



March 29, 2024

Dear Friends of Catholic Education,

We are living a transitional year. Not only have I transitioned from an active ministry at Sacred Heart Parish in the past year, but this year the Diocese is experiencing a number of other pastor changes in its Parishes. This is normal and healthy for the Church. However, it means we have to work harder to assure Catholic education, specifically for the poorest of our member families continues in the Parishes where our program is an important ministry.

We need you to help us say to the new pastors, "Welcome! We will continue to support your Parish to send the children of your poorest parishioners to Catholic school and help build your Parish."

As I move around the Diocese promoting Catholic schools and Our Kids at Heart, it is not unusual to be stopped by someone saying, "Padre Marcos, ¿se acuerda de me? Usted me ayudo a mandar mi hijo (o hija) a la escuela Catolica. Esto cambio nuestra familia. Mis hijos son felices y siguen estudiando en _____ Universidad." (Fr. Mark, do you remember me? You helped us to send our child to Catholic school. Our children are happy and they continue now to study in _____ University.").

Families move around due to economic realities. Their Faith moves with them. These conversations usually happen at Mass in some Parishes. The family is at Mass with their children. The "Pentecost Bombs" continue to evangelize their families; and the families evangelize their parishes, while 100% of these kids go on to university. Nothing evangelizes like Catholic education!

Catholic schools work!

You are making it happen! Because of your support, Our Kids at Heart has been able to provide pastors and parishes with needed funds to supplement the cost of Catholic education for those who need it.

Thanks to you, we have had the courage and resources to open more chapters of Our Kids at Heart across the Diocese. You are supporting children and families not only in Austin, but in Parishes in Bryan, Waco, Temple, Taylor, and Killeen. The parents pay the first dollar. You provide the backstop for the Parishes, with the direction of their pastor, to finish the job.



We need your help to complete this school year. Please help us pay off tuition bills of approximately \$225,000 by May 1st. We have donors willing to match donations up to \$100,000, if made by May 1st.

With God's grace and your help, we can support even more parishes to help their poorest families. Let's show the new pastors we are here to continue the program.

God bless you,

FR MARK

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