



# DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

## OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

January 30, 2022

*Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time*

To the Clergy, Religious, and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Lincoln,

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This week we celebrate Catholic Schools Week, whereby we recognize and celebrate the beauty that is Catholic education. There is nothing more sacred, nothing more important than passing down our Faith to the next generation. In fact, this is the last commandment our Lord left us in the Gospel of Matthew: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations [...] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20a.) Catholic Education is the primordial mission of the Church and during this week, we celebrate all who make that possible: teachers, parish catechists, CCD coordinators, volunteers, and most of all parents, who are the first and primary educators of their children. Without them, this would be an even more daunting task than it already is.

I would also like to take this opportunity to speak about the Good Shepherd Scholarship. This is a scholarship program we have established in the Diocese of Lincoln which helps parents be able to afford to send their children to a Catholic school. While I understand that a large portion of our parishes are not connected to any Catholic school, either parochial or regional, nevertheless this is a program I believe we can all support.

Catholic education affects everyone. We all must take a vested interest in the transmission of the faith. It is a spiritual work of mercy to instruct the ignorant. And so by each of us embracing this call of education, irrespective of whether we have a school to support or not, we are living out this act of charity and helping build up the body of Christ in our diocese. Over time, that will then pay dividends to each of us, as we live and thrive in a richly Catholic diocese. We will have priests to serve our Churches, Sisters to witness to the love of God in a profound way, and marriages centered on Christ, giving light in the darkness of our world: all through the sacrifice of so many to educate our next generation of believers.

Catholic Education impacts all of us, and we are all beneficiaries of the countless sacrifices of those who have gone before us. This Catholic Schools Week, I invite each of us, in gratitude for our predecessors, to pay-it-forward by supporting the Good Shepherd Scholarship. With my prayers for you and great esteem for all you do to build up the body of Christ, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Rev. James D. Conley  
Bishop of Lincoln

