

THE YEAR OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

WHEREAS, Catholic schools have existed in Colorado since 1864, when the Sisters of Loretto founded the first Catholic school at the invitation of Bishop Machebeuf; and

In the ensuing 140 years, countless parishes, families and young people have been served by Catholic schools, and these schools have been enriched by the charisms of many religious communities of women and men and more recently by the charism of our laity; and

WHEREAS, Teachers and administrators provide professionalism, personal sacrifice, daily witness to life, and efforts to integrate learning and faith in the lives of their students; and

Catholic schools collaborate with parents and guardians in raising and forming their children; and

Parents, parishioners, and benefactors, invest in Catholic schools in the form of time, talent, and treasure; and

It is the responsibility of the entire Catholic community to continue to strive toward the goal of making our Catholic elementary and secondary schools available, accessible, and affordable to parents and their children; and

WHEREAS, Catholic schools exist to cultivate in students and the whole Christian community a love for Jesus Christ, fidelity to his church, and commitment to the dignity of the human person; seek to assist parents in forming their children in moral and academic excellence; and in developing the talents of each student to the fullest seek to evangelize and serve the wider community in the name of the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, Catholic elementary and secondary schools, with their unique culture and identity, are schools for the human person, and fill a critical role in the future of our church, our country and our world; and

Young people are a valued treasure and a source of energy and leadership in our church and our nation in the third millennium; and

WHEREAS, The Church of Northern Colorado must respond to these challenging times with faith, vision and the will to succeed because the Catholic school's mission is vital to the future of our young people, our nation, and most especially our church;

THEREFORE, I, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, do hereby declare and proclaim that 2006 shall be **The Year of the Catholic School** in the Archdiocese of Denver, providing a time for celebration of the heritage of our Catholic schools, dialogue about the current challenges and opportunities facing our schools, and reflection on the future direction of the ministry of Catholic school education.



+ *Charles J. Chaput, of. c.*
Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Denver