

CATHOLIC IDENTITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

In the past, St. Ann School personnel has utilized the parent survey as a tool to evaluate almost every department and service to students. In light of the responses from parents and the affect this has had on the quality of improvements, Father Breen and Mr. Foreman felt a necessity to move beyond the Academics and extra-curricular activities and re-visit the Catholic Identity of the school.

They invited Sisters Adrian Mulloy and Sister Louise Shoulta, RSM, both long-time educators and former Elementary and High School Principals, to create and implement an Assessment Tool to evaluate the School's Catholic Identity as it is visible to and experienced by teachers and parents.

Phase I of the Assessment included individual interviews with teachers. Teachers were invited to discuss relevant focus questions concerning the understanding of Catholic Identity and its presence in all areas of school life; Prayer and Worship, Community, Moral Development and Service.

Although the Administrative Team and Teaching Staff are never totally satisfied with their efforts to assure catholic identity in the school, it is present to a high degree. You will see it at the Children's Liturgies, their frequent Prayer Services. You will see it in the ways teachers approach their classrooms throughout the day. You will observe it in the way teachers form community in support of each other. You will find it in the lunchroom as they come together to share ideas and articulate how together they can better meet the needs of students. It is apparent in service partners and service projects which are having an impact on the civic community. It is present in the environment where children come first and are expected to treat teachers and each other in that same manner. According to one teacher, "You just have to walk down the hall and you feel that *God experience*."

Phase II was directed toward parents. 68 families returned completed surveys. 95% of these parents feel the Catholic identity of St. Ann School is immediately visible. They see this in the exterior environment where Catholic symbols are tastefully displayed. They see it in the faith development of their children through weekly Liturgical Celebrations, in the emphasis placed on daily prayer services, and the reception of sacraments. Parents see this in the celebration of Catholic feasts and traditions. They feel that Catholic identity is also reflected in the attitudes and behavior of the children in school and at home.

Parents perceive the emphasis on service as a vital influence on the faith development of their children. They feel that the hands-on experience which involves every child in the school is a very important step in teaching children the values and rewards of giving to others.

There was some concern about "non Catholic" prayers and hymns used at the Children's Liturgies and use of holy cards as a fading tradition. One parent expressed dissatisfaction with the discipline, at least in some classrooms. One person expressed a concern for marketing non-Catholic children because of financial needs.

The complete Study and all responses are available on St. Ann Website

<http://saintannparish.com/school/index.htm>