



## SAINT PAUL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Part of Most Holy Trinity Parish  
54 EASTERN AVE  
BARTON, VT 05822  
(802) 525-6578

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January 28, 2017

Dear Friends of St. Paul's Catholic School,

This week is our national Catholic School's Week. The tradition of Catholic schools goes much deeper than most people know. As controversies about education continue to swirl throughout our nation, most every effort about how to make up the defects in education is a partial solution at best. At worst many actions are having the opposite effect of what "education" should mean for children, for families, for society, and the world. There is a stream of tradition which contains everything needed to make education "catholic" in the sense that it should provide everything that children need to grow into the fullness of their humanity, virtuous and complete. The word catholic means universal, and no education can be universal or comprehensive without the place of God, and without the place of family. We can rejoice that there is such a strong emphasis on family in the culture at St. Paul's School. We can rejoice that God is present in the school (and in the school chapel tabernacle), and that prayer, and genuine belief in the Christian Tradition are parts of each student's experience. However we still have much to pray for.

The work of reviving our area churches, and all our Catholic parishes, is very slow going. But it is necessary. Catholic Schools can and should play a part in this. With the loss of Sacred Heart School in Newport, it is all the more important to strengthen the Catholic Identity of St. Paul's School. Yet the school can have no Catholic identity except for the Catholicism of those who administer the school, who teach the school, who attend the school, and who support the school. The ancient rule of the church says *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*: "the law of prayer is the law of belief." Let us dedicate ourselves to prayer in the fullness of the Catholic Tradition, with Eucharistic celebrations, with personal meditations, with diligent reading of the Scriptures, with the invocation of the saints and their examples, with the sacrament of confession, and with devotion to Mary.



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The fullness of Catholic prayer will keep the beliefs, which shape our actions, on the path of Christ. It is the path that educates and completes humanity.

January 28<sup>th</sup> is the memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas, a patron saint of Catholic Schools. I personally celebrated the memorial Mass of St. Thomas with an intention offered for all our school families. As an academic, his genius was and still is admired throughout the Christian world and more so. (He said he never read a single page that he didn't understand!) Yet all of his intellectual energy was directed to serving God and neighbor. Jesus appeared to him once and said, "you have written well of me Thomas. What do you want as your reward?" His reply to the Lord Jesus was, "nothing but yourself Lord!"

In the end of all things, who can give us fulfillment but Jesus? And how will the education of our children be complete without the one thing that will sum up all the other elements and give them meaning that lasts forever? Let us thank the Lord for great Catholic saints. Not only Thomas Aquinas and Elizabeth Ann Seton, but all saints are patrons of Catholic education. Let us pray to the Lord, united to them. As another saint said, "let us love Jesus and Mary and become saints. We can neither hope, nor expect, anything better."

God bless you,

Fr. Tim Naples



Saint Paul, patron of our school, help us to be good students and good Christians today.

### CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S WEEK OPEN HOUSE INVITATION

Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
5:30PM to 6:30PM.

Mass at 5:00PM in St. Paul's Church  
Greet our staff. Hot dogs for dinner.