

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A FAITH-BASED ENVIRONMENT



WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF THE NEW ERIE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The Erie Catholic School System will be similar to the approach already successfully established in three areas of the diocese, **DuBois, Shenango Valley** and **Elk County**.

The final plan, *Building in Truth and Love*, calls for the creation of the Erie Catholic School System, rather than the current array of independent, parish-based schools. The diocese said it will make a multi-million dollar fundraising effort to support the initiatives announced.

Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for Education, said the diocese is deeply committed to system-wide, age-appropriate opportunities for middle school students.

"We are designing a more focused approach for students in grades six to eight, incorporating academic rigor, emphasizing high school preparedness and expanding offerings. All of this will be done in a faith-based environment. There also will be an emphasis on science across the curriculum with new science labs and improved access to technology. And we will continue to build and strengthen our athletic programs."

Sixth through eighth-graders will attend middle school embedded within the K-8 structure within the K-8 buildings.

The Erie Catholic School System will comprise six campuses: **Blessed Sacrament, St. George, St. James, St. Luke, Our Lady of Peace** and **Our Lady's Christian**.

St. Gregory in North East will remain open, but participate in a new diocesan collaborative for parish-based schools.

Villa Maria Elementary will continue to operate as a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Opportunities to develop **Holy Family School** into a separately incorporated diocesan school with philanthropic support from the wider community are being discussed.



THE ERIE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM



HIGHLIGHTS OF MIDDLE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Campus minister to develop age-appropriate spiritual experiences for middle school students
- Strong competitive and intramural sports programs
- Focus on science, technology, engineering, math (STEM)
- Emphasis on debate and public speaking skills
- Career education and exploration
- Professional development for middle school teachers
- Opportunities for students from multiple campuses to meet for educational activities focused on the arts
- Readiness for a smooth transition into Catholic high school.

The Erie Catholic School System will mean more collaboration and less competition among the Catholic elementary schools, ensuring consistency in everything from tuition rates to academic offerings.

"I feel a great responsibility to the sisters and priests and families who came before us. They poured their lives into our Catholic schools. Now it's our turn to assume that responsibility. We can do no less."

Bishop Lawrence T. Persico
Bishop of Erie

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THE ERIE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM,
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