

May 2008

Dear Parents & Guardians,

With the arrival of the month of May, the entire school community comes to the distinct realization that the end of the school year is upon us. This is the point in the calendar when students and staff members recognize that the time we are to spend together as a collective school community is coming to a close. Seniors are beginning the process of notifying colleges regarding their acceptances, interscholastic teams are gearing up for league and state playoff runs, AP exams will be administered in the coming weeks, and many of our clubs are engaging in culminating events and activities. This fine group of students has accomplished much during the current school year. However, prior to turning our attention towards the summer vacation period, we all must engage in quite a bit of work as well as enjoyment prior to the conclusion of this wonderful school year.

Recently, Governor Corzine noted his desire to increase the academic standards for New Jersey public schools. As you are aware, Bergen Catholic High School administers a comprehensive academic program with course requirements and sequencing which go beyond that of the current State requirements as well as the proposed changes. When school systems make structural scholastic changes, it is often in response to a desire to prepare students in a more thorough manner for the current global society which is so technologically enhanced. Years ago, Bergen Catholic identified the need to immerse our students in these aspects and reacted by incorporating technology and internationalism initiatives into our educational program. The use of our laptop computers as educational tools as well as additional technological equipment and software and the implementing of international topics into every discipline have enhanced the scholastic experience for our young men. It is our belief that the graduates of Bergen Catholic are well-equipped for their collegiate experiences as well as their lives beyond.

On April 28, 2008 the Blessed Edmund Rice Scholars of the Class of 2009 organized a school-wide presentation on depression and suicide awareness. The Blessed Edmund Rice Scholars enlisted the support of the Ganley Foundation and as a result was able to bring Father Charles Rubey, a nationally renowned speaker on depression and suicide, to our campus for the presentation. Fr. Rubey spoke to the students in part about warning signs of depression, the church's view on suicide, and the need to recognize that mental health issues should not label a person crazy but rather as ill. The most powerful part of the event was when Mr. & Mrs. Ganley addressed the student body regarding their love for their son Jimmy, a Bergen Catholic High School Class of 2000 graduate, who tragically committed suicide in 2004. They both spoke with great emotion and grace about their desire to not let Jimmy be forgotten as well as their commitment to providing assistance to others who might be experiencing difficulties in their lives, which have them contemplating suicide. Immediately upon the conclusion of their remarks, the entire assembled audience provided Mr. & Mrs. Ganley with a well-deserved and

poignant standing ovation, which lasted for a number of minutes. That evening, Fr. Rubey delivered a similar talk to parents and community members. The goal of this event for the Blessed Edmund Rice Scholars was to provide information regarding depression and suicide to as many people as possible. In terms of the Bergen Catholic and local communities, they were extremely successful. If anyone would like to discuss issues pertaining to this presentation, please do not hesitate to contact the Bergen Catholic Guidance Department.

Please continue to monitor your Edline accounts to ensure that you are up-to-date with your son's academic progress. Finals are not too far in the distance so beginning to prepare for these assessments would be a wise move by our students. All exam directives and schedules will be posted on Edline shortly.

The year is moving quite rapidly. It is my hope that we all enjoy the remaining days with this fine group of young men.

Please find enclosed with this letter the following information:

- 1) Message from the President, Br. Lawrence T. Murphy, CFC
- 2) Prom letter for SENIORS ONLY
- 3) Honor Certificates for students who received PRINCIPAL'S LIST, FIRST and SECOND Honors during the Third Quarter.
- 4) Golf Outing Flyer

Sincerely,

Timothy J. McElhinney  
Principal