



**Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland**  
**Bishop Emeritus**  
**Diocese Kansas City ~ St. Joseph**

**National Catholic Schools Week**  
January 29 -- February 4, 2005

My Dear Friends in Christ,

This week, our nation celebrates Catholic Schools Week under the banner of *Faith in Every Student*. This is a time for our Catholic community to reaffirm the spiritual value of all children in the eyes of God, to encourage our young people to reach for academic achievement, and to recognize families and parishes for the sacrifices made on behalf of education.

When the Holy Father named me Bishop of Birmingham, I selected as my Episcopal motto, "Go Teach All Nations." These words from Matthew's Gospel remind me that Jesus challenged his disciples to teach others to observe all that He taught and to remember that He will remain with us, until the end of time.

Our Catholic schools offer us an ideal forum to carry out this commission. Day in and day out, our schools form our young people into disciples. In partnership with their parents, our principals and teachers help young people to see, to understand and to respond to the needs of others. It is not buildings or classroom crucifixes that make our schools Catholic, it is the way our students grow spiritually and interact with the world.

Through our schools, young people come together as a community of faith. They pray. They learn the traditions of our forebears. They support each other on their journeys. They give and they receive the gifts of faith.

Catholic schools are challenged to ground our children in the teachings of Christ. We need them to become change agents – able not only to cope with the world, but inspired to transform the world with the teachings of the Gospel. Today, and every day, we give thanks for our schools, their rich heritage and their role in shaping the hearts and minds of tomorrow's leaders.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Most Reverend Raymond J. Boland, D.D.  
Bishop of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph