



**SHARE**  
*in the*  
**SPIRIT**

A COLLECTION FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE

CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
WILMINGTON

**SEPTEMBER 25 & 26 2021**

HELPING TO PROVIDE A CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN

# Infusion of Love Hits Home Thanks to Catholic Education

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION IS A GIFT; PRESSED DOWN AND OVERFLOWING.** by *Sheila McGirl*

**M**y family's experience with Catholic education has impacted us on so many levels. Our lives are better because of Catholic schools.

Raising children, it is important for them to experience our beautiful faith. We hoped to teach our children to live well, serve well, and impact lives. My husband and I were committed to providing a Catholic education for our children, as we are grateful for the Catholic Schools experience that was provided for us. We wanted our children to also be challenged and guided in faith and gospel values.

A Catholic education is infused with love, respect, forgiveness, service, compassion, and responsibility. Providing our four children with the benefits of a Catholic education was a priority for us. However, as we were planning, tragedy struck. My husband became disabled. He was unable to work and was physically and cognitively impaired. A hardworking mechanical engineer, he was now incapable of working again. And, I at the time, was a stay at home Mom. Ultimately, I turned to my pastor for help and began working for church (that is where my journey, working for diocese began). While I was grateful to be working, I was not making enough money to cover tuition for my children.

Our family needed help. Thankfully, we were able to keep our children in

their Catholic schools. Our family received tuition assistance. It was very difficult to be on the receiving end and to accept this gift. At the time, a priest friend of our family counseled me, "accept the help – you may be someone else's path to heaven." Receiving that helping hand was/is a dream come true for our family. I am extremely grateful



for the good people who donated to the tuition assistance fund when my family needed a helping hand. Our faith was certainly strengthened – and the experience impacted my career path. I am now the Director of Development for the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington.

Not only were my children provided a first class education that yielded scholarships when the older ones headed to college, it also taught them the importance of caring for the community and supporting those around them. My two oldest children pursued careers in television journalism. When you ask

them why they chose these fields, they respond: they want to tell stories that impact people. They hope to shine a light on powerful stories of perseverance or injustice, help someone in need, and give a voice to the voiceless. Our third oldest son works in the service industry where he encounters many poverty stricken people. He engages them with compassion and does his best to provide for some of their needs and connect them to people who may be able to help. Our youngest is a sophomore in high school and community service is instilled in her. All four of our children enjoy helping others and now I am able to pay full tuition for our youngest child. Our family is grateful to have the opportunity to 'give back' in service of others.

Every day, we are reminded of the kindness extended to us. Everybody needs a little help sometime. I know my children will continue to give back and impact lives. Catholic schools teach our young people: we are all in this together – and helping one another is key! A Catholic education is a gift; pressed down and overflowing.



For more information on how you may be able to help a family like ours – with a helping hand – contact: [smcgirl@cdow.org](mailto:smcgirl@cdow.org) or call: (302) 573-3121

# FAQs

## SHARE *in the* SPIRIT

### What is the Share in the Spirit campaign all about?

Share in the Spirit is an annual collection for tuition assistance of the Diocese of Wilmington. The collection is conducted at all Masses during the fourth weekend of September. This year, the collection will take place on September 25th and 26th, 2021. The funds raised are combined with the interest acquired from the diocese's Vision for the Future of Education Trust to provide assistance to elementary and secondary school students whose families struggle to afford the full cost of tuition.

Every family who receives tuition assistance pays for a portion of their child's tuition. Your participation in this campaign helps to support hard-working families to make the dream of a Catholic education a reality

### What is the need?

Each year, the applications we receive for tuition assistance far outweighs the level of support we are able to provide.

For example: Of the more than 1,000 applications, FACTS, an independent agent that analyzes the financial need of each applicant, determined that more than \$4.5 million would be required to fulfill the maximum need of every family qualified. And, every year, this number increases.

For this 2021-2022 school year—we have allocated \$884,400 to 363 students in need. Thanks to the generosity of donors and sponsors like you, we have been able to increase the amount distributed by 24%. This year, we provided assistance to 363 students—which is an increase over the 318 students last year.

Having these limited resources, the support for 2021-2022 represents only approximately 20% of the calculated need.

### Why is Catholic education worth the investment?

An investment in Catholic Education is an investment in the future. National studies reveal, Catholic schools develop future leaders who impact communities. Catholic schools instill the importance of people helping people; emphasizing, we are all in this together.

Catholic schools provide smaller class sizes; taught by teachers who are passionate about the faith and learning experience. Students are provided critical and creative thinking skills, self-confidence

and purpose, and are encouraged to contribute to a better world.

Here in the Diocese of Wilmington, our students are provided a resource-rich education of mind, body and soul. Ninety-nine percent of Catholic High School students graduate from high school, and are committed to service and compassion.

For more information about our Share in the Spirit collection, and the Diocese of Wilmington tuition assistance program, visit [www.cdow.org/sharespirit.html](http://www.cdow.org/sharespirit.html).

## Sponsor a Student

**T**HE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON believes that all children who desire to attend a Catholic school should be given the opportunity to do so, regardless of their family financial position. Unfortunately, each year, many children are unable to remain in our Catholic schools simply because tuition expenses have grown beyond their family's reach.

The diocese has established a Vision for the Future Sponsorship Program that matches donors with students in need of tuition assistance. This program compliments the Share in the Spirit collection and the Diocese's Vision for the Future Education Trust.

With an annual contribution of \$2,000 or more, you can support an elementary school student in need. Your sponsorship will be designated to a K-8 student whose family, based on financial evaluation, qualifies for tuition assistance.

Your sponsorship is a very special way to provide an education focused on academic rigor and student achievement in an atmosphere of deep faith and spirituality. Your investment in Catholic education will make a difference in the life of a Catholic school student, their family and the community. Because, when you sponsor a Catholic school student, you are helping to instill in them self-discipline, personal integrity and moral values that prepare them to become leaders, committed to social responsibility and civic duty.

Everybody needs a little help sometime!