



Woodmont Academy

To Teach, To Educate, To Form

State of the School Address

Scott Brown – Executive Director

January 25, 2006

Good evening. I am very pleased to be able to speak to you tonight for the second annual State of the School Address. Just by standing here I know that I was able to fulfill at least one promise from last year, which was to make this an annual event.

I thank you for taking the time to be here tonight. My objective this evening is to bring you up to date on where we are as a school and where we are going. I plan to cover a variety of topics and I have included a couple of special features. If I miss something that you would like to have addressed, I will open the floor to questions at the end of the prepared talks which is a bit of change from last year.

In another change from last year, I have asked two other speakers to make brief presentations. Throughout the course of the year I get lots of questions about the Legionaries of Christ - who they are and what they do. So I asked Fr. Steven Reilly to make a short presentation and talk about his life as a Legionary priest and the role of the Legion in the church and our school. Later on, Mr. Farrell will talk about our Iowa test scores and our academic priorities for the coming school year. The good news in this is that I won't talk as long.

So without further adieu, Fr.
Steven...

(Slides from Fr. Steven's Presentation begin after Page 7.)

Thank you, Fr. Steven.

The school year thus far has provided great excitement, great joy and affirmation of our mission; a new building, the dedication mass with Cardinal Keeler and Father Joseph, a visit from the Lieutenant Governor, a 7% increase in school enrollment, and continued solid Iowa test scores.

Our students have continued to demonstrate their apostolic zeal, whether supporting the Medical Mission to El Salvador in November or the victims of Hurricane Katrina at the start of the school year or local charities through the upcoming Enterprising Kids Day.

And their spiritual and human formation is demonstrated to us every day in so many ways, but so very clearly demonstrated one day a week or so ago when a sick child was carried into the nurse's station by her teacher. After determining that his assistance wasn't needed by the nurse and the teacher, Mr. Farrell realized that there was a class on campus that probably needed adult supervision. He found them standing at the back door of the administration building, praying for their classmate.

It is these affirmations, and many others, that tell us that our formation is working. It is our goal to provide the very best possible formation; intellectually, spiritually, humanly and apostolically. But even as we see these indications and confirmations through test scores and high school acceptance, we know that there are areas for improvement.

Each year we assess our current program and develop a plan for the next school year. Throughout the fall and early winter the staff has been working on our plan for the 2006-07 school year. A major part of the development of our plan is to assess where we stand as a school. This is a common enough practice undertaken in many businesses and schools. We perform this assessment in a variety of ways. Some of the assessments are very simple; did we or did we not meet a particular goal during the past year. Some of the analysis is very introspective and involves frank assessment of our weaknesses as well as our strengths. No holds were barred during the assessment and it involved the entire staff. The result of this is to truly understand what is working and what is not. If it's working to make sure we understand why, and if it's not working to understand why it is broken and to put in place plans to fix the problems.

At this point in our planning process we have identified nine priorities and several high level objectives for each of these priorities. During January and February each department will develop their plan for how their department will help the school to satisfy the objectives.

These priorities will set the course for our school for the coming year and in some cases for many years. All of these priorities, regardless of whether they deal with finances or teacher professional development or improved communication, have, at their root, one common goal: to provide the best possible formation for your children.

As we developed our priorities, we took into account many of the things that you have conveyed to us in conferences, meetings or in passing in the parking lot. We have a strong program, but there is always room to improve, which is why every year we will go through this same process.

Tonight, I want to share with you some of the priorities that we will be working on during the coming year.

Improve Financial Stewardship. A key objective for this priority is the development, implementation and communication of a long range plan. This plan, the draft of which is being reviewed by our board, will help us to chart the course for the finances of the school so that tuition increases can be known well in advance, so that operational fundraising is not needed for essential items, and we pay for buildings before we build them. I will discuss portions of this plan in more detail a little later in my talk.

Improve Formation. The objectives associated with this priority largely deal with providing more opportunities for our teachers to improve their professional skills and to learn more about the pedagogy that we implement here at Woodmont. Some of this will take place in professional development days as well as summer courses. It will also provide increased funding for pursuit of advanced degrees. The priorities also address providing opportunities for seminars and a speaker series for you, the parents of our school.

Increase staff retention. As Mr. Farrell reminds me every so often, one of our most challenging tasks is to find and retain qualified teachers. Retaining staff involves a lot of factors; fair pay and benefits, a quality work environment, and a worthy mission. It also involves proper teacher mentoring and staff recognition. All of these are top priority objectives for the coming year.

Two of our priorities deal specifically with our curriculum implementation and assessment. At this time I would like Mr. Farrell to come forward to discuss our recent Iowa test scores and his plans for the coming year.

JOHN FARRELL:

Thank you, Mr. Brown. I'd like to add my thanks to each of you for being here tonight.

Each family with a student in 2nd, 4th, 6th, or 8th grade should have received test

scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills a couple of weeks ago. This evening, I would like to speak to all Woodmont families about the ITBS. I will review a little about the test, what the results mean, and how we will use them.

First of all, the ITBS is really two tests: one of Basic Skills, and one of Cognitive Abilities. Tonight I will focus on Basic Skills. This is an achievement test, and, along with other assessments, it is what we will use as a guide to improve student learning. It will be used to inform curricular decisions and to shape instruction.

Please remember that the ITBS is only a snapshot of a child's performance. It is what a child did on a high-stakes, fairly anxiety-producing test. It is only one of the many assessment tools we use. Other tools include: teacher observation, paper and pencil tests, exams from textbook publishers, formal and informal assessments, oral reports, etc., etc.

The test is important and informative, but it is only one assessment on one day. We look at it and use it, but it is just one of the measurement tools we use.

With that said, the test indicates that our students have many areas of strength. Obviously, there also exist areas in need of improvement. These are generally more areas of relative weakness than they are areas in which we are actually substandard.

Our students in the 2nd, 4th, 6th, and 8th grades did very well on the tests. Let me provide you with some specifics.

First, as a school, Woodmont Academy students scored approximately twenty percentage points higher on the test than did students in the schools of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. These are the students with whom we can be most closely compared. Furthermore, Woodmont students, on average, scored better than 88% of all the students taking the test nationwide. Additionally, as a school, we scored in the 99th percentile, meaning we

scored higher than 99% of all the other schools taking the test. Finally, when you compare our students to students in other private schools and students in schools drawing from families having high socio-economic status (which is the group to which we are being compared), we are in the top 16% of students.

Let me give some information by grade level:

Grade 2

Areas of Strength:

Reading comprehension, decoding; problem solving, critical thinking

Areas of Relative Weakness:

Spelling

Grade 4

Areas of Strength:

Reading comprehension, usage and expression; maps/diagrams/reference material

Areas of Relative Weakness:

Multi-step problem solving; capitalization; social studies

Grade 6

Areas of Strength:

Reading comprehension, vocabulary; math concepts and estimation; science

Areas of Relative Weakness:

Capitalization and punctuation; math comprehension, problem solving; use of reference material

Grade 8

Areas of Strength:

Math computation; earth and space science

Areas of Relative Weakness:

Capitalization

In terms of next steps, reports will be going to the teachers for further analysis. Some of the modifications to be considered, once specific weaknesses are identified, will be such things as:

- Change the sequence for introducing and reinforcing the skill.
- Change when the skill is taught and when and how often it is reviewed.

- Change the instructional emphasis (e.g. add more time teaching the skill, add more practice). We will do this for capitalization!
- Modify the curriculum by changing the way concepts are taught (e.g. more manipulatives, different strategies).
- Do nothing. It may be that the tested skill had not yet been taught, in which case the “weakness” was to be expected.
- Do more assessments. It may be that ITBS is not a good test of mastery. Some test questions have only 2-3 items. This may not be a sufficient number to accurately assess a student.

We will be continuing to assess so we may improve our instruction. One additional way we will work to improve is for our students in grades 3, 5, and 7 to take the Stanford 10 Test in April. The Stanford 10 is another standardized test which we will be evaluating to see if it better meets our needs. The Stanford is recommended as more appropriate for Woodmont students as it is designed to test students who are more like students at Woodmont Academy. We will continue with both ITBS and Stanford for at least a year as we evaluate them both.

Woodmont Academy is on the right track; instruction is strong yet we will continue to work at improving the curriculum. The test scores are similar in 2005 to those in the past. We have been and continue to do many things right.

In conclusion, Woodmont Academy students are doing very well. You parents should be pleased and proud. Your administrators, faculty, and staff will continue to assist in your child’s learning. But you are the primary educators of your child. I am asking you to assist the school in a specific way: encourage your child to read.

Not all children like to read. That’s okay, but the more we do anything the better we get at it. Every indicator shows

that reading is connected to overall improvement in test scores. Reading more cannot help but make the child a better student. Encourage your child to read. Please avoid making it a battle ground. Encourage it, foster it, and nurture it. One way to do so is to read to your child. Not just your Pre-K or kindergarten child, but right up to those in the eighth grade. Read to your child. Model reading by being a reader yourself. Let them see you reading. That is a powerful example. Please set that example in your home. Please read.

God bless you.

SCOTT BROWN:

It has been a very exciting school year and we look forward to the remaining months and all of the excitement that the activities of these months bring to our school. We are grateful for the extra space that the new building provides, particularly on rainy days. And we are most grateful, quite simply, that the building is completed and the disruptions of construction are over.

Obviously there is still some construction going on so let me update you on the remaining construction work.

Harkins Builders has largely finished their work. All items within the building that needed post construction correction have been remedied. There are a couple of building exterior items that they will complete in the next couple of weeks.

As you can tell by driving onto the campus, site work is still underway. The remaining site works falls into the category of storm water management. As part of the development of the property, we were required by the state and the county to install significant storm water management facilities. You see visible signs of this storm water management in several places; the large pond between this building and Frederick Road, the rip-rap along the north edge of Woodmont Drive just before the parking lot, and the work ongoing at this time which is installation of bio-retention areas. These areas filter road runoff before

it gets into ground water. Another part of the storm water management project will be the completion of new culverts in two locations at Frederick Road. We expect all of this work to be completed by the first of April.

We are also still on the hook to improve the Routes 97 and 144 intersection. We have lobbied and will continue to lobby for some cost sharing of this work. But, as it stands right now, we have to get this work done. Both the state and the county have been very generous with us in terms of the timing of the completion of this work and we are very grateful for all that they have done.

So by early spring all of the work in this phase of construction will be completed. And now we must pay for it. As I have said many times and was made clear in the case study for our capital campaign feasibility study, we did this backwards. We built the house and then went looking for a mortgage. The good news is that, with very generous support from the Legion of Christ, we secured a mortgage for the construction. And while the Legion is being very patient with me on repayment, the expectation is that we will make the payments on the loan. It is important for you to understand the role that the Legion has played in making the loan happen. Without their help, we wouldn't have the construction loan. They understand the importance of this school and want it to succeed in every way possible. They understand that this has not been an easy three years for us. And they are here to help us to succeed in our mission. It is equally important to understand that it is their desire that each Legion school stands on its own financially.

This past spring we initiated a feasibility study to determine our capacity for capital fundraising. Many of you here tonight were interviewed as part of that study. I received the report from the study at the beginning of the school year and while a little disappointed, I was not terribly surprised.

The cost of doing all of the work on this campus today is over \$12.5 million. I don't know that we had a realistic

expectation of raising that much but we hoped that we could get to at least half. Our main goal if we could not raise all of the money would be to raise enough to cover the payments until school growth and tuition revenue could cover all of the payment. As the report indicated, Catholic School Management (CSM), our consultant, believes that we could comfortably raise \$2.5 million.

So once the dedication was behind us I began working on a new multi-year financial projection to determine the effects of a \$2.5 million campaign. I worked through lots of scenarios and solicited input from a variety of people. And let me explain what I was trying to accomplish. I needed to make sure that I had a clear understanding of the next 5-10 years (or at least what projections are telling me about the next 5-10 years). I didn't want to launch this campaign and at the end have to say to you, thanks for the money from this campaign but we are in no better position today than we were three years ago so we have to launch another campaign against the same problem.

I can't see into the future. I can only evaluate and decide based on what I believe are reasonable expectations of school growth. Each year I will revise my projections based on the knowns that are before me. But based on what I know today, I need to do a couple of things:

- a. Raise tuition \$595 for K-8 and \$300 for Pre-K (I'll discuss this a bit more later)
- b. Launch this capital campaign

Our goal with the campaign will be to raise enough money to bridge the gap until our school growth catches up to the point where we can successfully cover the payments on the loan. The final goal will be announced at the official launch of the campaign in April.

Tonight, I am pleased to announce that we have begun the preliminary work to launch the capital campaign. Since we have not run a campaign of this type before, we have engaged the services of Catholic School Management, the consultant that

conducted the feasibility study, to mentor us through the campaign. CSM is a nationally recognized leader in the development field and their assistance will be vital in helping to make this campaign a success.

The solicitations associated with this campaign will be conducted in phases over the next 18 months. Many people indicated during the feasibility study their willingness to assist with this campaign and we certainly welcome that assistance as well as the help of all of our school community in making this campaign a success. More information about the campaign will become available over the next couple of months and beginning in May a monthly newsletter on the status of the campaign will be distributed.

Several people have already stepped forward to fill key positions in the campaign leadership and I would like to recognize them tonight. Andrew Smith, father of Woodmont alumni, Drew, and Woodmont students, Garrett, Clark and Amy, and future student Clare, has been working with me for the better part of the last year as we conducted the feasibility study. He has chaired the fundraising committee of the advisory board and in that capacity will serve on the steering committee for this Capital Campaign.

Phil Muth, the father of Woodmont students, Philip, Jack, Marshall and Rachel, sent me a letter shortly after the report came out offering his assistance in making any capital campaign a success. In meeting with Phil during the last two months, his insights and critical thinking have led me to believe that he would be the ideal chairman for this campaign. Phil has accepted my invitation to be the chairman of our first capital campaign.

Developing an independent school like Woodmont is a challenging task. It requires a lot of patience, perseverance, courage and certainly faith. I thank each and every one for all that you have done to get Woodmont Academy to this point. You are co-founders in the truest sense of the word. Tonight I ask you to continue in that

role by supporting this campaign, when the time comes, with your time, talent and treasure. We are at the beginning of what will become a long history of Catholic formation in Howard County and you can be one of those first pioneers who blazed the trail. I look forward to working together with our whole community to making this campaign a success.

As I said earlier, improving our financial stewardship is a key priority not just this year but always. As I developed the multi-year strategy and continue to refine it, one of the key factors that I have to take into account is tuition revenue. Tuition revenue grows through two factors; number of students, and the tuition level. Tuition revenue needs to cover our expenses but at the same time allow us to maintain a tuition level that makes the school affordable and does not increase at an alarming rate. Financial stewardship also means that we maintain control of our expenses at the same time understanding that every year some of our expenses will increase. As I said a few moments ago, for the 2006-07 school year K-8 tuition will increase by \$595 per student. Pre-K tuition will also increase for the first time, by \$300. As part of my commitment to our stewardship priority, I will do two things:

1. Work to make future increases predictable and reasonable, relative to known inflation rates and known well in advance
2. Work with each administrative department head to achieve an overall 10% reduction in administrative expenses in the 2006-2007 budget

Based on my projections, the combination of these things; the capital campaign, moderate tuition increases, prudence in our expenses, will set us on a course of financial stability so that we can be prepared to achieve our long term objectives for the school.

We have set a very ambitious vision for this school, to build a new school from scratch. It will cost, and has cost to date, a significant amount of money. It will take

many years for the full flowering of the vision to be realized. But even before that happens, every day, every hour, in every classroom, the mission described in our defining principles is realized, and most importantly our first defining principle: bringing souls to Christ.

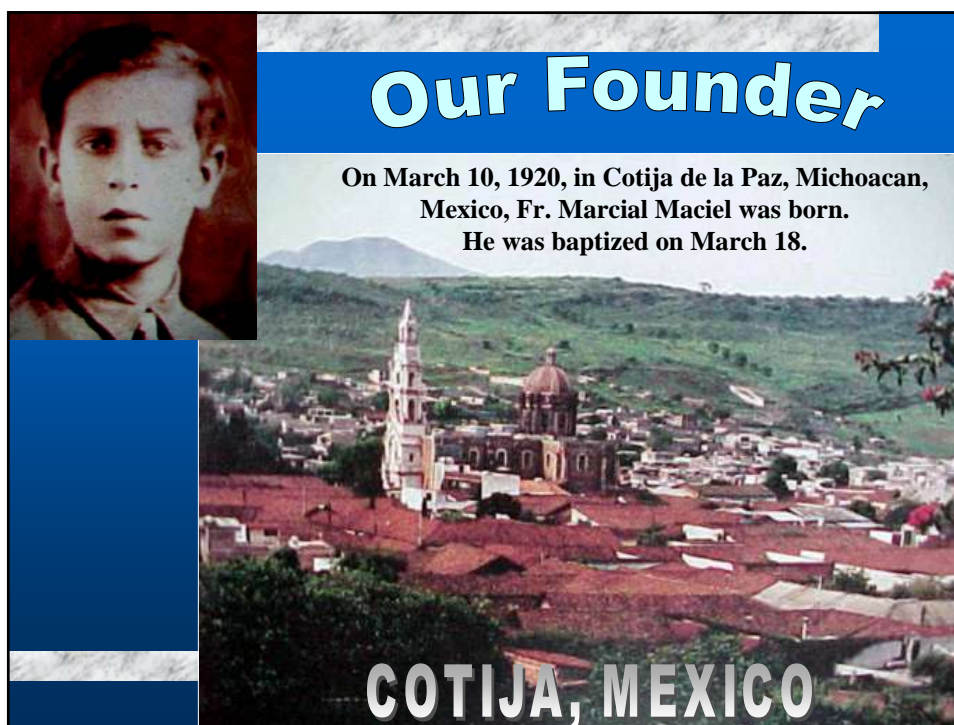
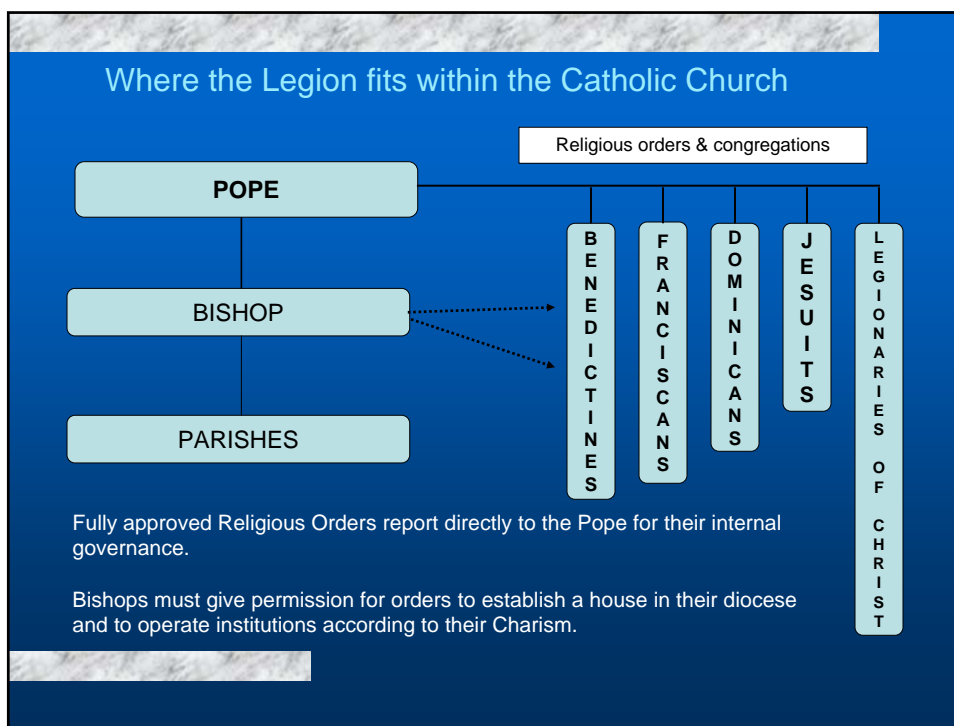
Woodmont Academy is not just a school where your children will learn the 3 R's. It is a place where they are integrally formed so that they can carry this formation into the world to lead with Christ as their example. It is an ambitious vision and an ambitious mission, but both very noble and both so very important.

Thank you for being here tonight, thank you for listening and most importantly, thank you for bringing your children to Woodmont Academy.

The Legionaries of Christ

Our Mission

- The Legion of Christ is a missionary congregation of Catholic priests committed to love Christ, serve people and build the Church. The Legionaries' ministry ranges from service to the Third World poor of Latin America to being "missionaries to an increasingly secularized world" in the words of our founder.
- Our mission is to inspire a new layperson, one who is deeply conscious of the demands of his baptismal commitment, and ready to commit himself actively to serve the needs of the Church and the world. Legionaries focus on projects that most effectively help spread the Gospel and the Kingdom of Christ on earth.





His parents were Don Francisco Maciel Farias, and Doña Maura Degollado Guizar. Marcial was the fourth of eleven children.

His great uncle, Blessed Rafael Guizar y Valencia, invited him to his seminary in 1936.



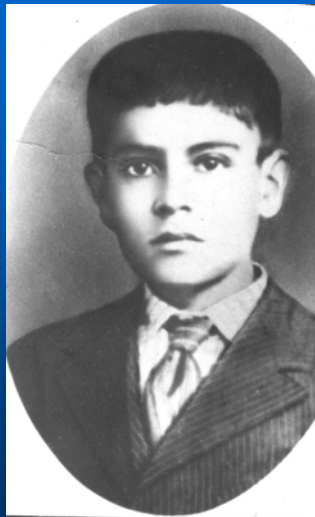
The "Cristeros" at mass before a battle.

Blessed Miguel Pro praying before his execution.



Fr. Maciel grew up during very hard times in Mexico. The government carried out an intense persecution of the Catholic Church .

The martyrdom of his friend, Blessed Jose Luis Sánchez del Río, February 10, 1928, profoundly impacted the young Marcial.



1941

January 3: The Legion of Christ is born in the basement of a friend's house in Mexico City, with a 20-year-old founder and 13 teenagers. It has the support of the bishop of Cuernavaca, Bishop Francisco González Arias.



1944

November 26: Marcial is ordained priest by Bishop González Arias in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico City.

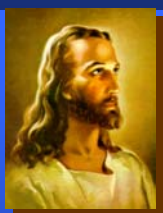


From this small beginning

- 660 Legionary priests throughout the world
- Over 2000 at various levels of formation
- 23 countries worldwide
- 15 states and provinces in North America



Spirituality



*Focused on personal love
for Jesus Christ*



*Looking to Mary as
the most
complete model*



*Rooted in the heart of the
Church and
completely at its
service.*

How to form a Legionary

12 – 13 years of formation

- Novitiate (2 years)
- Juniorate (1 or 2 years)
- Bach. Philosophy (2 years)
- Apostolic internship (3 years)
- Licentiate in Philosophy (2 years)
- Bach. Theology (3 years)
- Priestly Ordination
- Licentiate Theology (2 years)



A Day in the Life

6:15	<i>Rise</i>	2:00	<i>Rosary</i>
6:50	<i>Morning Prayers</i>	3:00	<i>Study</i>
7:00	<i>Meditation</i>	4:00	<i>Apostolate</i>
8:00	<i>Mass</i>	6:00	<i>Snack</i>
8:30	<i>Breakfast</i>	6:15	<i>Apostolate</i>
9:00	<i>Apostolate</i>	8:30	<i>Dinner</i>
12:50	<i>Conscience exam</i>	9:15	<i>Free Time</i>
1:00	<i>Angelus, Lunch</i>	10:00	<i>Night prayers</i>

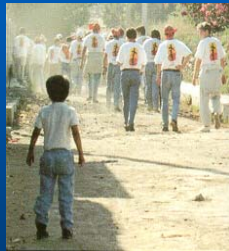
A View of Our Apostolates

Education

- 11 universities serving over 20,000 students
- 150 Legion Pre-K, Elementary and High Schools – Across the in Canada, Mexico, and the United States
- Institute for Psychological Sciences – Program providing masters and doctoral degrees in counseling infused with the spirituality and teachings of the Catholic faith.



Missions



- **Catholic World Mission (CWM)** – Fighting physical, intellectual and spiritual poverty in Mexico and South America
- **Mano Amiga Schools**
- **Helping Hands Medical Missions** – Volunteers providing humanitarian aid in rural areas of developing countries

Family

- **Familia:** an international apostolate dedicated to the well-being of the family.
- **Centers for Family Development**
Our Lady of Bethesda CFD
Springhill CFD
- **Three to Get Married:**
formation for engaged couples



Youth

- **Catholic Kids Net** – An internet resource designed for school-aged children from Pre-K to 8th grade
- **ConQuest** – A national network of spiritually-directed leadership clubs and camps for boys ages 8 to 16
- **Challenge** – A national network of clubs and camps for girls ages 10 to 16
- **Leadership Training Program (LTP)** – A program for 5th to 8th graders to grow in the virtues of honesty, responsibility, sincerity, tenacity, and constancy.
- **Youth for the Third Millennium (YTM)** – Training young adults ages 16 to 30 to participate in door-to-door missions in parish communities.
- **COMPASS** – A program for college students and professors to come together to improve the moral and intellectual life on campuses



Media

- National Catholic Register
- Faith & Family Magazine
- Catholic.net
- Sacerdos Magazine for priests
- Hombre Nuevo Radio and TV Show



Support for Diocesan Priests

- Pontifical International College
Maria Mater Ecclesiae
- *Seminary Rectors' Updating Courses*
- *Sacerdos Spiritual Exercises, Thornwood, NY*
- *Curso de Hispanidad, Mexico*
- Renewal Courses at Notre Dame Institute, Jerusalem



P.R.C.A.G.D.