



Three area schools were recently honored by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee with Exemplary Recognition. Holy Trinity in Kewaskum, Holy Angels in West Bend and Saint Frances Cabrini in West Bend were among eleven schools from throughout the Archdiocese given this recognition. The three schools were recognized in the area of Catholic Identity and Mission.

Exemplary Recognition is how the Archdiocese recognizes and commends schools that go well beyond normal standards and requirements. Every seven years, Catholic schools go through a re-accreditation process. Schools must meet a wide set of standards, educational and religious, to be accredited. For Exemplary Recognition, schools have an additional application process. They gather evidence, and submit preliminary and final reports. Then a team, including the School Superintendent for the Archdiocesan schools, visits the school, touring the facility, spending time in the classrooms, and meeting and interviewing a broad cross section of stakeholders in the school, including parents, teachers, the principal and staff, the school advisory board, parish priests, and the students themselves.

The reasons for this special recognition are as unique as the schools themselves. Holy Trinity's mission is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, to provide high quality education, and to guide children in living the Catholic faith. Principal Jodi Casetta says that the school truly lives out this mission. "It's strong, clear, and concise, and it guides us in all our decision making." She points out the school's approach to marketing as an example. "We try not to market *at* people, but instead to invite them and welcome them. It's not like business marketing. We're here. We're welcoming, and when God calls people here, they come."



At Holy Angels school, each week begins with a Monday morning assembly that centers a discussion of scripture readings from Sunday and how the students can live out the good news in their lives during the coming week. Principal Mike Sternig said that during re-accreditation, the evaluating team noticed the strong faith community and family feeling that permeated the school. "It's part of everything we do here." The team recommended that the school apply for Exemplary Recognition. This is the third time that the school has received Exemplary Recognition from the Archdiocese.



At Saint Frances Cabrini school, Catholic identity begins in the classroom, according to principal Aaron Hilts. "Our priests regularly come to our classrooms to teach about the faith, and to answer questions when students want to dive a little deeper." Hilts is also proud of the community service projects that are built into classroom curriculum, and of the school-wide service. For example, the school recently honored patron saint Mother Cabrini with a Month of Charity, during which students gathered 200 bags of donations for the Albrecht Free Clinic.



The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has a commitment to excellence and continued school improvement that ensures the best learning possible for its students. The Exemplary Recognition Program, based on the National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, honors schools that have demonstrated innovation and outstanding results. It is unusual that all the Catholic schools in a local area would apply for or be recognized in the same year. "We are delighted to receive this recognition, and delighted share the honor with our neighbor schools," said Hilts.