



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

PRESSRELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Darcie Tallman, Marketing Specialist, Schools Office
515-237-5088 (office), 515-441-6329 (cell)

Catholic school students celebrate 3rd annual Red Ribbon Week

Over 400 eighth grade students from area Catholic schools will be participating in a special Red Ribbon Week event at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines on October 26 to raise awareness of drug abuse prevention and education.

During the day, Des Moines diocesan Catholic school students will participate in a variety of interactive, small group sessions that will address alcohol, tobacco, stress, illicit and legal drugs, nutrition and preventing brain and spinal cord injuries. Presenters from a variety of resource agencies will lead the small-group sessions, including Jesse Gildea from ThinkFirst Iowa Voice for Injury Prevention (VIP). Gildea was injured in a motocross crash at the age of 18 and is now a paraplegic. His primary job is to promote a message of safety to students across Iowa through the ThinkFirst Iowa program, sponsored by the Blank Children's Hospital. He speaks to students about his injury, how it happened and how it has changed his life.

In addition to the breakout sessions, all of the students will gather for lunch and hear keynote presenter Michael Wenger from Employee and Family Resources. Students will take what they learned throughout the day and share the information with other students at their schools.

Prior to the event, all of the students will participate in service projects to raise funds for the House of Mercy, one of Iowa's largest providers of transitional housing and clinical services for parenting women with addiction. All dollars raised will be pooled together and presented to House of Mercy at the event on October 26.

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*The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic schools serve more than 6,400 students through its 17 schools.
For more information, go to www.dmdiocese.org and click on "Schools."*