

Rugby Little Flower School Plans to Celebrate Catholic Schools Week

Sister Jean Louise Schafer, OSF

Last fall Fr. Tom Graner and Nick stood side-by-side at a makeshift table on several sunny afternoons behind Little Flower School in Rugby. As they pounded out the cement mortar and cleaned the bricks (left over after a recent refurbishing project) Nick told Father, "When they were building the school I had to stay home and help with the harvest. So I figured finally I get my chance to help build Little Flower School." Such is the sentiment of many of the parishioners in Rugby. The concept of a Catholic School had been on the mind and in the hearts of many parishioners of Little Flower Parish, since the early days of the parish. In 1942 this dream was realized with the building of the present structure which had been dismantled on the Northern Minnesota Iron Range and trucked to Rugby where it was re-assembled by local builders with the help of many local parishioners. That dedication to Catholic education has not waned over the years. This year Little Flower Schools marks 68 years of passing on the Catholic faith in a warm, family environment.

Why have a Catholic School in a community which has a very good public school system? When I asked several parents and grandparents why they send their children to a Catholic School I was very happy with the responses:

--"We wanted our children not only to be educated in a less crowded environment, but to also have the foundation of learning who created the world and how the world came to be. I recall one time one of my colleagues at work, asked why my husband & I chose to sacrifice and pay tuition for our children's education when the public school system was available? My response was two -fold: first, we want them to know how the world was made and by whom and that everything that we have comes from God. Secondly, we would like them to be known by their name and not a number. He was satisfied with my answer."

-- "Sending our children to Catholic school provided us with an opportunity to have our values, traditions and faith life reinforced in the school setting. Because the enrollment is smaller, compared to public schools, our children received more attention and increased help from their teachers. We as parents were able to be involved with the school, ensuring that that our values and ideals are exemplified in our children's learning and in social interactions. We were able to have a closer relationship with the teachers, thus able to address potential problems as they might be developing and before they became detrimental to our child's learning. We could come up with solutions that would greatly benefit the child in the learning process and in preparing for the wider world. The opportunity for weekly student liturgy and the Eucharist nourished their developing faith.

Our children have a strong sense of faith and a true belief in God. Most teachers in Catholic Schools feel they have a calling to be there. Their dedication and caring is a true ministry and is reflected in their teaching and in their charism with the students."

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