

## A Letter from the Governing Board of Pastors Father Quindlen, Epiphany of Our Lord Parish, Plymouth Meeting

Dear Parents and Guardians:

This shortest month of the year begins with Catholic Schools Week (Jan.31 –Feb. 6) and ends with Lent. This year's theme is Catholic Schools: Faith, Excellence, Service.

Our schools remind us of Christ's love... a dignity of the human person that is beyond the mindset of the present moment, or the latest educational trend," explained Bishop Thomas Daly of Spokane, Washington, the newly-elected chairman of the Committee on Catholic Education for the U.S. bishops' conference, which provides guidance for the educational mission of the church.

"The 'first mission' of any Catholic school should be the salvation of souls," noted Bishop Daly, who spent 19 years in Catholic schools as a teacher and president and was also pastor of two parishes.

One of the most important factors in a school's character is the academic leadership which for elementary schools is most often the principal, he observed.

"We need schools that are Catholic," Bishop Daly emphasized, "that teach and proclaim the Gospel with the realization of academic rigor."

Since the twofold theme of Lent is repentance and baptism, it is fitting that we celebrate the sacrament of Penance in preparation for renewing our baptismal promises at Easter.

The scripture readings on Ash Wednesday advise us to be reconciled and return to the Lord by way of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. On the First Sunday of Lent, the scriptures record that the Lord established a covenant with Noah and promised never again to destroy creation by flood waters. The waters of baptism bring salvation and forgiveness through the death of Christ, who, after 40 days in the desert, began His public ministry by proclaiming, "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel" (Mk. 1:15).

God bless you,  
Father Quindlen