

# Holiday Happenings

## FIFTH GRADE SERVICE PROJECT -

### KINDNESS BRINGS CHEER TO ELDERLY

Generosity means sharing what you have with others with a happy spirit. Generous people give their time, talents and treasure to help others.....**The 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be Christmas caroling at Little Sisters of the Poor**

**on Thursday, Dec. 15.** We are taking with us personal care items for the elderly residents. Please **help us by sending a donation** to school by Dec. 15. Suggested items: toothpaste, toothbrush, mouthwash, wipes, tissues, lotion, Dove soap, knee high nylons, sugar free candy, etc. THANK YOU!!!!

## ROBOTICS TEAMS TO COMPETE

Come cheer on the robotics teams!! This **Saturday, December 10**, four OLP robotics teams will be competing in the Kansas City Regional Qualifier at Bingham Middle School, 1716 S. Speck Road, Independence, MO 64057. Judging and table competitions are between 9:30am and 3pm. Admission is free, so come cheer on the OLP Robotics Teams!!

**The Christmas Fair and Panther Shop are Monday! See the Flyers in this publication for more info.**

Please review the shopping list with your students before they come to the Christmas Fair on Monday. The ladies still use some help. If you can assist, sign up here: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F084FA4AF229-christmas](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/20F084FA4AF229-christmas) The password is "Christmas"

**Cookies with Santa, 1-3 pm, Sun. Dec. 11th, OLP auditorium.**

## REMEMBER SCRIP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Please remember to support the PTO Scrip program with your Christmas purchases. You can place your order at [presentation.scriporder.com](http://presentation.scriporder.com) or stop by the library Mon., Wed., and Friday before pickup or Mon. and Friday in the morning at drop off. We are also available at weekend Masses.



Please help support our sixth grade Girl Scout Cadettes annual Toys for Tots toy drive. While you are out shopping consider picking up an extra toy for local children in need. We will deliver your donation to the Toys for Tots warehouse. Place your donation in the container provided near the school office. Please drop off your donation by the end of the day December 16<sup>th</sup>. Thank you so much for your support. Any questions call Michele Warnecke 816-525-1354.

**Also-Stuco dress down day 50 cents, Fri., Dec 16. Money will go to Toys For Tots.**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## TUITIION REMINDER

As a reminder....please keep up to date on your tuition, it's easy to overlook through the Holi-days. The next report card date is January 4<sup>th</sup>. If you need to check your status please feel

### OLP Choristers open to 2nd Graders

Choristers are preparing to welcome their newest members from the Second Grade in January. Parents who "think" their child will be joining Choristers are asked to email their interest to Mr. Armstrong, [darmstrong@presentation-parish.org](mailto:darmstrong@presentation-parish.org). Forms for registration and liability can be found at the OLP Choristers School web page.

For information regarding OLP Choristers, click on the following link: <http://www.presentation-parish.org/Ministries/Liturgy%20and%20Music/School%20Choristers/School%20Chorister.htm>.

### Auction Class Projects Need Volunteers

Thanks for all who have volunteered for the class projects so far! We still have a few classrooms that need volunteers:  
3rd grade: VanBecelaere; 5th grade: Russell, Feuerborn; 6th grade: Lock, Memoly, and Rogers; 7th grade: Nyhan, Vittorino  
Please email Lori Meyer at [lorimariebailey@hotmail.com](mailto:lorimariebailey@hotmail.com) or call (816) 623-3123 if you are interested in participating in the project. Help make the 2012 auction a success!

All School Mass— Monday, December 12th, celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe, will be coordinated by Mrs. Vittorino's 7th grade.

A St. John LaLande family has opened Strikerz Entertainment Center (Independence - across from Costco, next to Lowe's). Strikerz is a bowling center, arcade and full restaurant & bar. They are having a special (tomorrow only - Dec. 8) \$5 per person for 1 hour of bowling, includes shoe rental. Excludes tax - up to 6 people per lane.

### Scholarship and Placement Test for Incoming Catholic High School Freshmen

All 8th grade students planning to attend a Catholic high school next fall must take the Scholarship and Placement Test on Saturday, Jan. 7. All Catholic high schools are testing sites. Doors open at 8 a.m., and the test begins at 8:30. The test is an entrance requirement for all diocesan and private high schools in the Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph. Students may test at Archbishop O'Hara, Bishop LeBlond, Cristo Rey in Kansas City, Notre Dame de Sion, Rockhurst, St. Mary's, St. Pius X, or St. Teresa's Academy. Please call the school of your choice to reserve a spot.

**Basketball** Spirit Wear will be delivered on Monday, Dec. 12. Eligibility Reporting Schedule for Basketball is included in this mailing.

# Dare Graduation 2011



OLP Fifth Grade graduated from the DARE Program Monday, Dec. 5th.

Above: Officer Chris Colon congratulates the essay presenters. Left: Each student received this medal for completing the course. Below: The entire graduating class pledged to stay drug and alcohol free.





The Panther Shop's

## ONE-DAY-ONLY Christmas Fair SALE

One Day – Two Big Events

**Event #1** – The Panther Shop will have a separate section at PTO's Christmas Fair on December 12, 2011. Children will have the opportunity to purchase Panther Shop items when their class attends the Christmas Fair. Select IN-STOCK merchandise will be specially priced, with students in mind. If you would like to plan ahead for your child(ren)'s purchases from the Panther Shop, please send a separate check or cash. Purchases from the Panther Shop and the Christmas Fair will be totaled and paid for separately. (See Merchandise & Pricing List Below.)

**Event #2** – From 3:00 – 4:00 on the day of the Christmas Fair, the Panther Shop will be offering additional select In-Stock merchandise, along with our Christmas Fair items, for purchase by Parents. Both events will be located in the Etue Room. Prices will be marked well-below regular prices for this **Special Pre-Christmas Event!** If you are unable to attend the sale, but would like to take advantage of our One-Day-Only pricing, please email your request to Sara Hogan at [sarabhogan@yahoo.com](mailto:sarabhogan@yahoo.com). Requests must be received by December 11. Sales are subject to availability on December 12, ONLY. (See Merchandise & Pricing List Below.)

### Christmas Fair Items. School Hours

Silicone Bracelets	\$0.25
Slap Bracelets	\$0.25
Pocket Coins	\$0.25
OLP Ornaments	\$1.00
Slipper Socks	\$1.00
License Plate Frames	\$1.25
OLP Headbands, each	\$2.00
Visors	\$2.00
Handmade Headbands	\$5.00
Travel Mugs	\$5.00
Panther Tumblers	\$7.50

### Additional After School Items. 3:00 – 4:00

Lip Balm	\$0.75
Panther Bobbleheads	\$3.00
OLP Headbands, 3-pack, (only)	\$7.50
Ball Caps	\$6.50
Fleece Caps	\$7.50
Jewelry	As Marked
Most Bling Tees	\$17.00
Performance Tees	\$14.50
Hoodies & Crews	\$16.00
Golf Pullovers	\$26.50
Paw Bling Tees (short sleeve)	\$20.00
Paw Bling Tees (long sleeve)	\$25.00

*To view Sale merchandise, look for the Panther Shop display cabinet, temporarily located in the Auditorium from December 5 – 12.*

Please note the following One-Day-Only Sale conditions.

- ✓ Add \$2.00 for size Adult 2XL; \$3.00 for Adult 3XL
- ✓ "December Special" Discount Does not apply on December 12; but, will continue in effect through the rest of December, (\$1.00 off each \$10.00 spent).
- ✓ We will NOT be taking Special Orders during this Event.
- ✓ Additionally, any Special Orders requested during the month of December will be submitted to our vendor in January, and will be filled at Regular Prices.



## Panther Shop News:

- Two Big Events coming Monday, December 12! **See Flyer Below.** Pre-ordering available, if you are unable to attend the sale!
  - Our November - December Special, (\$1.00 off each \$10 spent), continues throughout December; but, will not be in effect at our December 12 Events.
- Please note, any Special Orders placed during the month of December will not be placed with our vendor until January. Expected Delivery - mid to late February



### OTHER PANTHER SHOP NEWS:

#### *Start your Christmas Shopping!*

- ❖ Check out our *NEW Panther Boutique* items!
- ❖ *New Bling Tees!* Cash and Carry!
- ❖ We are *almost sold out* of Youth sizes of the new *Long-Sleeved Performance Tee* we premiered for the Guys at our October Sale. However, we have a good number of Adult sizes available. Don't forget Dad! (By the way... the girls and Mom's are loving this shirt, too!)
- ❖ **Place orders ANY TIME** – no need to wait for the next Sale Date! Just click on the Panther Shop tab, under PTO, on the School's Website.



# ARCHERY—Required meeting next week



Are you as excited about Archery as the kids have been? Now it is time to bring a little competition to the fun! There will be a MANDATORY parent meeting on December 12th at 5:30 in the Etue Room for those interested in joining an Archery Team representing OLP. Because time is limited, please be prepared to sign-up if interested. Check out the attached flyer for the details. Thank you for your support and interest in helping to develop OLP's Archery Team!

## Archery TEAM Mandatory Parent Meeting

DECEMBER 12<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm

In the Etue Room

### Come and join OLP's first Archery Team!

There will be a mandatory parent meeting about OLP's first competitive Archery Team. Clint Rogers is leading this program. If your child is interested in joining the team, you must attend this meeting. Because this is the first year, some of the details will be worked out after gauging interest and participation. We can tell you:

- The cost per student is \$40. This will cover the cost of tournaments and any equipment and repairs. The equipment is provided to the team for practice and competition.
- It is anticipated that the team will practice one time per week, for 1 hour and thirty minutes. Practice day and location TBA depending on participation. It is anticipated that these practices will occur *after school*.
- A team has a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 25 students. For each 12 students, we *must* have a parent who is willing to coach. In order to coach, you must have completed the NASP Training and Certification. This is a rigorous process, and several parents at OLP have completed it. Parent Volunteers to help with student safety and snacks are welcomed and encouraged!
- Practices will begin in December and continue until the close of competitions, most likely sometime in March. The Kansas City Regional competition will be held in Cole Camp on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012. The State competition is in late March, and it will be held in Warrensburg. Parents will be responsible for providing transportation to the tournaments. There is a possibility that the team may compete in other tournaments, depending on cost and availability.

The team leader is Clint Rogers ([crr009@yahoo.com](mailto:crr009@yahoo.com)). We are looking for interested coach volunteers. If you have any questions, you can contact Clint or Jenifer Valenti ([jvalenti20@att.net](mailto:jvalenti20@att.net)).

# Staff Christmas gifts donations



The PTO is offering a holiday gift giving option again this year for our dedicated teachers and staff. Parents and students are invited to make a monetary donation to a fund that is divided equally among the teachers and administration of our school instead of purchasing individual Christmas gifts. The staff has been very appreciative of the gift in past years. Many parents appreciate the convenience when considering purchasing several teachers' gifts.

This is strictly a voluntary donation intended to replace the holiday gifts for teachers and staff. Families may donate any amount they wish. Donations are held in strict confidence and no records are maintained.

Money collected from students and parents is divided equally among teachers and administrators. In addition, the PTO supplements each teacher and administrator gift. The PTO also provides a monetary gift for the kitchen and maintenance staff on behalf of the students and parents of the school.

The gifts will be presented to the teachers and administrators at the monthly teacher luncheon on December 21<sup>st</sup> along with a big Christmas card. The card is available to sign on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> from (7:45-8:05 & 2:45-3:15), and 14<sup>th</sup> (2:45-3:15) in the Mulligan Room. Please contact Karen Poletis to make alternative arrangements, or to sign on your behalf, if these times are not convenient for you.

Donations are accepted until Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. A donation box will be placed at the front office; you may drop off your donations December 9<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> in the Mulligan Room; you may send your donation to Karen Poletis through the school mail; or mail your donation to the following address:

963 NW High Point Drive  
Lees Summit Mo 64081

Please make checks payable to "Our Lady of the Presentation PTO".

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Poletis at 816-564-6453 or [karenp1974@hotmail.com](mailto:karenp1974@hotmail.com)

**Check your kids' backpacks** for a fun pen and pencil. Put them to good use over this four-day weekend crafting a submission to The Panther's Pen, OLP's student magazine. Applications are now being accepted for this special publication that showcases our kids' masterpieces. The deadline is January 20th, and the application is below with complete revised guidelines. So get those creative juices flowing, and submit now!

**Now accepting submissions!  
20<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.**

**Deadline: January**



## *The Panther's Pen Application*

Are you a talented writer? Do you count the days until Art class? This is the opportunity for YOU! The Panther's Pen is accepting your original:

*Artwork, Short Stories, and Poetry.*

If you would like to share your talents with our community, consider making a submission for our annual student magazine. Questions can be emailed to [jvalenti20@att.net](mailto:jvalenti20@att.net).

**Please follow the rules below, and make sure a parent has checked your submission and signed your application. Entries are due by January 20<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.**

**ENTRY GUIDELINES:** The Panther's Pen is a reflection of Our Lady of the Presentation and our Catholic identity. Content will be published at the editors' discretion, and submissions will be identified in the magazine by name and grade. Short Stories and poetry should be checked for proper grammar and spelling. Entries will be returned for correction, if necessary, and will need to be resubmitted. Please use clean, unlined paper with no pencil markings on it. *All submissions must be checked and approved by a parent prior to publication.*

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*I have checked the content of my child's submission and understand the rules contained in this application.*

From Parker Uniform: We are pleased to announce our December 20% off sale. This is a great savings event for parents. We wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season!



SCHOOL UNIFORMS

FREE SHIPPING  
ON \$100 OR MORE

## DECEMBER SALE

DECEMBER 1st - 31st, 2011



**20% OFF**  
**ALL IN-STOCK MERCHANDISE**

\*Not valid on previous purchases or when combined with any other promotional offer. Limited time offer.

[WWW.PARKERSU.COM](http://WWW.PARKERSU.COM)

## Eligibility Reporting Schedule for Basketball

Basketball eligibility reporting will be divided into two sessions (pre-season tournaments and season).

### Pre-Season Tournaments:

12/5-3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

12/12-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

12/19-3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

### Regular Season and City Tournament Schedule:

The first week of play is January 7<sup>th</sup> but with the short week we will not report.

1/9-3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

1/17-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

1/23-3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

1/30-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

2/6-3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

2/13-3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade reporting

2/21-5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade reporting (if 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade teams are participating in end of season tournaments, it is the AD's responsibility to let the school know)

I have included the eligibility guidelines below:

### 3rd- 5th grade

Grades are monitored and reported to administration every Monday during the season. If a student has a grade below 74% (C-) in any subject and **at the teacher discretion is reported to administration**, he/she will be given a warning. During this time, the parent is required to make contact with the teacher to discuss the grade. The student may be required to attend the Success Center and/or meet with the teacher in effort to improve the grade. If when grades are reported again, the student still has a grade below 74% (C-) in the same subject, the teacher will either report the student as warned or ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for the next week. (student may attend athletic practice but not participate in games). This cycle will continue through the sport (football/volleyball, basketball and track) season. In an effort to be fair to the students, eligibility will restart with each sport season. If a student misses three weeks due to academic ineligibility, he/she will forfeit his/her right to be a part of the team or group.

### Middle School

Grades are monitored and reported to administration every other Monday during the season. If a student has a grade below 74% (C-) in any subject and **at the teacher discretion is reported to administration**, he/she will be given a warning. During this time, the parent is required to make contact with the teacher to discuss the grade. The student may be required to attend the Success Center and/or meet with the teacher in effort to improve the grade. If when grades are reported again, the student still has a grade below 74% (C-) in the same subject, the teacher will either report the student as warned or ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for the two week reporting period. (student may attend athletic practice but not participate in games). This cycle will continue through the sport (football/volleyball, basketball and track) season. In an effort to be fair to the students, eligibility will restart with each sport season. If a student misses six weeks due to academic ineligibility, he/she will forfeit his/her right to be a part of the team or group.

**Behavior** is the second component of the policy. Students in 6th-8th grade that receive two detentions (automatic or earned) and students in 3rd-8th grade who receive a suspension (in or out of school) in a two week reporting period, will be ineligible for two weeks. If a student misses six weeks in a season due to behavior issues, he/she will forfeit his/her right to be a part of the team or group. Additionally, if during school, at sporting events or at extracurricular activities, a student demonstrates immoral, illegal or disrespectful behavior, the student may be deemed ineligible or required to step down from the team or group.

The third component of the policy is **attendance**. Students must be in attendance for at least three hours of the school day to attend an extracurricular activity that afternoon or evening, **including after-school practices**. If a student is absent of Friday due to illness, parents are expected to adhere to the 24 hour health policy and not allow the child to participate in weekend events if he/she was vomiting or running a fever. Students not in compliance with this attendance policy will be deemed ineligible for two weeks.

The school administration will monitor/enforce the participation policy. Notification will be given to the athletic director, activity sponsor and to the parents each Monday during the reporting period. Reporting weeks will be listed in the Panther Prints and weekly emails.

Attached is the flyer for the next Love and Logic class taking place in January.



WWW.LSCARES.ORG

## LEE'S SUMMIT CARES PRESENTS:

### America's Most Practical and Entertaining Parent Training *BECOMING A LOVE AND LOGIC PARENT*

Do you find parenting to be the most challenging yet rewarding responsibility? Could you use some fresh ideas for putting an end to arguing, whining and backtalk? Would you like your kids to listen the first time? Be more responsible? You're not alone! Whether things are going well or you could use some help, join us to learn practical and proven strategies for raising kids that are respectful, responsible and fun to be around!

**SUNSET VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
1850 RANSOM RD.  
TUESDAY'S JANUARY 17 TO FEBRUARY 14  
6:30 TO 8:30 PM**

THE COST FOR THE CLASS IS \$42 PER PARTICIPANT. THERE IS NO COST FOR PREVIOUS PARTICIPANTS OF THE SAME CLASS. SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS WHO LIVE WITHIN THE R-7 SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES. CONTACT BEV AT ReDISCOVER (816) 347-3259 OR VISIT WWW.LSCARES.ORG FOR MORE INFO.

January 2012 for kids of any age at Sunset Valley

\*\*\*\*\*Please register by Jan 13.\*\*\*\*\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing or Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(To be used for confirmation).

For your convenience, childcare is available for \$5 per child per session, maximum \$10 cost per family per evening. For safety reasons, children must be at least 4 years of age. Families with younger children can attend our early childhood program.

Please list the name and ages of the children that will need childcare: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any special needs your child has. \_\_\_\_\_

You may pay by check, Visa or MasterCard (circle one): Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed or billed to credit card: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If charging, please include complete address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward payment to ReDiscover c/o Bev Hatley 901 NE Independence Ave. Lee's Summit, MO. 64086 (816) 347-3259.

Kerri Gray, M.S., LMFT, or Jan Nelson, M.A., of ReDiscover, facilitates the program. It is offered in collaboration with the R-7 School District and area churches. This program is funded in part by United Way of Eastern Jackson County.

**Our Lady of the Presentation's Annual  
Sisters of Charity Award  
Honoring Excellence in Catholic Education**

**What is the purpose of this award?**

*To honor a teacher at Our Lady of the Presentation School for excellence in Catholic education.*

**Who is eligible?**

*Nominees must be full-time teachers at the Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic School in Lee's Summit, Missouri. A teacher may be eligible to win the award one time in every five year period. Teachers who received honorable mention distinction are eligible to win the following years. The 2010 winner was Carmen Bisacca. The 2011 winner was Emalee Rogers.*

**Who can nominate a teacher?**

*Anyone can nominate a teacher for the award. Nominations may be submitted from a student, a parent, another teacher or colleague, or a member of the parish or the community. An individual may nominate only one person for the award each year. Teachers may not nominate themselves, but may nominate a colleague. A teacher's eligibility status will be reviewed prior to the nomination being submitted to the selection panel. If you are submitting a nomination, and you are 18 years old or younger, it is required that your parent or guardian sign and date your completed nomination. If you are a parent submitting a nomination on your child's behalf, you may submit one nomination for each child.*

**What are the criteria for selecting the Teacher of the Year?**

*There will be five judges from the Catholic faith community (who are not directly involved or affiliated with Our Lady of the Presentation Catholic School or parish) on the selection panel. They will review the nominations and select the award recipient. Nominations will be presented to the panel without the teacher's name or the name of the individual who nominated the teacher attached to the nomination. The teacher of the year demonstrates the following skills and characteristics:*

**Inspires students**

**Understands and encourages talents helping build confidence**

**Knows subject matter and shares it effectively**

**Contributes to the school community outside the classroom**

**Demonstrates leadership in professional development**

**Fosters cooperative relationships with colleagues**

**Integrates the Catholic traditions and faith formation**

**Leads by example positive Catholic values**

**Awards and Recognition**

The Sisters of Charity Award will be announced at the Catholic Schools Week Spirit Assembly in February 2012. The winner will receive a \$1000 award from the PTO in recognition of his or her achievements. There may also be a teacher or teacher(s) who receive an honorable mention.

**Deadline for nominations is 3:00 p.m. January 4, 2012**

# Communications from Missouri Catholic Conference

## **U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Votes to Repeal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)**

On Nov. 10, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10 to 8 along party lines to repeal the Federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). DOMA was passed in 1996 and signed into law by then President Clinton. The law defines marriage for purposes of federal law as the union of one man and one woman. The judiciary committee is using an artfully deceptive strategy to repeal DOMA. The bill that repeals DOMA is called the "Respect for Marriage Act." Apparently, George Orwell's doublespeak is still alive and well. To pass the full Senate, the "Respect for Marriage Act" (repeal of DOMA) will require 60 Senate votes, which sponsors of the bill acknowledge they do not have at this time. The repeal bill is also not expected to pass the House of Representatives.

## **Family Rights, Duties at Heart of School Choice Debate**

Many school choice proponents tout how it will inject competition into the educational marketplace forcing schools to get better or close down. It is an argument with some merit, but it is not the focus of Catholic teaching, which stresses the rights and duties of parents to educate their children in accord with their moral convictions. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

"The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable." (par. 2221)

Education must begin in the home and K-12 schools are no substitute. And this education is about more than learning secular subjects. Parents have the responsibility to create "a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues." (par. 2223)

Catholic schools offer a natural extension of this education in the virtues and parents have the right to choose these schools for their child's instruction. The Catechism states that: "Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of ensuring the concrete conditions for its exercise." (par. 2229)

Many parents, however, lack the financial ability to send their children to a school that corresponds to their own convictions. For this reason, the Missouri Catholic Conference supports legislation that would allow parents to claim a tax deduction or credit for their child's K-12 expenses - be it for attendance at a public, private, parochial or home school. It is about family rights and duties.

## Take Back the Family

Not so very long ago, Catholic homes were adorned with pictures of the Holy Family and families prayed the rosary nearly every day. Non-Catholics took note of how Catholics honored Mary, the mother of God. Faith and family were intertwined.

Today, a Catholic home might look just like any other home. There might be a crucifix on a wall but the television, home computer and cell phones are ceded much more attention. No wonder Catholic parents have a difficult time imparting their faith and values to their children.

Families face a culture that too often glamorizes evil and a media that markets sex and violence. In this brave new world, the individual comes first. Self-gratification is more important than personal commitment. As a consequence, marriages now begin and end in just a few years or less.

It is bad enough that the culture is so often hostile to family life; now government has joined in tearing down the family. Recently, [California passed a law](#) that allows a child as young as 12 to obtain the HPV vaccine without parental permission.

It is time to take back the family. Ironically, this will require families to resist the temptation of withdrawing into their own private world. Ultimately, strong families will only flourish in a culture that supports them. So taking back the family - making it strong again - means parents must be involved in their neighborhoods and communities and even be active as citizens.

The Missouri Catholic Conference is especially concerned with legislation and public policies that affect the family. The new California law is not the law in Missouri, but vigilance is necessary. This is one West Coast trend Missouri should not emulate.

## Catholic Teaching on Family

The Catechism of the Catholic Church strongly affirms the importance of the family as "the original cell of social life" (par. 2207) and offers other insights into the proper relationship between society and the family:

"The family must be helped and defended by appropriate social measures. Where families cannot fulfill their responsibilities, other social bodies have the duty of helping them and of supporting the institution of the family. Following the principle of subsidiarity, larger communities should take care not to usurp the family's prerogatives or interfere in its life." (par. 2209)

The Catechism sets out specific ways in which government must honor and assist the family by ensuring especially:

- "the freedom to establish a family, have children, and bring them up in keeping with the family's own moral and religious convictions;
- the protection of the stability of the marriage bond and the institution of the family;
- the freedom to profess one's faith, to hand it on, and raise one's children in it, with the necessary means and institutions;
- the right to private property, to free enterprise, to obtain work and housing, and the right to emigrate;
- in keeping with the country's institutions, the right to medical care, assistance for the aged, and family benefits;
- the protection of security and health, especially with respect to dangers like drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc;
- the freedom to form associations with other families and so to have representation before civil authority." (par. 2211)