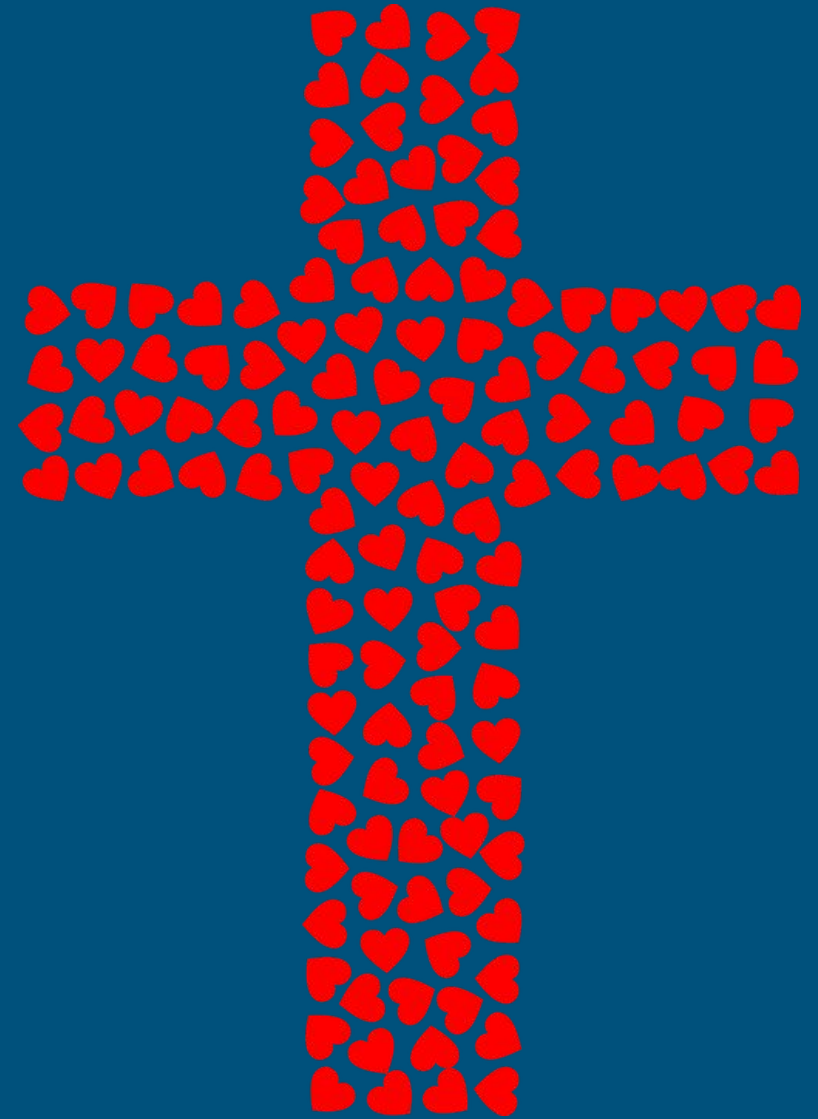


Diocese of Buffalo

Leadership for Catholic Schools

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Prayer of Sir Francis Drake

*Disturb us, Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true Because we dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.*

*Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst for the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.*

*Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wilder seas where storms will show Your mastery;
Where losing sight of land, We shall find the stars.*

*We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future in strength, courage, hope, and love.*

This we ask in the name of our Captain, Who is Jesus Christ.

Amen!



Joy!!

BLISS
CHEER
DELIGHT

TREASURE

FESTIVITY

TREAT

HAPPINESS
ELATION
LIGHTEARTEDNESS
TRANSPORT RAPTURE
EXULTATION SOLACE

GLEE

FROLIC

REVELRY COMFORT
MERRIMENT MIRTH GAIETY

GLADNESS LIVELINESS RHAPSODY
WONDER JUBILANCE
REJOICING PROMISE
ECSTASY





History of Catholic Schools in Buffalo

- First large arrival of Catholics was due to the construction of the Erie Canal
 - Thousands of immigrants to settle in western New York
- First priest to hold services in Buffalo was John Farnham of Utica in the district schoolhouse in 1819
- Diocese of Buffalo formed in 1847
- From 1847-1867, the number of Catholic schools and educational institutions went from 10 to 60
- That growth came with tremendous effort, and not a little conflict...

Gallagher, Sr. Marie Patrice (1945). *The history of Catholic education in the diocese of Buffalo, 1847-1944*

1850

“That the reproach about religious schools of St. Louis church lies not at the door of the trustees or of the congregation, but rather of the clergy of said church...as soon as the teacher had the misfortune of calling on himself the displeasure of the pastor, there was no more mercy for him and he had to leave the situation. That is a fact.” (p. 4)

circa 1840

No Catholic school has been established which, “thereby exposes the Catholic children...to be liable to imbibe the contagion of the various Sectarian doctrines so zealously propagated...against the practices and principles of our Holy Religion, and it, therefore, must essentially injure and...eventually withdraw the youth of our people from the Catholic religion.” (p. 5) -

October 1847

“Upon his arrival the bishop had no church or residence of his own thus necessitating his living with the pastor of St. Louis’ Church. In spite of the fact that he paid his board, the trustees of this parish wished him to live in some other place whereupon he moved to St. Patrick’s rectory.” (p. 10)

In the Catholic Union and Times (3/3/1892) it was written about Cathedral parochial school:

“The new school is a complete success. The regular monthly examinations show a succession of improvements in all class work and reflect credit on the teachers. These examinations are conducted on strict lines...It is merit and application that wins the percentage.”

The next line states that the **“school had to close because of the population trend which drew the people away from this section of the city.”** (p.21)

Gallagher, Sr. Marie Patrice (1945). *The history of Catholic education in the diocese of Buffalo, 1847-1944*

Relationship to Today

- There have been great successes for Catholic schools the Diocese of Buffalo
- But we don't tend to remember the struggles - it has been said that nostalgia is history without the pain
- It is important to acknowledge and celebrate our past success but know that it was never easy
- The saints of those times struggled and built Catholic schools through challenging times - closure was just an opportunity to build another Catholic school somewhere else
- The saints of today, all of you, have your own struggles through challenging times

Top 15 Catholic Schools in Enrollment - 1965

- St. Amelia (1553 students)
- St. John the Baptist--Kenmore (1422)
- Holy Family (1350)*
- St. Teresa's (1200)*
- St. Mary's of the Assumption (1120)
- St. Benedict (1108)
- Blessed Sacrament (1030)*
- Ss. Peter & Paul, Hamburg (1001)
- St. Francis of Assisi (989)*
- St. Aloysius Gonzaga (936)*
- Infant of Prague (910)*
- Queen of Heaven (900)
- Cathedral (896)
- St. Thomas Aquinas (895)*
- St. Josaphat's (860)*

* indicates a closed school

Catholic School Enrollment - Buffalo

1983-84 - 37,900

1988-89 - 29,800

1993-94 - 29,849

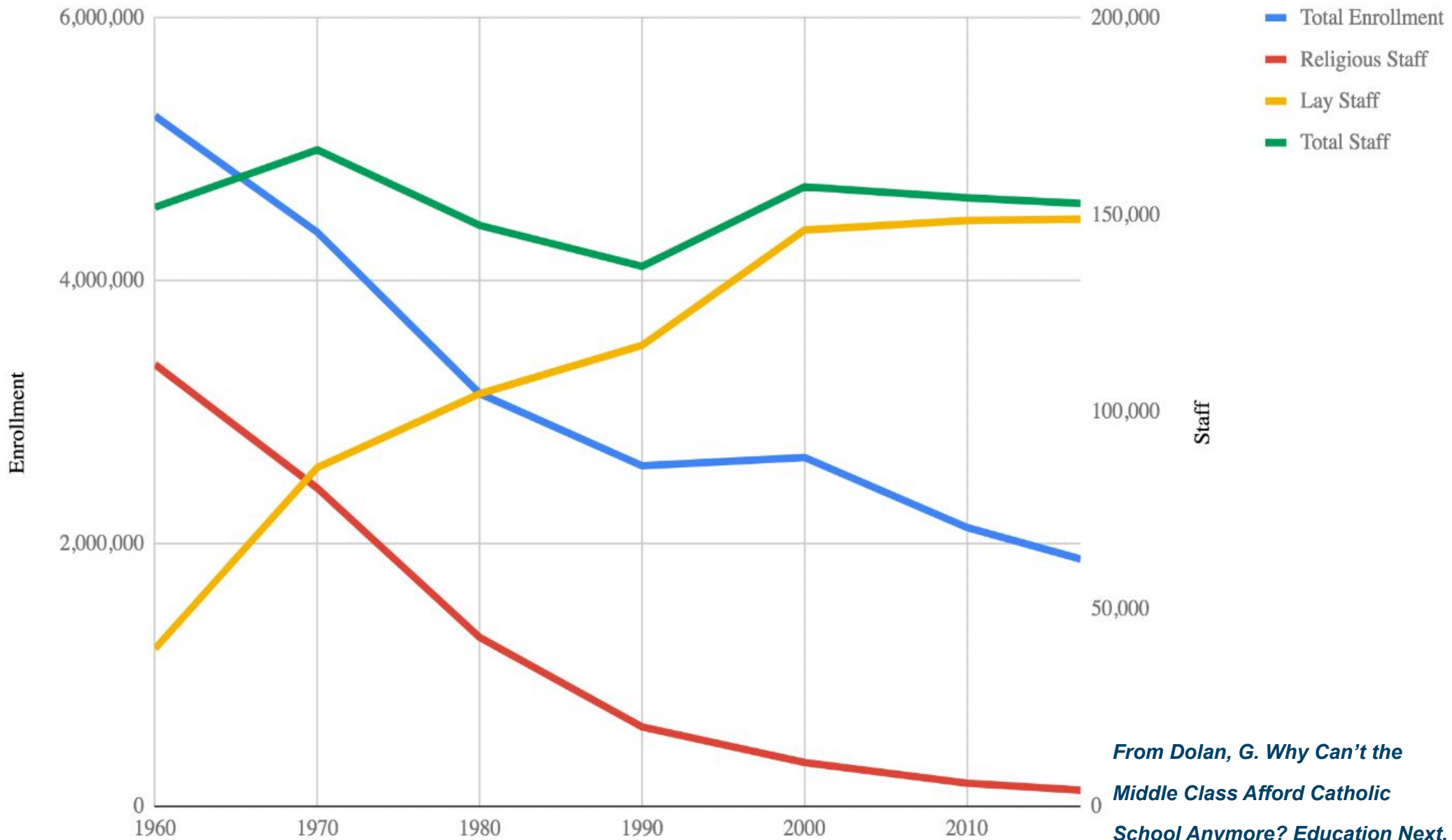
1998-99 - 29,759

2009-10 - 17,886

2014-15 - 15,362

2021-22 - 12,089

Catholic School Staffing and Enrollment Trends



From Dolan, G. Why Can't the Middle Class Afford Catholic School Anymore? Education Next. Data from NCEA.

How do we approach the problem?

Vision -> Strategy -> Tactics

Importance of Vision

- Vision is a collective understanding of why we exist and why we do what we do
- At the Gates of Heaven - How much did you love?
- A belief that the best days of Catholic schools lie ahead of us, not behind us
- If we lose that in Catholic schools then we lose hope
 - If we have lost a sense of vision, how do we get it back? What can inspire us?

Vision - Sustainability -> Growth

- Admiral Jim Stockdale – highest ranking POW in Hanoi Hilton for 8 years (1965-1973)
- Stockdale Paradox – absolute faith that you will prevail AND confront the brutal facts
- How did he deal with the struggles for so long not knowing what the ending would be?
 - “I never lost faith in the end of the story. I never doubted not only that I would get out, but also that I would prevail in the end and turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which, in retrospect, **I would not trade.**” (p. 85, G2G)
- The blind optimists didn't make it out
 - “You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end – which you can never afford to lose – with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be.” (p. 85, G2G)
 - ***You have to deal with the honest reality but never lose faith***

“I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.” ([Evangelii Gaudium](#), #49)

Vision - Confront the Brutal Facts

- All schools face adversity – deal with it head on and you will emerge even stronger – problems don't go away, they get worse
- Your focus should be internal vs. external
- “People often obsess on systemic constraints.” (p. 29, G2G, Social Sectors) - we do this in schools all the time...
 - Don't focus on things you can't control but those you can
 - You can control what occurs *at* the school, not what occurs outside of the school

Table Talk

- What is the vision for my school?
- What can I celebrate at my school or diocese today?
- What brutal fact must I confront at my school or diocese in order to move from good to great?
- What at my school do I have absolute faith in, regardless of the present reality?
- What is some adversity that I am facing now that I have to deal with head on?

Strategy

Growth = Leadership + Innovation

Leadership – Pebble in the Hole

Faith

Academic Excellence

Stewardship



Tactics - Leadership

- Stick to your Core
- Relationships
- Reflect
- Confront with Tact
- Level 5 Leadership

Innovation – Pebble in the Shoe

Culture of continuous improvement

Reject feeling comfortable - challenge is continuous growth, take calculated risks

Continue to operate in the same way will result in same outcomes



Tactics - Innovation

- Network Model
- Dual Language Immersion
- Microschools
- Rigorous focus on excellence
- STEM
- Governance
- Finance

Our Generation - Our Obligation

Making God Known, Loved and Served (2008)

- Call for Catholic higher education to more fully support Catholic K-12 schools
- Closed with a series of key questions for our generation...

“Will it be said of our generation that we presided over the demise of the most effective and important resource for evangelization in the history of the Church in the United States?”

Will it be said of our generation that we lacked
the resolve to preserve national treasures built
upon the sacrifice of untold millions?

Will it be said of our generation that we abandoned these powerful instruments of justice that provide educational opportunity and hope for families otherwise trapped in poverty?

*And the response, which needs to be the response of all of us who work in
Catholic schools today:*

Surely not. Instead, when the story of Catholic schools is written, historians will look back on our age and marvel that against great odds, we changed the ending.”

OFF-DUTY
NO HAY SALVAVIDAS
TRABAJANDO
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE 911
TELEFONO EMERGENCIA
KEEP OFF

24

EMERGENCY ACCESS AREA
PLEASE STAY OUTSIDE THE CONES



Walking to the Office...



A walk around the
lake...



Sacred Ground

- Notre Dame is sacred ground - but the same is true for every Catholic school
- Miracles are all about us - we have to adjust our eyes to see them
- But, they sometimes become a bit more clear...

Calling to a Sacred Space

“The Miracles of the Church seem to me to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from far off, but **upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always.**”

Death Comes for the Archbishop - Willa Cather

0:04



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