of leadership and civic engagement through critical thinking, inquiry, and project-based learning. Acting on the principle that liberty is a right to which every person is entitled, YHOP prepares students to identify gaps in liberty and supports them in making social change in their school or community. In addition to the student-centered approach, YHOP includes comprehensive professional development and support for teachers, who work in partnership with NLM Educators to implement this unique, project-based program in their schools.

For more information and an application, go to <https://www.libertymuseum.org/yhop/>. If you do participate in this program, please let us know.

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

Office of Catholic Elementary Education
222 North 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

cjennings@archphila.org

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