



Nurturing Wonderful Mentors

Sr. Catherine Meinert, SC.

I first met Sr. Catherine Meinert in August of 2002, when I interviewed for a teaching position at Conn-Area Catholic School. She was the principal of the school, which at that time was located on Prospect Street, beside the Immaculate Conception Church. It did not take long to see that she was a remarkable person. Anyone who knew Sr. Catherine was impressed by her intelligence and her goodness to all people. She was a born leader.

Sr. Catherine was a Sister of Charity and began her mission in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, where she was raised, incidentally in the same city of Bloomfield, where I was born and spent the first ten years of my life. She started out as a teacher and later became a principal. Once engaged to be married, she heard God’s call to become a sister and rightfully answered that call. There is no mistaking that Sr. Catherine was born to do great works for our Lord.

She was assigned to Conn-Area Catholic School in 1996. During her time at the school, she accomplished much. In addition to launching the technology program, she was instrumental in moving the 7th and 8th graders to the Geibel Catholic building, under the direction of the Diocese of Greensburg. She began the first Conn-Area Catholic School preschool program, as well as the highly valued Extended Care program. Most of the wonderful traditions we have at the school came from Sr. Catherine. She came to work early and worked late because of her love for the school and its students.



In addition to her life at the school, Sr. Catherine was involved on many committees, most of which had a mission that would support the work of God, such as *Alternatives. Yes*, a pro-life organization. If there was a need for good to be done, she was there to make it happen.

We lost Sr. Catherine on July 24th, after a long struggle with health issues, all the while, working as she carried her cross. She is an amazing example of what it means to serve the Lord, in a very selfless way. May eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. Thank you, Sr. Catherine, for making Conn-Area Catholic School ‘Centered in Christ’.

***“Precious in the sight of the Lord,
is the death of His saints.”***

Psalm 116:15

Inside this issue

- TOPS 2
- EITC..... 2
- Pro-Life 2
- Student Spotlight 3
- Extended Care Programs 3
- 9-11 Prayer Service 3
- Chapel 3
- Donors Recognition..... 4-5
- Greenhouse/Aquaponics 6
- Volunteers 7
- Opportunities..... 7

Sponsoring Parishes

- Immaculate Conception (Connellsville)
- St. Aloysius (Dunbar)
- St. John the Baptist (Scottdale)
- St. John the Evangelist (Connellsville)
- St. Joseph (Everson)
- St. Pius X (Mt. Pleasant)
- St. Raymond of the Mountains (Donegal)
- St. Rita (Connellsville)
- Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Mt. Pleasant)

The St. Pope John Paul II Tuition Opportunity Partnership student is one whose family has entered an agreement into a partnership with donors who will provide them with assistance for their tuition if they are in need. In return, that student must be an active member of their faith, do well academically, have good attendance, and show leadership qualities through service to church and school. If you know of anyone who might be interested in this partnership, please have them contact the office at 724-628-5090. With over \$20 million available across the diocese, over five years, there is no reason a family who desires a



Catholic education cannot have this for their child. We are blessed to have donors who deeply know the value of a Catholic education and care enough to want that for everyone. This gift is truly an act of faith in efforts to build the kingdom of God.

“The future is in your hearts and in your hands. God is entrusting to you the task, at once difficult and uplifting, of working with Him in the building of the civilization of love.”
- Saint John Paul II



EITC

You may very well qualify to have your Pennsylvania tax dollars be given to Conn-Area Catholic School, instead of to the government. This makes paying taxes something to be excited about. Individuals must earn a minimum of \$115,000 in state taxable income individually or together, if filing status is Married Filing Jointly. A minimum contribution of \$1,000.00 is required to participate. The business or individual receives credits against Pennsylvania State Taxes for 90% of that amount each year. The school will receive 100% of that donor’s contribution for tuition assistance in the next school year. The 10% may be claimed as a charitable contribution. If you would like to learn more, we would be happy to set up a lunch meeting or phone call with our diocesan EITC representative, Mr. Bill Barnes.

Pro-Life

As baptized Christians, we have a responsibility to stand up for life. At Conn-Area Catholic School we teach respect of all life: the elderly, the poor, the sinner, the lonely, the sick, and the unborn. We do this by focusing on the positive aspects of life. We make cards for the shut-ins, we provide for those in need through canned food collections, we pray for the sinners and those who are lonely, and we celebrate new birth and collect baby items for those parents in need. Our students participate in our very own March for Life. Students make their own posters that celebrate God’s creation. They march around the gym in solidarity that life is a gift from God, and they commit to show respect in all of its forms. Within our hallway, we have a pro-life bulletin board where the newest members of our school community are posted. Each new baby from our school community sends us a photo to be added to the board. It is a beautiful reminder that God created us with a purpose and we are here to fulfill that purpose. “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5.



Student Spotlight Winner

Addison Casini is a sixth grader who started out at Conn-Area Catholic School as a preschooler. From the very start, Addison exemplified what it means to be a star student. The title Student Spotlight fits her well since her leadership demeanor and positive attitude are obvious to those around her. She is conscientious about her work, goes above and beyond with the quality of her academics. She is organized and prompt with assignments. Addison has been known to offer assistance to her peers when they struggle with learning. She enjoys helping her teachers, when a need arises. From a very early age, Addison has greeted the faculty and staff by name when she sees them and continues to show that respect every day. She has been tasked with greater responsibilities, as she has proven herself to be reliable. She takes leadership responsibilities seriously and naturally.



Addison has been taking dance lessons since she was three years of age and has been dancing competitively for the past four years. She also is active in basketball, as a member of the Conn-Area Catholic team, for the past four years. She is a viable member of her church, Holy Cross in Youngwood. She is the lector at the church, weekly. She is actively involved in the church's Youth ministry, attending all the meetings and activities offered through this program. These activities have included putting together care packages for the Navy, helping with making and serving food at the Knights of Columbus Santa breakfast, and making cards for the church's homebound. She has also assisted the kindergarten teacher with CCD classes at Holy Cross Church. Addison and a friend organized and executed a program they named Blessing Bags, where they collected donations and created bags for those in need in Fayette County. She plans to become an altar server for the church, as well. Thank you for your service, Addison.

Early Morning Drop-Off and After School Care

Conn-Area Catholic School offers its families a service that is a great support to working families. Students can be dropped off at the school as early as 7:15 a.m. We also have an after school program that extends supervision as late as 6:00 p.m. On days of two-hour delays, students can be dropped off at 8:00 a.m. During these non-school hours, students have an opportunity to do homework, do crafts, play games, and share in snack time. For some, it also satisfies 'play dates' with schoolmates. Whatever your needs, it is always nice to know there is a place that provides a safe environment for the children and convenience for their parents.



9-11 Prayer Service



Since September 11, 2001, Conn-Area Catholic students have invited our first responders, fire fighters, police force, military personnel, and medics to a prayer service in their honor. Each anniversary of that horrific day we remember in a special way all who lost their lives and appreciate all those whose mission it is to save lives and promote peace. It is through such acts of courage and love that we live in a free America, where we stand 'one nation under God'.

Chapel Prayer

On the second floor of our building sits a beautiful chapel. The chapel provides a wonderful space for prayer and reflection. Twice a month, when our first through sixth graders board a bus to Immaculate Conception Church for Mass, our preschoolers and kindergarteners head to the chapel to do a prayer service suited for children ages four and five. Conducted by their teachers, this is a spiritual way of bringing our young members into a deeper relationship with Jesus.

This chapel is also used by the entire student body during the season of Lent, when we pray the Stations of the Cross each week. The Stations in the chapel are absolutely beautiful.

During the seasons of Advent and Lent, our priests provide a day to hear confessions. Having the chapel available for Penance and Adoration has been very meaningful.



Dear Friends of Conn-Area Catholic School,

We come into this world to do great things; great things for the glory of God. Often baptized as babies, we spend our whole lives learning what it means to be Christians. We learn to pray, to thank God for our blessings, to ask God to protect those dear to us. Our spiritual lives grow deeper as we interact with those who are sent into our lives. We search for the message that will discern who we are and what we are intended to do for His glory.

No matter where we are in this journey, the support we receive from those around us should not be taken for granted. The people in our lives are put there to help shape us whether their presence provides the comfort we need in our lives or the struggles that shape us to become better at who we can become. We must value every trial and every triumph. Each one guides us to our Lord.

In I Peter 4:10, it reads "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied Grace." We are the body of Christ, to work for one another and with one another. On behalf of the Conn-Area Catholic School faculty and staff, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your part in supporting our journey, as we work each day to build up the church and to bring our students on that same journey. Your support, whether through prayer, financial donations, or whatever way you are a steward of God's work, you have made our travels more spiritual. You are a gift to us.

May God Bless You,

Mrs. Cecilia C. Solan, Principal

Sincere Appreciation to our Annual Appeal Donors as of December 31, 2023

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Dr. & Mrs. Edward Spotts -
**In Memory of Sally Ebbert*
Mr. & Mrs. Dustin Traill -
**In Memory of Kristina Matyi*

thank you!

Aquaponics Flourishing

On August 7, 2023, Fr. Paul Lisik blessed our greenhouse. In attendance, were our superintendent, Dr. Nancy Rottler and Mr. Bill Barnes, Director of Special Projects. It was during this event that we also recognized our volunteers who helped to build the structures. Mr. Michael Sharbaugh, Mr. John Sharbaugh, Mr. Gerry Solan, Mr. Jonathan Coholich, and helping out with the aquaponics process, Mr. Scott Ritenour. Mrs. Kristin Baker and the PTG officers provided a wonderful social, with refreshments that came from the greenhouse gardens. The PTG officers' children also spoke at the event, sharing what they have learned in their science classes from this addition to the curriculum.

Last year's newsletter reported that the greenhouse had been erected, the aquaponics system installed, and we were preparing to begin planting seeds. Now one year under our belts, we are reaping the benefits. Our tomato plants responded well to the nutrients fed to it by the waste of the Koi fish. Looking more like a jungle than a tomato garden, it produced an abundance of tomatoes throughout the spring, summer, and into the fall. Lettuce was the first to take root, and it also did quite well through the symbiotic process. Peppers, parsley, and strawberries were tested through the aquaponics system.

On the other side of our greenhouse, students planted their own seeds and took turns caring for them to fruition. Very soon, we will begin this process again, as the growing season draws near. Mrs. Tammi Kostley, our science teacher, has truly introduced our students into a fascinating process of supporting God's creation of the garden, a place where life begins and nurturing with knowledge and respect happens.



Amazing Families

The school's entrance area has, over the past twelve years, become overrun with weeds in the mulch areas, making it difficult to maintain. Our mission is to remove the weed-infested mulch and replace it with new mulch. We are two years into this three-year process. We could not have done this without the support of our wonderful parent volunteers (and their children). We thank Superior Mulch for their donation to our cause. It looks absolutely beautiful!



Opportunities



S.T.R.E.A.M.



Robotics



FAITH



SPORTS



Performing Arts



Leadership

Conn-Area Catholic School

Conn-Area Catholic School

613 East Crawford Avenue

Connellsville, PA 15425

www.connareacatholic.org

Call for an appointment to visit the school and to learn more about our great program. Registration for the 2024-2025 school year has begun.

Phone: 724-628-5090

Fax: 724-628-1745

E-mail: csolan@connareacatholic.org

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- ◆ Outstanding Academics
- ◆ Child Care Program: Before and After School
- ◆ Excellent One-to-One Technology (K - 6th grade)
- ◆ Foreign Language Beginning in Preschool
- ◆ Safe & Secure Learning Environment
- ◆ Greenhouse/Aquaponics
- ◆ Preschool through Sixth Grade
- ◆ Financial Literacy Program
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- ◆ STREAM Education
- ◆ Robotics Program
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- ◆ Sports Programs



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Time to Shine

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Centered In Christ

**FALL 2024
ENROLLMENT**
PreK through 6th Grades

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For More Information, Please Call 724-628-5090