

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CHRONICLE

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A quarterly newsletter provided by Catapult Learning, The *Superintendent's Chronicle* offers Catholic school leaders at the chancery-level current insights, ideas, and information about the landscape of Catholic schools and helpful tools for addressing emerging challenges.

Celebrating Easter and the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Annual Convention

As it has been for several decades now, the annual NCEA Convention for Catholic educators is held during the octave of Easter in the week immediately following Easter Sunday. This year we gathered in Orlando, FL, April 21-23, to celebrate the vital importance of Catholic schools while delighting in the marvelous joy of the Resurrection. One special celebration found several hundred Catholic educators enjoying one another's company and a fine meal at Ole Red, a restaurant and music venue owned by country music star Blake Shelton.



Jesus' resurrection is a great joy for all believers, celebrating the new life that is ours in Christ. May these Easter days be a source of abundant blessings for you, your loved ones, and all those you serve in the ministry of Catholic education.

Recent Changes Among Superintendents and Central Office Leaders for Catholic Education

Congratulations and best wishes to the following recently appointed (arch)diocesan superintendents:

Dr. Christopher Bott	Diocese of Albany
Sister Patricia McCarron, SSND	Archdiocese of Baltimore
Mrs. Joleen Dimitroff	Diocese of Buffalo
Sarah Grey	Diocese of Grand Rapids
George Valadie	Diocese of Knoxville

Readers are welcome to send any updates to Fr. Ron Nuzzi ron.nuzzi@catapultlearning.com or at 330.652.7944.

Previous issues of The Superintendent's Chronicle dating back to Summer 2023 can be found [here](#).

Celebrating the Life and Leadership of Pope Francis

The world awoke to the sad news of the death of Pope Francis on Easter Monday. We are united with Catholics around the globe in celebrating his faith filled, humble leadership of the Church, his joyful energy, and his love Jesus and the Gospel. As media coverage continues and the story of his life is told and retold, we prayerfully remember Pope Francis as one who served the Church well and helped renew the faith, much like his namesake saint.

Prayer for Pope Francis

Lord Jesus, you have called Pope Francis to yourself. Thank you for the gift of his papacy. When he was with us, he tirelessly showed the Church your constant mercy toward sinners.

You entrusted the care of Your Church on earth to Pope Francis,

and now You have called him to Yourself.

We entrust his soul to Your boundless mercy.

For his lifelong service, we thank You.

For his care for the poor and marginalized, we thank You.

For his witness to simplicity, we thank You.

Grant him now your mercy and let him rest eternally with you in your Kingdom. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



College of Cardinals: Nearly 80 Percent Appointed By Pope Francis

Of the 21 bishops appointed cardinals by Pope Francis back in December 2024, all but one are under the age of 80 and are eligible to participate in the next conclave. Nearly 80% of the voting eligible cardinals have been appointed by Pope Francis. The Vatican's most recent report indicated 135 total cardinal electors, but only 133 are able to be present for the conclave. Only one of the newest cardinals is from North America: Francis Cardinal Leo, the archbishop of Toronto. Other cardinals hail from South America (5), Asia (3), Africa (2). Oceania (1), and Europe (9).

NCEA Celebrates Catholic Educational Leaders

The annual NCEA Convention is also a place where significant and impactful leadership on behalf of Catholic schools is recognized and celebrated. Among the many outstanding leaders recognized this year were:

[David Faber, Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, received the Karen M. Ristau Innovations Award](#) which recognizes individuals, schools or programs that have furthered the mission of Catholic education through an innovative program or approach.

[Andrew McLaughlin, Secretary of Elementary Education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, received the Lead, Learn Proclaim Award](#) which recognizes outstanding efforts, contributions and achievements in support of Catholic school education.

Congratulations to David and Andrew on these well-deserved awards, highlighting their outstanding service and witness.

Diocesan Financial Transparency-Where Is Your (Arch)Diocese of the List?

Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) has recently completed its eighth annual review of the financial transparency exhibited on the web pages of all 176 dioceses in the USA. The authors of the study set specific criteria on reporting, scoring each item, and then grade every diocese on a scale with a maximum possible score of 100.

The ten highest-scoring dioceses—all with 100 percent—were: Belleville, IL; Charleston, SC; Erie, PA; Kansas City, KS; Lexington, KY; Orlando, FL; Pittsburgh, PA; Rochester, NY; Scranton, PA; and Youngstown, OH.

The eight lowest-scoring dioceses were: Dallas, TX; Amarillo, TX; New York, NY; Spokane, WA; Birmingham, AL; Harrisburg, PA; Newark, NJ; and Sioux Falls, SD.

The six most improved dioceses were: Santa Fe, NM; Steubenville, OH; Lubbock, TX; St. Cloud, MN; Baton Rouge, LA; and Nashville, TN;

Measuring and Ranking Diocesan Online Financial Transparency: 2024 Report, with information on all 176 USCCB dioceses, can be found on the Voice of the Faithful [website](#).

Nationwide Study Of Catholic Education Offices And The Superintendency

All Catholic school superintendents recently received an invitation to participate in an important nationwide study that aims to more fully understand the operations and responsibilities of central office departments and positions dedicated to Catholic schools.

Have you ever wondered if your office was appropriately staffed, or how your diocese compared to others of similar size? Do you know how salaries compare for similar positions, or benefits packages? Have you considered reorganizing office responsibilities, wanting input from other dioceses or superintendents? This is a great opportunity to answer these important questions by contributing to this study.

Under the leadership of our trusted colleagues at Boston College's Roche Center for Catholic Education, the study will be a vital resource for future planning and will deepen our understanding on the ongoing and ever-expanding needs of Catholic schools.

Two important enticements are available, rewarding your participation. First, you will have early access to the data and final report, and will be invited to private sessions to share the research findings prior to publication. Second, Amazon gift cards of \$25 will be given to every superintendent who completes the online survey.

To participate in the survey and provide the needed information for your diocese, click [here](#).

For any questions about the survey and upcoming study, be welcome to reach out to Melodie Wyttenbach, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Barbara and Patrick Roche Center for Catholic Education at Boston College, 617-552-1771 or wyttenba@bc.edu.

The Good News About Mass Attendance

Mass attendance is up! Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) researcher Mark Gray reports that Mass attendance has returned to pre-pandemic levels. From the beginning of the pandemic lockdowns back in March 2020 all the way to the declared end of the pandemic in May 2023, Mass attendance averaged 15 percent. Since that time and through early 2025, it has averaged 24 percent.

Most notably, Christmas 2024 was the first time that Mass attendance for this holiday reached its 2019 level. Easter and Ash Wednesday Mass attendance returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.

For more information on Mass attendance, see 1964, The Cara Blog at nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com

Vatican Statistics

Speaking of statistics, The Vatican recently released The Statistical Yearbook of the Church, offering data on the life and activity of the church worldwide. The yearbook, published in March 2025, reports data from 2023. Among the findings:

- 9.1 million people received their First Communion in 2023, up from 8.68 million the previous year.
- 7.7 million people were confirmed, up from 7.4 million.
- There were 1.405 billion Catholic worldwide, up 1.15% from 1.389 billion at the end of 2022.
- -There are approximately 220,000 Catholic schools worldwide, serving over 62 million students. These schools range from preschool to higher education and include both primary and secondary levels. Catholic education also includes universities, with approximately 1,360 Catholic universities and 487 Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties.

Although the full text of the yearbook is not available online, more information can be found about it [here](#) and [here](#).