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Nativity School to begin jubilee year celebration

Nativity School in Fargo celebrates its 50th anniversary this year with a kick-off event on Sept. 15 that will include a birthday blessing and cake and a "Fit for Fifty" family fundraising and "fun-raising" event. Throughout the year, students, faculty and staff will offer 50 prayers for their sponsors, 50 wishes for God's world, create a time capsule and other activities.

Anniversary events include: the annual Dec. 1 Advent evening; the Feb. 3 school carnival with a birthday party theme; and a May 19 all years reunion. The old Nativity Chargers' logo has been resurrected for this year.

About 350 students attend the kindergarten through fifth grade school, which is part of the Blessed John Paul II Catholic Schools Network.

Established in 1961, Nativity School has had a rich history of traditions. Father James Walsh was the pastor who opened the school. Sister Bridget was the first principal. Carol and Gordon Johansen were the first secretary and custodian and served in those positions for more than 40 years. The Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary were the first educators. Their commitment to providing the best Catholic education for children continues to be the goal of faculty, today.

Second generations of students keep coming to experience the qualities of Nativity School that remain close to the hearts of their parent-graduates. The school climate continues to focus on God's great love for each of us and each person's responsibility to share their own talents and gifts with others.

Nativity School is "accredited with commendation" from the State of North Dakota. The faculty continually seeks innovative, proven techniques and tools to improve student learning. Teaching the "whole child" expands the school mission to encompass the spiritual, social, physical and emotional growth of each child.

The school community celebrates faith in word and action. Students are actively involved in social justice activities and relationships. Parent involvement is a key ingredient of Nativity School. Whether assisting in the classrooms, serving on committees, praying for our students, or cooking up exciting ways to raise additional funds, parents and family members are appreciated and encouraged to be involved.

There is a song that is sung the last day of each school year that exemplifies the Nativity spirit. The morning begins early with family kite flying on the school playground to mark the transition to summer days. Then at the school Mass, the students sing the following song by Gloria Gaither:

"I am a promise. I am a possibility.

"I am a promise, with a capital P!

"And I am learning to hear God's voice.

"And I am trying to make the right choice.

"I am a promise to be . . . anything God wants me to be."