

Summer

2026



ESTABLISHED 1968

Youngstown Diocesan Confederation of Teachers

President's Message

As we finish another school year, it's easy to feel how fast the time goes! Even so, we can face each year's completion with gratitude and appreciation for all who help keep our Catholic Schools a positive influence in the lives of our students and families!

Isabella Piro points out in her article on Pope Leo's most recent document and first encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* that in the document Pope Leo calls for renewed attention to schools as places where people learn to "seek and love the truth."

And last year around this time, Pope Leo said in an address to the Roman Curia, that "Each of us carries out our task and we praise God precisely by doing it well, with commitment." This seems like a fitting motto for us as Catholic School teachers as we work to enable our own students to seek and love the truth!

We are grateful for all of the hard work from our members, our building representatives, and our officers in the pursuit of social justice and educational leadership. And we, too, pray that we may carry out our work with the kind of commitment of which Pope Leo spoke.

Have a great summer!





News From the Front

Elementary Schools

Holy Family School

Holy Family School wrapped up another wonderful year full of learning, fun, and faith. Before Easter, Beta Club put on an Easter egg hunt for the lower grades and we reflected on our Lenten journey through our Lenten Prayer Service. After returning from our break, students had fun participating in History Day, we had our annual Beta Induction, eighth graders enjoyed their milestone trip to Washington, DC, we proudly participated in the English Festival, Home & School hosted their Casino Night fundraiser, and we got to enjoy our final concert for the school year that featured the third-grade class and our school choir.

A BIG shout out to all of our teachers and aides during Teacher Appreciation Week! You always give a hundred percent, and our school would not be what it is without your continued dedication and love.

Our last Home & School meeting will be held in May. We are grateful to our current board members and all of the volunteers we have had throughout the school year. They continue to make the school a better place for students and staff, and they are appreciated!

Most importantly, we look forward to celebrating with the second graders as they make their First Holy Communion on May 2nd and celebrating with the eighth graders as they make their Confirmation on May 9th . All students will be recognized during our May Crowning Mass on May 15th .

A reminder to everyone as we leave another school year behind us that "We Can Do All Things Through Christ!"



St. James School

St. James school in Waynesburg is wrapping up the school year. 3rd grade is taking their annual community tour field trips where they learn local history. K-5 will be going to the skate place in Minerva on May 20th. And Kindergarten Graduation will be on our last day of school on May 29th.

Plans are being made for next year school year including: moving teachers to new grade levels, a new marketing committee with a head marketing position, and more. We can't wait to see everyone next year!

Have a wonderful summer!





Elementary Schools continued

St. Nicholas School

Celebrating Growth, Faith, and Achievement at St. Nicholas School

Students at St. Nicholas School have been actively growing in faith, knowledge, and community this spring. Our 8th grade class is preparing for graduation with excitement, having recently completed state testing, taken graduation photos, and begun final preparations for their upcoming class trip to Niagara Falls. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and the leadership they have shown as they prepare for the transition to high school.

This year, our 8th grade students continued a longstanding tradition at St. Nicholas. They shared their faith in a powerful way during Holy Week through a reverent mime presentation of the Passion of Christ, allowing the school community to reflect deeply on the meaning of Christ's sacrifice. 8th graders also had the unique opportunity to partner with Youngstown State University through the Sokolov Honors College Dr. Abdu Pen Pals Program. This experience strengthened students' writing skills and built meaningful connections, culminating in a visit to campus where they participated in team-building activities, explored the Clarence R. Smith Mineral Museum, and took part in Honors College trivia. In addition, several students participated in the Youngstown State University English Festival, where they read multiple novels and engaged in academic competitions. We are proud to share that Hayden Harris earned second place in the Writing Games.

Our younger students have also celebrated meaningful milestones in their faith journey. Several of our second grade students joyfully received the sacrament of First Holy Communion, a special day filled with prayer, reverence, and celebration shared with their families and parish community. Our younger students participated in Read Across America, fostering love of reading through fun and engaging literacy activities. Congratulations to those involved in these events.

Creativity and faith were also on display as two of our students were recognized as winners in the Catholic War Veterans Poster Contest, showcasing their artistic talents and understanding of faith and service. Congratulations to Sergio in Kindergarten and Joshua in 2nd grade for this wonderful achievement!

Across all grade levels, we continue to emphasize kindness, a positive mindset, and strong character. From academic achievements to faith-filled experiences and community-building activities, St. Nicholas School remains committed to forming students who are prepared to succeed and serve.

We wish all of our students, families, and staff a safe, happy, and restful summer!



Elementary Schools continued

JFK Elementary

As the sun begins to set on another fantastic academic year, we find ourselves looking back with immense pride at everything our students have accomplished. It has been a year of growth, discovery, and community. Before we head off for a well-deserved summer break, let's celebrate some of our highlights!

Our hallways have been transformed into a vibrant gallery this year, showcasing the incredible **artistic journey** of our students. From intricate sketches to bold paintings and creative masks, it is clear that we have a school full of remarkably talented children. Your creativity has brightened our days and reminded us all to look at the world through a more colorful lens. We can't wait to see what you create next!

Fifth Grade Class: the time has come to take that big step toward the **Upper Campus**. We have watched you grow from curious youngsters into confident leaders, and while we are sad to see you leave our halls, we are incredibly excited for your next chapter!

We have some very special personal news to share from our faculty family. A huge **Congratulations to Tom Sharp**, who got married during Spring Break! We wish you and your Bride a lifetime of happiness, love, and wonderful adventures together. Thank you for being such an integral part of our school community.





Elementary Schools continued

St. Rose School

St. Rose students have been busy this spring. Students participated in field trips to Columbus (7th grade) and Washington DC (8th grade). Our Literacy Team Teachers hosted a fun Literacy Night and 3rd grade students participated in the fun pen pal project with students from Ursuline High School. Our 7th and 8th graders represented our school in both English Festival and Math Counts held at YSU. 7th grade students received honors and recognition through Trumbull County Bar Association Law Day writing contests and the National Science Foundation Award.

Our primary grades have worked in the school garden, performed experiments with candy, honored earth day and prayed at the atrium while growing in their faith.

We celebrated our mothers with a Mother's Day tea and our fathers got to participate in a father-daughter dance. Students also participated in Science Fair, History Day and the American Heart Association Kids Heart Challenge.

May God continue to bless all of our students especially our 8th graders as they celebrated Confirmation and our 2nd graders as they received their First Holy Communion.





Elementary Schools continued

St. Charles School

It's been a busy few months at St. Charles School, filled with lots of learning, love, laughter and friendships.

During Lent, our 8th graders led us in a beautiful prayer of the Stations of the Cross, guiding our school in reflection. Following that, our 7th graders led us in a moving prayer service centered on the Washing of the Feet, setting a tone of humility and service on Holy Thursday. The reverence and leadership of both classes this year have been wonderful. Our 8th graders are a group of students who truly live out the Stations each day of their lives. They are looking forward to graduation and moving on to either Cardinal Mooney or Ursuline High School- **All of our 8th graders have chosen Catholic High Schools- continuing their Catholic educational journey- that is pretty awesome!**

Beyond our prayer life, our students have been learning in the world around them. The 5th graders enjoyed a trip to Camp Fitch, where they spent time hiking and observing nature, made butter, and took time to appreciate God's beauty all around them. Also, our 8th graders returned from their annual trip to Pittsburgh and Gettysburg in April. They visited PNC Park, home of the Pirates, and the Pittsburgh Zoo, toured the Jenny Wade House and the Gettysburg battlefields, and enjoyed a meal at The Burgatory and many other wonderful restaurants on their trip. It was a great trip for sure. Inside our classrooms, so much learning is taking place. They are buzzing with excitement. Our students have completed fun science projects, read many exciting books (fiction and nonfiction), learned English, and worked on a variety of math problems every day.

Our 2nd graders also reached a special milestone in their faith journey. They participated in their First Communion retreat to prepare their hearts, and celebrated the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on Saturday, May 2. God bless all of those students who made their First Eucharist! In addition, our Fine Arts program was on May 8th, in the gym. There was beautiful singing and beautiful artwork displayed for all to enjoy. We have such talented students and it was so nice to see their work and talents being showcased at this annual event. Our fine arts program is alive and well at Saint Charles.

As the end of the year draws near, we are reminded of all the special memories we have shared with our friends and families. St. Charles is a very special place filled with lots of love and happiness. We continue to grow and experience new memories together. We wish everyone a beautiful and blessed summer. God bless everyone!



Elementary Schools continued

St. Charles (cont.)





Elementary Schools continued

St. Christine School

It has been a busy and exciting spring at St. Christine School!

In March, the entire school participated in our "Candyland" themed Right to Read Week culminating in a Family Literacy Night with games and activities for everyone. The 4th - 8th grade production of Alice in Wonderland Jr. delighted the capacity crowd and showcase the talents of our young actors and singers. Several of the gifted artists of SCS were honored with awards at the Ursuline High School Art Show. Our Primary grades participated in a Living Wax Museum, their own Spelling Bee.

There were plenty of field trips to give our students exciting opportunities beyond the classroom. These trips included bowling at several local lanes, OK Go Play, the Mahoning County Courthouse, Ohio State Capitol Building, and the 8th grade trip to Detroit. Our Jr. Beta students were able to provide service to the residents at The Inn at Christine Valley and also held fundraisers for several local charities.

The 8th graders continued our Holy Week tradition of presenting a Passion Play of the Living Stations and joined with our 2nd graders to lead a beautiful May Crowning prayer service.

Our outstanding Home and School Association provides so much support and special moments for our teachers and students sponsoring field trips and our Cinco de Mayo lunch. They also spoiled the teachers and staff with an amazing "Blooms and Blossoms" themed Teacher Appreciation Week. Spring sports are going strong with Soccer heading for its final goals, and a Basketball Camp sponsored by the Booster Club featuring several YSU basketball players and Pete the Penguin.

The teachers at SCS are looking forward to a much needed and well deserved summer break, and wish the same for all of you!





St. Christine School continued

Elementary Schools continued High Schools



Cardinal Mooney High School

Mrs. Marlene A. Bassil, a dedicated Spanish teacher at Cardinal Mooney High School has been recognized with the prestigious Golden Apple Award 2026 through the Roman Catholic Diocese of Youngstown for her outstanding commitment to education, faith, and student success. Known for creating an engaging and inclusive classroom environment, she brings language learning to life by incorporating culture, real-world connections, and meaningful student experiences. Her passion for teaching extends beyond academics as she inspires students to grow in confidence, global awareness, and character. This award reflects her dedication to excellence and the lasting impact she continues to make within the Cardinal Mooney Family and community.

Congratulations also to Mrs. Maureen Kandray who was honored at the Mahoning Valley Educator Awards ceremony. This honor could not have gone to a better teacher.

Cardinal Mooney is proud of four of our students, Jon Luke, Nyla, Ka’Ron, and Kaleb, for participating in the Mahoning Valley Sojourn to the Past Civil Rights and Social Justice Program.

We also proudly celebrated Nelson Lopez and Pierce Jones on being named Eagle of the Cross Award recipients by the Diocese of Youngstown.

Recently the robotics team competed in the 2026 RoboBots Competition at Lakeland Community College.

Congratulations to senior, Hannah English, for being named First Runner-Up in the WKBN Tom Holden Memorial Scholarship contest! Her 30-second public service announcement, highlighting the Jewish Community Center, stood out among more than 230 entries.... an incredible achievement. And thank you to alumnus & faculty member, Mr. Jim Stickel for attending the event and supporting Hannah on this special occasion!





Elementary Schools continued High Schools

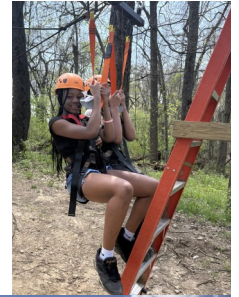
St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School

Our middle school students have been hard at work, and there is so much to celebrate! Students recently completed MAP Growth testing, and we are proud to share that we have seen tremendous academic growth across all middle school grade levels. Their hard work, perseverance, and commitment to learning have truly paid off, and we are so proud of the progress they continue to make this year.

Our 6th grade class also recently returned from their annual 6th Grade Camp, an experience that combined faith, science, and team-building in a meaningful and memorable way. During camp, students explored the connection between God's creation and scientific discovery while also strengthening their relationships with classmates and growing in their faith. From hands-on learning activities to moments of reflection and prayer, camp was a wonderful opportunity for students to learn outside the classroom and deepen both their knowledge and their relationship with Jesus.

Moving into May, excitement was building for one of our favorite middle school traditions—May Day! Teachers and students are busy preparing for this fun-filled event, where students will compete in a variety of activities and games alongside their teams. May Day is always a highlight of the spring season, bringing together teamwork, school spirit, friendly competition, and lots of laughter.

We are looking forward to a strong finish to the school year as our middle school students continue to grow academically, socially, and spiritually.



St. Thomas Aquinas High School

As the school year comes to a close, we, as a community at St. Thomas Aquinas High School, have celebrated many special events. May 8th was our High School May Day. Baccalaureate Mass was held at 6:00 p.m. on May 12th, with Graduation to follow on May 21st. Prom took place on May 16th, followed by an After Prom event at Cedar Point.

Our athletic programs have also given us much to celebrate. Our Varsity Baseball team is enjoying a successful season with a 7–5 record, while the Girls' Softball team is excelling at 9–4. Jiani Mohr-Roberts is currently ranked 1st in the State in stolen bases, while Jocelyn Powell is 5th in the State for most stolen bases. Ariana Nelson holds the State record for most grand slams. Also, Jocelyn broke the school record for most stolen bases in a game. Our Track team also continues to shine with Jacqurie Corner leading the way, placing at many meets.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026, and best wishes to all of our students as they finish the year strong!





High Schools continued

Ursuline High School

This year, we welcomed two new baby boys to the Ursuline family. Baby Jack (on the left) was born in December to Ursuline teacher Mrs. Karlee Sweeney and her husband, Mr. Thomas Sweeney. Jonah David (pictured right) was born on Holy Thursday to Ursuline teacher Mr. Greg Sauline and his wife, Ursuline administrative assistant Mrs. Desirae Sauline.



Congratulations to Mrs. Lisa Devlin for being nominated for Mahoning Valley Educator of the Year. Lisa teaches French and AP Seminar, and she is also instrumental in many other Ursuline programs. Lisa is the founder of our Global Rovers, a group through which she takes students on trips around the world, encouraging travel and exploration of other cultures. In addition, she serves as a director of the theatre program, a coach for Speech and Debate, and a Dean in the newly formed House structure this year. We are so proud of her accomplishments and grateful for the many ways she contributes to our school.



Congratulations to Mrs. Joan Williams on her upcoming retirement! Joan has been teaching at Ursuline for 35 years and has decided it is time to retire. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Joan serves as co-advisor for both the Speech and Debate Team and the Theatre Program. Joan and her many contributions to the performing arts will be greatly missed. We thank her for her many years of dedication to fostering a love for theater and speech in so many of our students, both past and present. We wish her a long and wonderful retirement with her husband, Todd.



The Ursuline High School Band and Colorguard, led by band director Mr. John Peplowski, traveled to perform at Epcot in Walt Disney World this spring. The band marched in Disney's World Showcase. They had a wonderful time playing in the showcase and enjoying the parks! Thank you to John for his hard work organizing and fundraising in order to offer our students the opportunity to take this trip.



High Schools continued



Ursuline High School continued

The hard work of our art students was recently showcased at Ursuline's Art Show. Art teachers, Mrs. Alana Campbell, Mrs. Miranda Drummond, and Mrs. Janice O'Neill did an outstanding job curating and presenting the exceptional work of our talented students. Thank you for a wonderful Art Show!

We also extend our best wishes to Mrs. Janice O'Neill a happy retirement - once again. After previously retiring, Jan returned on a part-time basis to teach Art I over the last few years. She has now decided to retire for a second time. Her quick wit and vibrant personality will be missed!



We would also like to recognize our Spanish teachers for another successful Fiesta De Las Americas celebration. Started by Mrs. Paulina Montaldo, with support from fellow Spanish teachers Mrs. Claudia Montaldo and Mrs. Teresa Sweely, this annual event provides students with authentic opportunities to engage in language, music, food, and traditions of Latin American cultures. Paulina is also the creator of Somos Youngstown, a Spanish-language news platform designed to serve Spanish-speaking residents in and around Youngstown.





High Schools continued

JFK Upper

John F. Kennedy's Upper campus has enjoyed a busy winter and spring. To kick off Catholic Schools Week, students from both campuses came together to perform in *The Wizard of Oz*. During Holy Week, our high school students produced the *Living Stations of the Cross* to present to all grades. On May 1, the Junior High staff welcomed fifth graders to our building for Step Up Day, while teachers and students in grades 9-12 participated in our annual Father John-Michael Lavelle Day of Service. After this year's Olympic Day, the House of St. Cecilia won the 2026 JFK House Cup.

As we prepare for final exams, we are glad to celebrate with our 2026 graduates. We are also excited to offer our congratulations and thanks to Michael Codispoti and Jenifer Story, who are retiring at the end of this school year.

Central Catholic High School

Central Catholic has been very very busy in these last weeks of the 2026-27 school year! The Art Department has been creating some beautiful pieces that Mrs. Jenny Pollard, Art Teacher is displaying all over the school. The Liturgical Music Group was busy providing music for our Masses during Lent and the Easter season. Our combined musical with St. Thomas Aquinas High School was *Godspell*, and it was an excellent production! Our seniors had an afternoon before their exams when they celebrated some Campus Ministry events including a prayer service in the grotto, a class of 2026 photo and tie-dying a uniform shirt to wear on their last day of school. On the evening of their Baccalaureate Mass they processed from the school with the banner that they made at the beginning of their senior year to St. Joan of Arc Church for Mass. And now the underclassmen are finishing up their school year and preparing for exams. It's been a great year!





Youngstown Diocesan Confederation of Teachers Scholarships

We are so happy to be able to offer scholarships to children of YDCT members!

This year’s winners of the High School Senior College Scholarships are:

Madeleine Devlin
(Ursuline High School)

Mariana Nist
(Central Catholic High School)

Johnny O’lihan
(Fairless High School)

(We had no submissions from Junior High this year.)

Congratulations to these winners of our freshman scholarships:

CMHS

David Johnson
Landon Keck
Alek Rudiak

UHS

Elaina Burnett
Isaiah Edwards
Isabella Falasca

CCHS

Nora Held
Abbigail Longwell
Addison Studeny

JFK Upper

Breann Derryberry
Carly Dittmer
Kailyn Rudd

STAHS

Luis Bonilla
Braylon Heestand
Ceapri Mabry

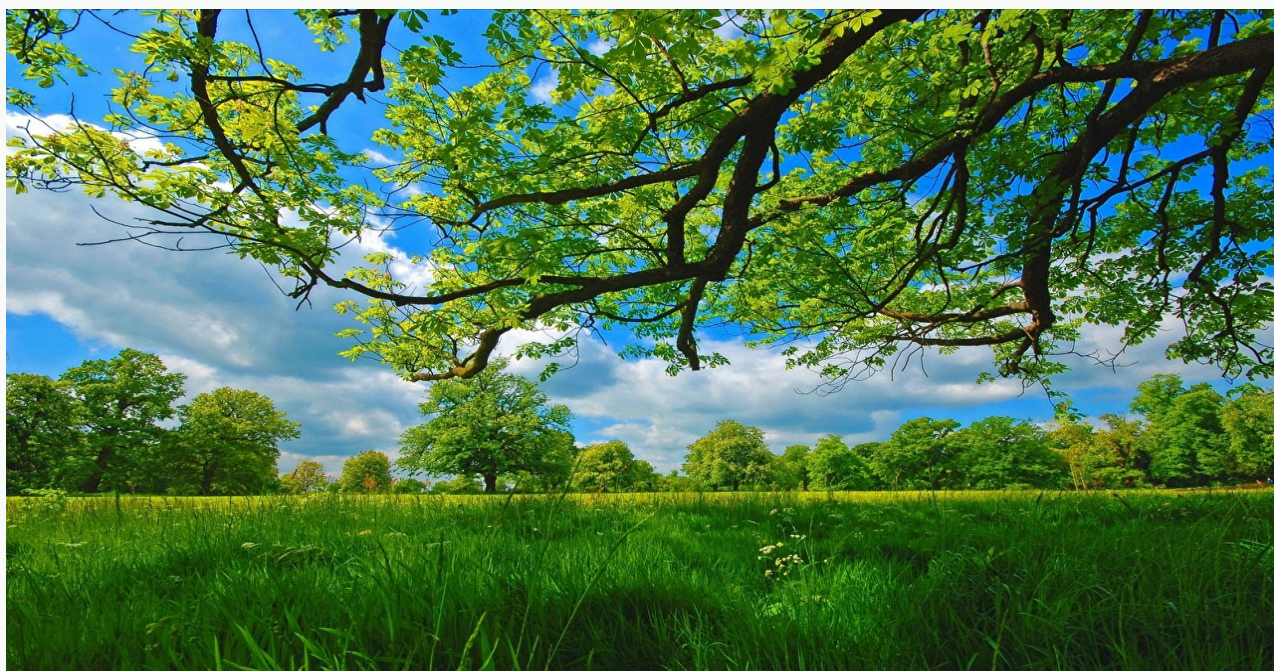


You can find all future editions of the newsletter
and the contract on this website:
ydct.us



Hope everyone has a lovely and relaxing summer!





YDCT Executive Board

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OFFICE MANAGER

*Among the basic rights of the human person must be counted the right
of freely founding labor unions.
These unions should be truly able to represent the workers and to
contribute to the proper arrangement of economic life.
(#68, Gaudium et Spes, Vatican II)*