

# FROM FR. MIKE

January 28, 2024

It's that time of year to be grateful for the gift of Catholic education through Catholic Schools Week. Last weekend we heard some reflections from our school families about how important St. Elizabeth of the Trinity School is to them. There is an open house in the school this Sunday from 10:00-noon, feel free to ask questions and get a tour. I remember the sacrifice my own parents made to provide me with a Catholic education and the advantages that it gave me academically and spiritually, their sacrifice also showed me how much they cared about me.

You probably know that sadly, the Tax Credit Scholarship through the state of Illinois has ended. However, we have created our own Tuition Assistance Fund at the local level. We are setting up an account through Faith Direct but are already accepting donations by check or through the school's 'Give Smart' app. Your donations are tax deductible (not a credit anymore) but it's much more convenient now to donate. There are about twenty students who qualified for financial aid this year and we expect the same next year. Every dollar donated to this fund will go towards financial aid to families that could not on their own afford a Catholic education for their child. Dr. Hillmann will be following up with more details soon, please be as generous as you can.

In today's Gospel, we heard that Jesus entered the synagogue and taught the people. So much of the Lord's ministry was teaching. He taught through the parables and by interpreting the Word of God correctly. He taught by His example of sacrificial love. So often passages in the Gospel begin with the words: ***"And Jesus taught the people."*** So, a key aspect of discipleship is a willingness to be taught. The word disciple literally means "one who is taught, a student, a follower."

Are we willing to let the Lord teach us? There is a great humility in allowing ourselves to be taught because in doing so we are admitting that we lack something, that we aren't completely in the know. This was the great wisdom of Socrates who was considered the wisest of men not because he knew everything but rather because he admitted how much he didn't know. We need this kind of disposition with the Lord if we're going to be His disciples; we must be willing to be taught by Him as the psalm said: ***"If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts."***

We are humble before Christ and listen to Him because of who He is: ***"The people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes."*** The Greek words used to describe Jesus' authority are *"ex ousia"*. Jesus taught *"ex ousia"* which means he taught from His own being. Christ's ability to teach with authority comes from the fact that He is the Son of God, God from God and Light from Light. No other person who has ever existed could teach from their own being with authority in this way, even prophets invoked the message that the Lord gave them.

Every human being desires to know the truth of things, perhaps especially in a skeptical age like our own. Jesus Christ can be trusted, His promises can be trusted, for God can neither deceive, nor be deceived.

***If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts.***

God bless,  
Fr. Mike

