



St. Monica Catholic School

A Mission Ordered towards Reaching Eternal Life

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Monica Catholic School Opens its Doors to Home-Schooled Students

School also gains 3-d copier and puts emphasis on integrated curriculum

For the first time in its 56-year history, St. Monica Catholic School will open its doors to home-schooled students who may wish to try a traditional classroom experience for an hour or two a day.

Home-schoolers in grades K-8 can enroll in core curriculum classes in math, science, theology, English Language Arts (reading and writing) and social studies. Home-schooled students will be placed in classrooms on a space-available basis, and each course will cost \$700 per year. Home-schooled students will be expected to wear uniforms – just like other St. Monica students – and they can select used uniforms for free from the school’s “uniform closet” if they do not wish to purchase them new.

St. Monica Catholic School is the first Catholic school in the Diocese of Kalamazoo that is welcoming home-schooled students, at this time. Enrollment is open to any home-schooled student who is a member of St. Monica Parish, or any one of the seven parishes that financially support St. Monica Catholic School: St. Ann, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Thomas More Student Parish, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Mary’s and St. Joseph.

Principal Becky Reits said the school decided to open its doors to home-schoolers “when I was approached by a prospective parent, last spring, who mentioned that there is a need for and an interest in creative educational options such as these, among home-schooled families.”

Parents interested in enrolling their child in the home-school program should contact Mrs. Reits at (269) 345-2444 or via e-mail at breits@stmonicakzoo.org.

The Home-School Program is just one of many exciting changes happening at St. Monica Catholic School as the 2014-2015 academic year gets underway. Thanks to a very

generous donation, the school will also be receiving a state-of-the-art 3-D copier that will allow young engineers to test their talents, using real-world machinery. This fall, the copier will be put to use helping students make 3-D statues of famous saints.

The copier is part of the school's academic push, this year, to show students how the various subjects they study overlap and integrate with one another. Mrs. Reits, and six St. Monica teachers attended a "STREAM Symposium," this summer, at the Catholic University of Dayton. The event focused on science, technology, religion engineering, the arts and math – and provided what Mrs. Reits called "an opportunity for dynamic collaboration that ignited 'out-of-the-box thinking' and initiated a deeper commitment for comprehensive instructional change that revolves around student-centered learning."

Jim Rigg, PhD, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, said implementing STREAM concepts in the classroom is the wave of the future.

"For generations, Catholic schools have led the field of education in leading new ways of teaching and learning," said Rigg. "This legacy is embodied through STREAM. By focusing intently on science, technology, religion, engineering, the arts and math, our schools can provide an education that forms the whole child while emphasizing specific skills necessary for success in the 21st century."

The STREAM conference will help teachers build on the success of a special STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) curriculum used, last spring, at St. Monica. This curriculum, sponsored by the nationally recognized Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP), resulted in four St. Monica students developing a science experiment that will be activated by astronauts on the Mission 6 Spaceflight to the International Space Station, this fall.

St. Monica will also be using a brand new theology curriculum this year – titled the "Faith and Life Series" – which is published by Ignatius Press and Catholics United by the Faith. The series is unique in that it includes a text for parents, so that families can implement at home the theological concepts being taught in the classroom.

"Our goal is to bridge learning opportunities across content areas where and when we can, knowing that the connection between home and school is the most important element in ensuring the success of all students," Mrs. Reits said.

St. Monica Catholic School offers educational programs to students ages 3 through grade 8. Its current enrollment is 334 students. St. Monica operates under the auspices of the Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo and is part of the Catholic Schools of Greater Kalamazoo (CSGK), a system which also includes St. Augustine Cathedral School and Hackett Catholic Prep.