



Important Notes from Mrs. Luzzo January 24, 2025

Don't forget to ROAR!

Happy Friday, HTCS families. What a week it's been! The leadership team was at school late this morning to assess the situation and the parking lots and crosswalks were still covered with snow and ice. Hopefully, with the warmer temps and sun today most of it has melted away by now. I appreciate everyone's support and flexibility as we attempted to manage the chaos caused by winter weather we aren't used to dealing with here in sunny SC. We are scheduled to reopen on Monday and students who return their completed work by 8 AM will be marked present for this week's virtual days. Praying that we see lots of sun this weekend!

ESTF Grant Application - All families with students going into Kinder and up who will be seeking tuition assistance and/or scholarships for the 25-26 school year **MUST** apply for the ESTF grant by clicking the link: [ClassWallet](#). When applying, you should be able to select "other" for your current school. If necessary, you can upload a report card or the attached letter, but I have been told by the Diocese that families should be able to select "other" as an option.

FACTS Update to family Portal - You may have seen the attached message about updates to Renweb/FACTS. Our district code is: htc-sc.

MAP testing - Testing will wrap up this week. Please refer to your child's teacher for more specific information about your child's testing status.

Catholic Schools Week - The annual celebration of Catholic schools will be held January 26-February 1. Each day's theme highlights the things that make Catholic schools so special.

Sunday, 1/26 - Celebrating Your Parish - Join us for **10 AM Mass** - The open house has canceled.

Monday, 1/27 - Celebrating Your Community - Annual blood drive **10 AM-1 PM**

Tuesday, 1/28 - Celebrating Your Students - Science Fair for all students

Wednesday, 1/29 - Celebrating the Nation - Parent viewing of Science Fair at dismissal **2:45-3:15 PM**

Thursday, 1/30 - Celebrating Vocations - Learning about vocations - The conversation with Deacon Richard, Sr. Marie, and Fr. Frances is being rescheduled to a later date.

Friday, 1/31 - Celebrating Faculty, Staff, and Volunteers - PTO treat for families, faculty/staff luncheon

Saturday, 2/1 - Celebrating Families - Enjoy the day together doing something fun

2025-2026 School Year - Open enrollment for new families and re-enrollment for current families (except current 5th graders moving onto middle school) will take place via FACTS at the end of January into early February. Information about tuition rates, tuition assistance, and scholarships will be coming out in a separate communication. We look forward to welcoming back all current families as well as many new families for a new and exciting 25-26 school year.

Science Fair Project Parent Viewing - Please see the attached information for parent viewing of students' science fair projects after school on **Wednesday, 1/29**.

Not Your Average Joe - If you would like to volunteer to help with the annual dinner show, either one day or both, please contact Mrs. Carman at ccarman@charlestdiocese.org. She would love to have your help!

Half Day - Friday, 2/14, is a half day with **noon** dismissal and no aftercare. All students must be picked up at noon. Please form two lines at dismissal and watch for faculty instructions so we can keep everyone safe.

No School - School will be closed on **Monday, 2/17**, in recognition of President's Day. We will reopen on **Tuesday, 2/18**, at our normal time.

13th Annual PTO Golf Tournament - Please see attached information about the PTO's annual golf tournament taking place at The Long Bay Golf Course on **Saturday, 2/22**. This is the PTO's largest fundraiser and your support is greatly needed to make it a success.

Sports Opportunity - Seton Catholic is starting a Varsity and JV Lacrosse program with their first season spring of 2026. Their coaching staff for both boys and girls programs are fantastic! In the meantime, one of our coaches is offering a free skills and drills clinic Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 3:30-5:00 PM. Anyone interested in the sport is invited. Please text Rob Cottle at 203-763-9471 for more information. HTCS students are welcome!

School Website - As always, please refer to the school website for all the information you could need regarding school events, clubs, sports, etc. [Holy Trinity Catholic School | North Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

Catholic Faith Formation - *The Gift of a Catholic Education* - By Frank Chiment, January 2025

In a world increasingly defined by technological advances, cultural shifts, and a fast-paced global environment, the value of education remains unwavering. For Catholic families and beyond, Catholic education represents more than just academic excellence; it is a proposition that seeks to nurture the whole person – mind, body, and spirit. It is grounded in the

teachings of Jesus Christ, with an emphasis on faith, service, and moral integrity. In this sense, Catholic schools are not just places of learning but of formation, shaping young people to be leaders of compassion, justice, and hope in a complex world. Indeed, this moral imperative is further consolidated by a document published by the Vatican in 1977 entitled, *The Catholic School*.

The value of a Catholic education lies in its holistic approach. While academic growth is important, Catholic schools aim to develop students' character and moral compass. Pope Francis has on various occasions emphasised that *"education is an act of love."* He believes that an education that fosters intellectual and spiritual growth ably prepares our youth not only to succeed in their careers but to live lives of service to others, driven by the Gospel values of charity, compassion, and justice.

A Catholic education sets environments where students are encouraged to ask profound questions about faith, life, and the world around them. It is a journey of self-discovery, not only through intellectual curiosity, but also by deepening one's relationship with God. Schools encourage prayer, participation in the sacraments, and reflection on Scripture, helping students to understand their place in the world and their responsibility toward others.

Students in Catholic education are supported to be critical thinkers and compassionate individuals, emphasising respect for the dignity of every person and an active engagement with social justice issues. Students are challenged to examine the world through the lens of the Gospel, and reflect how they can help build a more just and equitable society. It is not just about academic attainment but about a deep sense of responsibility to the common good.

Central to the Catholic educational experience is the integration of faith into all aspects of learning. Education in a Catholic school goes beyond the classroom, seeking to nurture the faith lives of students. Through prayer, liturgies, reflection days and retreats, students are encouraged to encounter Christ and explore their personal relationship with God.

This faith foundation serves as a source of strength and guidance, helping students navigate the challenges and choices they will inevitably face in life.

The Bishop of Parramatta, Bishop Vincent Long, is a strong advocate for the transformative power of Catholic education. In one of his speeches, he remarked, *"Ours is a Christ-centred community that fosters not only intellectual growth, but just as importantly, young people's emotional and spiritual growth."* (Keynote Address at the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese Symposium, 2022). Bishop Long's words highlight the fact that Catholic schools are deeply committed to helping students grow not only in knowledge but in virtue, spirituality, and moral clarity. The experience in a Catholic school setting strives to form students to be disciples of Christ, eager to share the Good News and serve others in their community.

Bishop Long also emphasises the importance of Catholic schools being inclusive and welcoming to all students, regardless of their background. He notes that Catholic education should reflect the Church's mission to serve the poor and marginalised. *"God's love is inclusive, is far reaching and it breaks down barriers. Catholic Education is about*

transformation and turning us into a symbol of God's presence in the world" he stated in his Homily at a Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese Education Mass in 2019. By teaching students to care for the most vulnerable in society, Catholic schools uphold the Church's social teachings, reminding our youth that their faith calls them to love and serve others.

In the Australian context, Catholic schools consistently rank highly in academic achievement, demonstrating that a commitment to faith and values does not compromise the pursuit of excellence. Across the globe, Catholic schools provide a rigorous academic curriculum that fosters critical thinking and a love for learning. Yet, academic success in a Catholic school is always interwoven with a strong commitment to service.

The idea of service, or "caritas," is integral to the Catholic educational experience. Pope Francis has often stressed that an authentic education must be linked to loving others and demonstrating a genuine desire to support the poor and marginalised in society. Catholic schools encourage students to see their education as a tool to make the world a better place. This might take the form of service-learning projects or advocacy for justice and peace. This approach not only forms young people academically but also socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

For many students, the experience of serving others is transformative. It helps them understand the value of humility, empathy, and solidarity. Additionally, it may amplify the messages of the Gospel even more. By seeing education as a means to serve, students are equipped to meet the needs of their communities and make positive contributions to society now and beyond. Catholic schools, therefore, have a dual mission – to foster personal academic achievement and to cultivate a commitment to the greater good.

In recent times, Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) has consulted, planned and implemented a new system wide Strategy, which reinforces the mission of Catholic education by focusing on faith formation, excellence, wellbeing, innovation, inclusivity, and community engagement across Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. This strategy outlines a clear vision to support students in becoming compassionate, creative, and capable individuals who are grounded in faith and prepared for the challenges of a rapidly evolving world. It rightly emphasises equitable access to high-quality education, fostering environments where every student is valued and empowered to flourish. By integrating contemporary and evidence based teaching practices with Gospel values, the strategy strengthens the commitment of CSPD Catholic schools to not only achieve academic excellence, but also nurture a deep sense of purpose, service, and belonging within their communities.

In an increasingly fragmented world, Catholic education provides a sense of belonging – a faith and learning community where students are not only known by their academic potential, but cherished as individuals made in the image of God. In this community, faith, hope, and love are not abstract ideals but lived realities. It is a place where students learn that their lives have purpose, and where they can develop the tools needed to be active agents of positive change in the world.

As Pope Francis and Bishop Vincent Long remind us, Catholic schooling is about more than academic success – it's about forming young people to be beacons of hope, responsible stewards of the world, committed to justice, compassion, and the common good. In a rapidly changing world, the gift of a Catholic education remains a profound treasure, one that continues to shape and inspire generations of young people. [*The Gift of a Catholic Education – Catholic Outlook*](#)

MISSION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School, a ministry of Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, offers to early childhood and elementary school students of diverse ethnic, economic, and religious backgrounds a superior academic program based on Gospel values. Within a family atmosphere, the school strives to develop the spiritual, academic, personal, creative, and physical growth of each student.*

VISION STATEMENT: *Holy Trinity Catholic School students will be fully prepared to transition to middle school possessing critical thinking skills, an ability to work independently as well as collaboratively, and an awareness of what it means to actively live the Gospel values.*