



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION & FORMATION

SAINT THOMAS SEMINARY - ARCHDIOCESE of HARTFORD

My dear brother priests,

I write again to ask for your enthusiastic promotion of the September 21 and 22 **HOPES (Help Our Parish Educators & Students) collection**. As you know, this collection is meant to support the teachers and students by way of supplementing teacher salaries by providing bonuses at the end of the year to our teachers, thus enabling us to keep student tuition rates affordable for our families. This is vitally important, as our schools are where our students thrive and they are all tuition-driven.

While not every parish has a school, this collection reminds us all that Catholic education **is a universal mission and ministry of every Catholic parish**. Your support and enthusiasm in promoting this collection makes a significant difference in the lives of our children and educators.

To paraphrase St. Luke, "*There's something greater here,*" means that our parish schools are communities of Hope—led in Truth by men and women who know their students by name and who build welcoming, close-knit communities where the children know they are valued, loved and supported. Catholic education is more than great academics, it is about formation of the whole child—body, mind, spirit and imagination.

Moreover, your promotion of the HOPES Collection, which is our chief annual fundraiser, provides the vital support that our Catholic elementary schools in the Archdiocese need to help shape the hearts, minds and souls of the children who come through the doors each day. Why is your enthusiastic support so important? Well, every parish that promotes the HOPES Collection in the bulletin, in homilies and even in the end-of-Mass announcements tells an amazing story to our Catholic people. We inform the faithful that our children are leaders in academic excellence—far surpassing state and national test scores as well as in critical thinking and collaborative problem solving; we are leaders in robotics, champions in athletics and brightly shining stars in the arts and entertainment fields.

When I write the parish thank-you letters, I am amazed at how supportive some parishes are, and that tells me that the pastor offered positive talk about our Catholic elementary schools—and we have every right to be proud of our teachers and students—trust me, it is not a hard sell.

To make this as easy as possible for you, I have enclosed the **HOPES Collection Promotional Toolkit**, in which you will find:

- *Bulletin Announcements* for before and after the collection;
- *Social Media Posts* and photos located on the Center's website catholicedaohct.org/catholic-schools/hopes;
- *Talking Points* that you can use in your homily or announcements at Mass to talk about the Hopes Collection;
- The *Report Form* to return with your donation;
- *HOPES Collection Flyer*;
- The *Promotional Toolkit* can be found on the HOPES page on our website: catholicedaohct.org/catholic-schools/hopes.

Thank you for taking the time to acquaint yourself with our success story and for promoting Catholic education during the month of September. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Laura McCaffrey at 860 242 5573 or email her at laura.mccaffrey@aohct.org.

I thank you for your support.

Respectfully,



The Reverend Michael Whyte
Vicar