



DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

PRESSRELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 20, 2011

Contact: John McHale, (402) 578-1871

Saint Albert alumnus Joe Connolly named school's president

The Council Bluffs Area Board of Catholic Education nominated Saint Albert Catholic School alumnus Joe Connolly as the school's new president effective May 1. Bishop Richard Pates, Bishop of Des Moines, upon receiving this recommendation has subsequently appointed Mr. Connolly to the post.

Connolly brings to the position a formidable business background. Most recently, he was senior vice president of Mutual of Omaha Insurance Co.

In addition, he has a deep background with Saint Albert School. He graduated from the school in 1975, served as chief financial officer from 1994-1999, sent his four children to the school and been an energetic volunteer for the school community for decades.

"Joe Connolly brings the best of both worlds to the Saint Albert community," said Bishop Pates. "As a graduate, a parent and a longtime supporter of Saint Albert School, he has a good understanding of the community. As a 16-year executive at a premier financial institution, he has not only a solid grasp of financial issues but strong leadership abilities that will enhance the school system, a valuable asset to the Council Bluffs community. St. Albert is most fortunate to have Joe Connolly as its next president."

(more)

St. Albert...add 1

Connolly steps in at an exciting time for the Saint Albert School community in terms of new programs, academics and growth.

- The school is offering new programs at both the elementary and secondary levels to enhance student learning and extracurricular activities. An example will be a new pre-K through sixth grade Spanish program and the addition of mentoring programs at the high school level.
- This past February, the school was accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, the only Catholic K-12 system in the Midwest to hold that distinction.
- Saint Albert graduating seniors have been offered record-breaking scholarship dollars this year, a tribute to the school's college preparatory system.
- The school has grown by 13 students since January, and kindergarten pre-enrollment numbers are well ahead of last year's figures for the 2011-2012 school year.
- The school has community support. Tickets to the annual auction sold out in two days!

“Most importantly, we are experiencing spiritual renewal through many programs at Saint Albert Catholic Schools on a daily basis,” said John McHale, president of the Area Board of Catholic Education. In addition to a weekly all-school Mass and a weekly rosary prayed by students, staff, parents, grandparents and supporters, the school is using the Chalice for Vocations prayer program, holding adoration two days each month and encouraging high school students to perform hundreds of service hours in the greater Council Bluffs community. Just recently, a group of Saint Albert School seniors returned from an annual mission trip to the Dominican Republic, where they partnered with Creighton University to be of service to others on a global scale.

A 1981 graduate of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, Connolly and his wife, Cindy, are active members of St. Peter Church in Council Bluffs.

In addition to naming the new president, the school board has retained consultant Jeff Johnson to conduct a series of focus groups within the Saint Albert School community and the broader community over a six-month period beginning in August. The results will help the board, the school's foundation and administration develop a long-term vision plan for the future of the school.

(more)

St. Albert...add 2

“Please join us in prayer both for Saint Albert Catholic Schools and for Joe Connolly during this very important transition. And may God continue to bless all those involved in the furthering of the mission of the Saint Albert Catholic School System,” said John McHale.