



ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

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Archdiocesan Communications Center

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MAJOR NEW INITIATIVES ANNOUNCED FOR CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS Annual Tuition Assistance Fund Will Double to More than \$3 Million Annually

(Louisville, Ky.) Today, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz and Richard A. Lechleiter, President of the Catholic Education Foundation, announced new efforts to make Catholic elementary schools more accessible and affordable. These efforts are expected to double the amount of tuition assistance available for families in need to more than \$3 million annually.

“It’s a new day for families who may be thinking about a Catholic elementary school but are unsure if it is financially possible for them,” said Archbishop Kurtz.

The Archbishop announced the details of the Catholic Elementary School Plan, which is the result of a two-year process of study and consultation among parishioners, pastors, and community partners.

Archbishop added, “As has been the case throughout our 200+ year history, people tell us again and again of the great value of Catholic education, not just for Catholics but for everyone. Employers and civic leaders know that high quality education is vital to the common good, and Catholic schools provide just that.”

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Four elements of the archdiocesan plan were highlighted:

- **New Investment in Catholic schools:** Pastors and laity have identified Catholic school education as a priority need in the Archdiocese. In light of this, every Catholic parish will be supporting a new funding mechanism to provide a voucher program for Catholic parishioners that will provide more than \$1 million in new tuition assistance.
- **Option for the Poor:** A special outreach to families of any faith with significant financial challenges is being launched. Those families whose household income is less than 200% of the poverty level will receive a \$1,000 tuition discount on Catholic elementary school tuition at any Catholic elementary school. This tuition assistance can, and will, in many cases, be augmented by additional financial assistance from the Catholic Education Foundation and other sources.
- **State Tax Credits:** Through the Catholic Conference of Kentucky (CCK) and in partnership with the Catholic Education Foundation, the Archdiocese is strengthening advocacy efforts to pass a state-wide business tax credit program for the state of Kentucky, which will benefit both public and non-public schools. Additional staff within CCK will be advancing this effort.
- **Specialized Structures:** New school models will be designed to serve specific communities within the Archdiocese with particular language, cultural, or educational needs. Grants from the Archdiocese will be made available to assist with the initial costs.

Mr. Richard Lechleiter discussed the Catholic Education Foundation's expanding role in helping make Catholic schools more affordable for more families, "This fall, thanks to so many of our generous donors, we awarded nearly \$1.7 million of tuition assistance to 1,476 Catholic elementary school students in the Archdiocese, shattering last year's record of more than \$1.3 million for 1,330 students. The Foundation is now assisting over 1 in 10 of our elementary school students, and next year we will do even more. Today we are thrilled to announce a new goal of \$2 million in Catholic elementary schools tuition assistance for the fall of 2015. We can't wait!"

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Mr. Lechleiter continued, “The partnership of the Foundation, the Archdiocese, and individual and corporate donors across central Kentucky will provide powerful financial resources to young families who want to give the gift of a Catholic education to their children but cannot afford it. To those who yearn for this storied educational experience, we stand together and proclaim: The answer is YES!”

The Catholic Elementary School Plan contains several other initiatives. Details can be found in the attached *2014 Strategic Plan* for the Archdiocese of Louisville. The new tuition assistance opportunities will be available for the 2015-2016 school year.

There are 46 Catholic schools serving more than 19,300 students in six counties of Central Kentucky. 13,200 students attend 37 elementary schools.