

St. Cornelius School  
Special Edition News  
Thursday, Feb. 18, 2010

To: All Families Who Wish To Enroll Their Child For The 2010 – 2011 School Year

From: Mrs. Margaret M. Campbell / Fr. Dan Fallon

Re: Launching The **GRACE** Initiative  
Enrollment Procedures For The 2010-2011 School Year  
Distribution of the \$80,000 Gift

Three weeks ago a letter went home to school families announcing an \$80,000 donation and the launching of a new initiative to make St. Cornelius School more affordable. The name of this new program, The **GRACE** (**G**rowing the **R**ewards of **A**ffordable **C**atholic **E**ducation) Initiative was chosen to demonstrate that our efforts will not stop with this gift but will seek to grow the commitment of all stakeholders to increase the affordability of Catholic education for all families.

**Q How did this \$80,000 gift originate?**

A The School Board, in its efforts to make tuition more affordable for families who wish to have their children attend St. Cornelius, wrote a proposal aimed at reversing two trends: rising tuition rates and falling enrollment. It was their hope that thinking about tuition differently would allow current families to stay and new families to be attracted to our school. The proposal was discussed with members of the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools.

An anonymous donor was intrigued by the efforts of the School Board and the excellence of Catholic education at St. Cornelius. The donor offered the \$80,000 in scholarship to help all families who wished to attend our school.

**Q How does this affect our tuition rates?**

A A decision was made by the School Board with approval of the Parish Staff to **freeze** our tuition and fees for next year. The rates will be the same for the 2010 – 2011 school year as they were in 2008-2009 and 2009-2010. The only exception will be the enrollment fee charged by Tuition Management Systems, the company that processes our tuition (approximately \$30.00).

**Q What will the procedures be for enrolling our child for 2010-2011?**

A There will be several steps in the process.

1. Completion of Registration Forms
2. Attendance at the Informational Meeting on Sunday, March 21, 2010 at 12:15 p.m. in Pacocha Center

3. Individual meetings with Fr. Dan and Mrs. Campbell (participation by one or both parents expected)
4. In preparation for the individual meetings, families will be asked to complete an information form regarding such things as:
  - a. Family data – number of children or other dependents
  - b. Current and planned involvement in the school and parish volunteer activities and ministries
  - c. Need for scholarship assistance
  - d. Any other pertinent data - extraordinary expenses, job status, etc.
5. Completion of Tuition Management Systems enrollment
6. Families who request assistance will be notified shortly after we have met with all school families of their portion of scholarship.

**Q What will the procedure be for registration?**

A Just as we have done in the past, families will complete a registration form for each child they wish to enroll in grades K-8. They will return it to school with the \$25.00 non-refundable registration fee. The difference this year is that the forms will be completed much earlier. Previously, registration forms were completed in mid May. You will note that a registration form accompanies this notice. Please complete it as soon as possible. This is the first step in the process.

Families who wish to enroll a child in pre-school and who have not yet done so should return the registration form with the \$100.00 non – refundable deposit which is applied to tuition. This is the first step in the process.

**Q Why are we being encouraged to attend the informational meeting on March 21?**

A This meeting will give us and the School Board an opportunity to give general information regarding The **GRACE** Initiative, the school budget, the parish budget, the cost of educating a child, the procedures for enrollment this year, information about the distribution of the \$80,000 gift, and goals for the future. It will also give school families and parishioners alike the opportunity to ask questions.

**Q Why is participation in an individual meeting with Fr. Dan and Mrs. Campbell expected of all families?**

A Primarily, we need to meet with each family to engage in a personal conversation about the future of St. Cornelius School and to personally extend an invitation to each family to share their time and talent with The **GRACE** Initiative. We also think these meetings will help us be the best stewards of the gift that has been bestowed on our parish school. This is a huge responsibility – one that we take very seriously.

We are concerned that some families might be reluctant to schedule a special meeting time in order to request assistance because, in a small community like ours, that information could become known to other people. By asking each and every family to come to talk with the school leadership, regardless of their interest in requesting tuition assistance, we are then providing complete confidentiality for those whose circumstances could benefit from a tuition grant but who would prefer their financial situation remain private.

It is our hope to use these meetings to best discover the struggles and needs of all families. It is also an opportunity to discuss a family's need for scholarship assistance or ability to help another family with tuition. (You will not be asked for income tax statements or other verifications nor will you be pressured into doing more than you believe your circumstances allow nor will you be expected to pledge or commit to any specific contribution of time, talent, or treasure during the meeting.)

It will also give us the opportunity to personally thank families for the commitment they have shown to our school and parish. This format is similar to one used at many Catholic high schools. It is our way of really getting to know our families even better.

**Q Why do I need to complete an information form?**

A It will give you an opportunity to prepare for the individual meeting so that you are aware of the items that will be discussed.

**Q How will the information be handled?**

A This information will be treated in a confidential manner.

**Q When will these individual meetings be held?**

A The meetings will be held after Easter beginning April 12, 2010.

**Q What if I'd like to meet sooner?**

A Please contact us and we'll make arrangements to set up a meeting.

Also, please contact us with any other questions. They will be addressed personally or, if a general question, at the Informational Meeting on March 21.

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Please remember that we have made a commitment to all our school families to assure that no family leave our school because of financial need.

God has truly blessed our parish school. Continue to pray together for our donor, our school and our parish.