



Growing DISCIPLES

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DIOCESAN SCHOOLS WELCOME NEW STUDENTS

As we say farewell to the warm summer months and the autumn breeze starts to rustle the leaves, an unmistakable air of excitement and anticipation envelops the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic schools. Total enrollment across the diocese grew by more than 400 students compared to last year and the schools are abuzz with activity, new possibilities, and an overwhelming sense of growth and community.

The 2023-2024 school year and this influx of young minds promise to enrich the educational experience for all students across the diocese. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Officers Meunsaveng (left) and Marquez (right) with Police Dog, Bero and Holy Family students



LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT VISITS HIS ALMA MATER

Holy Family alum Officer Alberto Marquez and fellow officer Daobandon Meunsaveng introduced Holy Family students to the amazing police dog, Bero. Click [here](#) to discover how Alberto's time at Holy Family influenced his journey to serve the community as a dedicated law enforcement officer.

UNLEASHING THE BENEFITS OF THERAPEUTIC PETS

As we strive to create nurturing and conducive learning environments for children, more elementary schools are embracing therapeutic pets to support students' emotional, social, and cognitive development. These furry companions, ranging from dogs and cats to smaller animals like rabbits and guinea pigs, provide benefits that extend far beyond companionship.

Pet therapy benefits in schools include:

- Emotional Support and Stress Reduction
- Improved Social Skills and Empathy
- Enhanced Focus and Concentration
- Facilitating Learning and Cognitive Development
- Emotional Regulation and Behavioral Improvement
- Fostering a Positive School Environment



St. Joseph, Des Moines



Therapeutic pets have proven invaluable in elementary schools, offering many benefits for students, teachers, and the entire school community. From emotional support and stress reduction to improved social skills and enhanced cognitive development, these furry companions can transform children's learning experience. Therapeutic pets also help shape the next generation into well-rounded, caring individuals by fostering empathy, compassion, and responsibility.

The specific requirements for certification as a school therapy dog may vary depending on the organization providing the certification. However, therapy dogs are generally highly trainable, motivated, and have a friendly, calm, and gentle temperament that makes them well-suited to work in a school setting.

Christ the King, Holy Trinity, St. Augustin, and St. Joseph Catholic Schools - have embraced the benefits of pet therapy. Click [here](#) for a closer look at these furry friends at our Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools.

SCHOOLS AWARDED COMMUNITY BETTERMENT GRANT

Prairie Meadows recently awarded the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools a Community Betterment Grant totaling \$99,000.00. Prairie Meadows is a nonprofit organization dedicated to lessening the burden of government by promoting economic development, jobs, agriculture, and tourism in the state of Iowa.

"We are grateful for the partnership and generous support from the Prairie Meadows Foundation," said Donna Bishop, Superintendent of Schools. "These grant funds will help us fulfill our mission to provide collaborative communities of spiritual formation and academic excellence. This grant is not only an investment in our schools and our students, but it is also an investment in the future of the greater Des Moines community."

Schools awarded grant funds include Christ the King, Dowling Catholic, Holy Family, Holy Trinity, Sacred Heart, St. Anthony, St. Augustin, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Joseph, St. Luke the Evangelist, St. Theresa, and St. Patrick. The Community Betterment Grant funds will support STEM programming, curriculum enhancements, building security, adaptive seating, and classroom technology resulting in an enhanced academic experience for thousands of students. Projects funded through this grant program are expected to be completed throughout the 2023-2024 school year.

Since 1989, Prairie Meadows has given \$2.1 billion to the state of Iowa through taxes, grants, and charitable donations.



BISHOP'S CELEBRATION RAISES FUNDS FOR PROGRAMMING

The Diocese of Des Moines hosted its second annual Bishop's Celebration of Catholic Schools on August 26 at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in West Des Moines.

The event kicked off with a special Mass concelebrated by Bishop Joensen and 12 diocesan priests. After Mass, attendees enjoyed a dinner and awards ceremony honoring three individuals for their contributions to Catholic education. Hundreds of supporters of Catholic education were in attendance that evening, and the event raised nearly \$56,000 to support programming for students attending diocesan Catholic schools.

The event's success was a collaborative effort by the Catholic Schools Office, Office of Stewardship and Development, and the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa.

Save the date of Saturday, August 24, 2024 for next year's event and click [here](#) for a special thank you message from our incredible students.

CHRIST THE KING AND ST. ANTHONY UNVEIL NEW VISUAL BRANDS

Christ the King and St. Anthony Catholic Schools recently unveiled a fresh brand identity and updated logos. This exciting development will usher in a new era for both schools, bringing numerous benefits that resonate with students, parents, educators, and communities alike.

The rebranding initiatives come as a response to the ever-evolving landscape of education, which requires institutions to stay relevant and appealing to the modern generation. The new brand and logos signify a commitment to adapt to changing times while preserving the timeless values and traditions that have defined Catholic education for generations.

The updated logos feature a blend of contemporary designs and traditional symbolism that evoke a sense of belonging and pride among students, educators, and alumni, fostering a stronger sense of community while maintaining fidelity to both schools' Catholic identity.

Additionally, the new brand identity for St. Anthony emphasizes inclusivity and diversity, welcoming students from various backgrounds and beliefs which aligns well with the school's Two-Way Language Immersion track of learning.



This inclusivity fosters a supportive environment that nurtures young minds, prepares them for a globalized world, and encourages them to be compassionate and open-minded.

The brands reinforce both schools' commitment to academic excellence. The modern design and the logo's forward-looking elements reflect the dedication to providing top-tier education aligned with the latest teaching methodologies and technology. The schools remain focused on nurturing critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and strong ethical values, preparing students for a competitive future.

Ultimately, the updated brands and logos emphasize the enduring commitment of Christ the King and St. Anthony Catholic Schools to serve the community, contributing to the overall development of a more educated, compassionate, and engaged citizenry while positioning both schools for continuing enrollment growth. The rebranding effort serves as a testament to Catholic education's enduring values and dedication while ensuring its continued relevance in the 21st century.



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools includes 16 schools serving 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa. Catholic schools in the Des Moines Diocese build Christ-centered, collaborative, inclusive partnerships with parents, students, and parishes to provide innovative academic excellence and inspirational faith formation. To learn more about the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools, visit dmdiocese.org/catholic-schools or email grow@dmdiocese.org.

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St. Theresa, Des Moines

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