

THE PASTOR'S POST

CALLED to our Catholic School

Dear Parish Family:

This year, the Department of Education of the Diocese of Rockville Centre has asked each school to focus on the theme, "Called". It is a good theme for our school, particularly as we come from our work on the Jubilee of Hope last year. I cannot help but think of that theme when it comes to our Catholic School and this Sunday's readings. Not only are we **called to our Catholic school** in our support and presence, we are **called by our Catholic school** to become better disciples.

Let me explain. Consider today's reading with me as I think they speak of the same ideas - being called to God and in that nearness to walk together in bringing God's love to the world. Today in the Scriptures, Isaiah, the psalmist, Paul, and John the Baptist and so many others are called by God to go forth. This is the work of the disciple. This is your work and mine.

What better place for the awareness of that call to happen than in our Catholic school? While we are surrounded in this area by many good schools, we are blessed by the presence of St. Brigid/Our Lady of Hope Catholic School. For here, young people and their families are formed in body, mind, and spirit to recognize what God is asking of them. They are formed in the principles of our Catholic faith and given an incredible foundation for life. Coming from a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives, they work, and it is work, to discover what God is asking of them. By all measures - from academic testing to participation in various activities to a lived faith - they are responding to this incredible call.

I have been privileged to teach in the school this year. It is awesome to see it happening right before my eyes each day. I leave school, if I am honest, a little tired and a little overwhelmed by the grades that need to get entered. (We'll get there!) I am also challenged and uplifted. I am challenged to be a better person and a better teacher by these young people **who call me to more**. I am uplifted because I see the power of a loving community that educates, forms, and **calls them to be more**. Wow! What a gift!

The school has transformed our parish, too. The school is a vital part of our mission and calls for

our support. Yes! At the same time, the school is transforming our parish. We see the incredible engagement of students and families in our liturgies and services to the community. We have so many alumni, some now parents engaged in so many worlds and ministries here. We receive such generosity from the school in support of those in need. We have been invited to reflect and journey with our school as they have taught us about hope, grief, peace, gratitude, and justice...and that just in the last seven or eight months. They are calling us to respond to God's call!



Now, I pray we can mirror this call and response in our lives as disciples and in our work and support of the school. As much as our Catholic school needs our parish, our parish needs our Catholic school. So just as Isaiah is called, just as John the Baptist

sees, can we pray for that awareness, particularly when it comes to St. Brigid/Our Lady of Hope Catholic School. It is not the responsibility solely of the parents or the teachers or the staff. They are certainly part of this. Do they work hard? You bet! It is our responsibility too! We are growing as our enrollment is up. We are continuing to strengthen and enhance our school. We have great foundations to build upon going forward.

This week, can you consider how you might be called to the mission of one of our most important missions - our Catholic school.

- Do you feel called to help? Can you support us by sponsoring a student or family in need, even partially?
- Do you have experience in education and development? We need some new board members soon!
- Do you love to visit? Come to our Open House next Sunday!
- Do you love to talk? Can you invite others to learn more about our Catholic school?

So Isaiah said yes! Paul was called. John the Baptist testified. The psalmist said, "Here I am...".

What about you? What about me?

Please pray for me. I promise the same!

Featherstone