



# *Our Mother of Consolation Parish School*

Annual Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Plan – January 2012

Our Mother of Consolation Parish School has served families of the parish and surrounding communities for over one hundred years. In that time, it has been a significant instrument of Catholic evangelization, education, and formation.<sup>1</sup> As the local Catholic community with responsibility for the School, we are called to reflect upon and read the “signs of the times”<sup>2</sup> to ensure that we are carrying out the task of evangelization in the most thorough manner possible. Our Strategic Plan is designed to continue and enhance this work of evangelization for our Parish School.

Our School is blessed with a superb, experienced faculty, committed families, bright and engaged students, an enviable academic track record and, above all, a culture of Christ-centered gentleness. Small classes permit individualized attention to the academic, spiritual, and moral development of each child. Our School is also blessed and animated by the support of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Our School is blessed still further by a profound diversity -- a diversity that goes beyond race to encompass various ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, geographic locations, and denominational creeds. In this diversity, our School reflects the universality of the larger Church and is a welcome sign of a future where a community of faith will be defined less by the boundaries of ancestry and neighborhood, and more by a common desire to participate and educate children in an explicitly Catholic environment.

As stewards of the OMC Parish School, it is incumbent upon the Parish community to actively reflect on all that the School has been, and is today, in order to better discern a future to secure the School as an education ministry of the Parish. This annual report on the implementation of the strategic plan is the instrument through which the School Advisory Board engages the Parish in reflection and discernment on the mission and ministry of our Parish School.

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<sup>1</sup> The Second Vatican Council in its Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum Educationis*, emphasizes that the Catholic school is of great service in developing the mission of the People of God to be “a saving leaven” in the community. Catholic schools “are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is, however, the special function of the Catholic school to develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity based on the Gospel. It enables young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in the new life which has been given them by baptism. The Catholic school so orients the whole of human culture to the message of salvation that the knowledge which pupils acquire of the world, of life and of humanity is illuminated by faith.”

<sup>2</sup> “The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel.” Paul VI (promulgator), *Gaudium et Spes*, Introductory Statement, ¶ 4 (1965).

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## ***Catholic Identity***

**Goal: *To increase participation of School families in the sacramental and community life of OMC Parish:***

- ✚ Students participate in the Parish 40 Hours devotions
- ✚ Initiated a monthly Coffee Hour after the Sunday 9 AM Mass which is promoted to all Parish families
- ✚ The School Spirituality Committee sponsored events for parents and their children to encourage spiritual discussions and prayerfulness at home

**Goal: *To increase awareness of the charism and ministries of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales and the Sisters of St. Joseph:***

- ✚ Three retired Sisters of St. Joseph volunteer in the school on a weekly basis
- ✚ In the tradition of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, *The Direction of Intention* is now a part of daily school-wide prayer throughout the day
- ✚ Through the *Holy Childhood Association*, individuals involved in missionary work make presentations to the students yearly

**Goal: *To deepen the School connection of Parish families with children attending other schools as well as with non-parish and non-Catholic families:***

- ✚ Sponsored a High School Night for eighth grade students and their parents, which was promoted to other local parishes and the entire OMC Parish Community
- ✚ Used the parish-wide email system to communicate school-related updates and activity information to all parishioners

## ***Academic Excellence***

**Goal: *An OMC Parish School that encourages learning through inquiry, problem solving, and cross-curricular activities:***

- ✚ In serviced teachers on the latest principles of 21<sup>st</sup> century student-directed learning. Teachers are implementing the *Understanding by Design* lesson format as encouraged by the Archdiocese

**Goal: To continue to take programmatic steps to ensure academic excellence in all grades:**

- ✚ Established a Resource Room and obtained a full-time *Improvement of Reading* specialist who is working with students in all grades
- ✚ Initiated a Faculty Tuition Reimbursement Program to assist teachers pursuing graduate work and professional certifications in an effort to increase their pedagogical expertise

**Goal: To provide opportunities for multifaceted student growth by providing a variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities:**

- ✚ Added an After-School Robotics Program
- ✚ Obtained a \$5,000 grant to update School Physical Education equipment and expand the scope of activities for student engagement
- ✚ Obtained a \$4,000 grant to rebuild the School greenhouse destroyed last winter, and resumed the Green Grow Program

## ***Enrollment and Retention***

**Goal: To review, revise, and implement external communications strategy:**

- ✚ Activated a *School Reach* emergency communication system
- ✚ Launched an email system for weekly School announcements and messages
- ✚ Set up an electronic communications system for Parish families with young children for school updates and invitations to School activities
- ✚ Made significant progress in redesigning the School website with the live date scheduled for February 2012
- ✚ Adopted a comprehensive Marketing Plan which includes:
  - direct mailings and e-mails about School events & activities
  - monthly advertising in the local papers
  - distribution of lawn signs and OMC car magnets
  - increased Church bulletin inserts
  - parents testimonials published in local papers
  - School posters hung in local businesses and at nearby parishes without schools
  - a School video on the website
  - development of School brochures – in progress

**Goal: *To expand School Outreach to the OMC community:***

- ✚ The School hosts a “Mom and Tots” playgroup on Thursday mornings and on the second Sunday of the month after the 9:00 AM Mass
- ✚ The Home and School Association sponsors a monthly after-Mass coffee hour
- ✚ The Home and School Association established a Retention Committee to help new School families adjust to the OMC Parish School community. Veteran parents contact new parents and offer themselves as a resource for information about the School

**Goal: *To engage in focused communication with Parish families:***

- ✚ Instituted School Observation Days specifically designed for Parish families
- ✚ Parish families with young children participated in age-appropriate activities sponsored by the School and are encouraged to include OMC School as part of their school search
- ✚ Use the parish-wide email system to communicate school-related updates and activity information to all parishioners

***Advancement***

**Goal: *To coordinate and develop new fundraising initiatives for the School, improve ongoing liaison with the Parish Finance Committee, and aid the Principal in developing annual and multi-year budgets:***

- ✚ Developed a 10-year tuition plan in conjunction with the Parish Finance Council in an effort to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the School
- ✚ Applied for four grants with the help of a Parish volunteer; received two
- ✚ Appointed a member of the Parish Finance Council to work with the Principal and the School Advisory Board on tuition and budgeting
- ✚ An Advancement sub-committee initiated the development of an alumni database

**Goal: *To ensure that the School has an adequate and appropriately used physical plant:***

- ✚ Worked with the Parish Building Committee and commissioned a school site-plan to investigate the efficient use of limited school space

***Our Mother of Consolation - School Advisory Board***

Mr. Peter Amuso ♦ Rev. Robert Bazzoli, OSFS ♦ Sr. Cecelia Cavanaugh, SSJ ♦ Mr. John Grogan (Chair)  
Mr. Bruce Hagy ♦ Mr. Chris Kallmeyer ♦ Mr. Doug Kubinski ♦ Mr. Al Lamperti ♦ Mrs. Sue Lasek ♦