

## Celebrate our Story 1980-1981 to 2010-2011 History of Holy Family Regional School.

St. Andrew Catholic Grade School was an important part of St. Andrew Parish until 1971. Escalating costs forced Catholic school doors to close in many parishes, including St. Andrew, due to the failure of Proposal C which was to provide state funding for non-public schools. Cardinal John Dearden was in leadership in the Archdiocese of Detroit. Adrian Dominican Sisters staffed St. Andrew School and lived in the convent-the building that is now known as the Parish Center and Neighborhood House. The school building was used for religious education classes from 1971 until 1980.

A 1979-1980 booklet of information written by the Steering Committee for re-opening the school states:

*Since the summer of 1976, there had been concerted efforts to re-establish Catholic education in the Rochester area. The first movement was in 1976 at St. Irenaeus and recently in the fall of 1979 at St. Andrew Parish. Although these two recent parish efforts have fallen short, they reflect a renewed interest in parochial education in our area since its decline in the early 70s.*

*The pre-registration drive in January, 1980 through February will allow the committee to know if there is sufficient support to continue our efforts. Parents are asked to make a deposit of \$100.00 per child. Mr. Dick Hanson was the Chairperson of the Registration Committee.*

*signed by: Dr. James Komendera, Chairman, Steering Committee  
Holy Family Catholic Elementary School.*



Experiencing the interest for a choice of Catholic education in the area and having an existing building available, a committee set an appointment to meet with the Archdiocesan Education Department to see if their dream could become a reality. After numerous contacts with the Education Office, the committee received affirmation but the Archdiocese suggested that the school be a regional school instead of a parish school. This would enable several parishes to finance Catholic education in Northern Oakland County. Their proposal was accepted at the time of Cardinal John Dearden's retirement from office. Since Cardinal Edmund Szoka did not begin leadership in the Archdiocese until the Fall of 1980, Cardinal John Dearden approved the opening of Holy Family Elementary School (later called Holy Family Regional School) on March 30, 1980.

**.How did Holy Family get its name?** 1980 was the Year of the Family. The committee chose the name Holy Family for the school since it would bring many families together for the purpose of Catholic Education. Because it would serve more than one parish family, the word regional replaced elementary.

An initial school committee, consisting of founding parents began contacting parents who sent in a pre-registration form with the deposit for the 1980-1981 school year. The school committee launched a search for a principal. Together, the parents took the awesome task of cleaning, painting and renewing a building that had limited use for ten years. Desks, chairs, tables, and educational equipment needed to be evaluated for usage. The building began to look like a school waiting for children.

**The FIRST Principal was Sister Susan Stockwell**, a Sister of St. Joseph, principal of St. Alfred in Taylor. Under her leadership, teachers were hired, books were ordered, meetings were held and registrations were confirmed. Holy Family Regional School opened in September, 1980 with 130 students in Kindergarten through Grade 6. The staff numbered 5 teachers. The students wore uniforms. Rochester Bus service started.

**The first handbook published in 1980-81, states:**

*"Holy Family Regional School recognizes the uniqueness of each student and provides for the development of each student's intellectual, physical, emotional, social and above all spiritual needs in an environment in which students grow according to each one's unique gifts.*

*Believing that education is a continuous search for truth, it has most meaning when there is an atmosphere with Christian values".*

**The Rochester Paper wrote: The First Day at Holy Family:**

"Holy Family brought the sound of children at work and play to St. Andrew's former school.

About 130 students, in crisp new uniforms, filed into the building when the bell rang for the first time in a decade."

**SERVICE** became a major part of Holy Family with students raising money in a rice bowl project for the people in Ethiopia and earthquake victims in Mexico. They seriously believed in the message of Jesus Christ:

"Whatever you do for others, you do for me."

**ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS** gave students recognition within the Rochester area. Students participated in PTA Reflections Contest; FRENCH Enrichment and STRINGS GROUP. Holy Family students were high achievers in the Rochester Optimist Club, Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee and Odyssey of the Mind. Sports records were broken by Holy Family 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> basketball teams

**The SECOND Principal was Mrs. Mary Lou VanAntwerp** who took over leadership of Holy Family Regional School for the **1983-1984** school year. In June, 1986, Holy Family broke ground for a new addition to the existing school building. An addition was needed to accommodate 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The school had an enrollment of 400 students. The new wing (which is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at the North Campus) would enable the school to have 2 classrooms of every grade. The new addition included a band room, computer lab and language lab. The St. Andrew Religious Education center was added behind the library. In November, 1986, the new wing was dedicated and blessed by Father Eugene Strain and Monsignor Edward Kuzava.

**The THIRD Principal was Mrs. Sylvia Trepanier** who took over leadership of Holy Family Regional School for the **1988-1989** school year. In July, 1989, Father Eugene Strain became the founding pastor of St. Mary of the Hills Parish which was a break-off from St. Andrew Parish. Father Tim Babcock became the Pastor of St. Andrew and the Pastor of Holy Family.

**The FOURTH Principal, Sister Karen Hawver**, a Sister of Charity from Cincinnati, Principal of St. Dennis School in Royal Oak, came to Holy Family Regional School for the **1991-1992** school year. Students numbered 508 in 18 classrooms- including 2 half day kindergarten classes. Monsignor Kuzava Garden was planted in front of the school in his memory. As founding pastor of St. Irenaeus Parish, Monsignor Edward Kuzava was a cheerleader for parents who wanted Catholic education for their children. Monsignor Edward Kuzava died in a car accident on November 21, 1988. In 1991, Sister Karen wrote her vision for Holy Family Regional School:

## *Vision of 1991*

*I envision*

*A school in which excellence is the only standard*

*A school in which children thrive and grow as learners*

*A school in which all staff challenge each other to be better professionals  
within an atmosphere of trust.*

*A school led by an administrative team of creative, responsible leaders*

*A school where parent input and involvement are seen  
as a vital part of the learning experience for children*

*A school where everything accomplished is done  
with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the name of Jesus.*

During the **1992-1993** school year, the student population numbered 530 with 30 homeroom teachers, specials teachers and staff. Due to limited space over, 50 kindergarten families continued to be turned away each year. St. Mary of the Hills was added as the third supporting parish. St. John Fisher asked to be the fourth supporting parish. Catholic school interest and enrollment in the northern and western part of the Archdiocese was on the rise. Rochester, Novi and Northville were targeted areas. It was projected that the next local Catholic school would likely be built in the Rochester area where hundreds of families were on waiting lists.

During the **1993-1994** school year, Mrs. Faye Pacinski, Art teacher, designed the Holy Family Mosaic on the wall across from the office at the North Campus. All 541 students and 34 Teachers/Staff Members put a piece into the Mosaic. 7 of the 9 grades were filled to capacity with 64 students in each grade. Only 3 openings were in Grade 6. All the other grades had a waiting list. 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduated 44 students.



### **94-95 Theme: Children of Light Share Gifts**

#### **Symbol: Gift Box**

In May of 1995, a Town Hall Meeting was held to discuss Catholic School expansion. Vision, 200 was organized with the goal of providing more seats in the Pontiac Vicariate with Holy Family receiving 750 seats. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduated 62 students.

### **1995-1996 Theme : Jesus is the Light**

#### **Symbol: Candle**

Sister Karen wrote her first message in the yearbook with a welcome to the **Accreditation Team** that visited us in April. Our enrollment numbered **550 students**.

Grade 8—the largest class in Holy Family since its opening in 1980-81 graduated 63 students

Some third and sixth graders formed a Science Group called H.O.P.E. Help Our Planet Earth. With their parents, they improved the city of Rochester park next to Holy Family by putting in wood chips, a bridge and bird feeders.

After a thorough self study, Holy Family welcomed a visiting team of principals and teachers from the Archdiocese of Detroit and the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools, who would spend time with us to see and experience our excellence in academics and the living of our philosophy and mission statement. We received Accreditation being #1 in Excellence and #1 in Pride.

### **1996-1997 Theme: Turn to the Son, Jesus**

#### **Symbol: Sunflower**

As a fully accredited school with the recommendations for improvement, Holy Family welcomed **555 students** to "Turn to the Son, Jesus and Follow". **Jesus Christ is the Reason for Holy Family Regional School.**

63 students graduated from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The symbol, a sunflower, can produce up to one thousand seeds. Through living our philosophy and mission statement, Holy Family would continue to grow as the seeds of Holy Family were planted and nourished. One day, would we have over 1,000 students in Holy Family?

## 1997-1998 Theme: Called to be Children of New Life

### Symbol: Water

**564** students entered the school year. In 6 years, Holy Family increased the student population by **107 students** filling every possible space. Each grade had two rooms along with 2 half day Kindergarten classes. Most of the grades had waiting lists. TECHNOLOGY was the focus. To be prepared for technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers and staff members took classes for 6 weeks either on Monday night or Saturday morning. Holy Family parents became our instructors. The HEAD END ROOM was installed. The feature of OPEN HOUSE, was the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Head End Room by Monsignor John Quinn, Director of Education for the Archdiocese of Detroit, and Sister Karen. In Spring of 1998, the Student Council proudly presented Sister Karen with a check for \$700.00 to be used in Technology. The summer was spent wiring the north campus for full technology use. Math Club and Jr. Great Books were part of Enrichment. In April, 1998, an expansion plan for Holy Family became part of the Plan for the Future.. Sacred Heart, Auburn Hills was included as the fifth supporting parish.

## 1998 -1999 Theme: Fired by the Holy Spirit

### Symbol: Flame

Mrs. Faye Placinski, Art Teacher designed a flame upon which all teachers and students put their thumbprint. Late October, 1999, 6<sup>th</sup> grade religion classes raked the leaves for the people living on Maywood Street. December, 1999 displayed the Holy Family scout float with the nativity scene including angels, innkeepers and shepherds for the Christmas parade.....the most known shepherd was Sister Karen. Of course.....it RAINED all through the parade. Holy Family graduated 64 students from grade eight.

There was no possibility for parents who wanted Catholic education for their children because there was no room in the existing facilities, so committees of pastors, principals and representatives of the Pontiac Vicariate were formed. Long range planning determined the viability of the area for another facility for catholic education. **Vision, 2000 project** was approved by Cardinal Adam Maida in August, 1999.

## 1999-2000 Theme: Color my World God

### Symbol: Globe and Grade Colors

With a full enrollment, Sister Karen welcomed new staff members for 1999 -2000 school year.

**Mrs. Carla Vandercruyssen** began her new position as **Assistant Principal**. Faculty/Staff numbered 41.



Sister Karen joined the parents in putting up the **new playscape** and refurbishing the North Campus playground. 1999 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> year Holy Family had the Spaghetti Dinner. Student Council Representatives shopped for food to be donated to the



needy families for Thanksgiving. Student Council organized "Gently Used Books" collection to give to inner city schools for their libraries.

**Our Grade Colors:** 8-Red, 7-Blue, 6-Gold, 5-Green, 4-Purple, 3-Orange, 2-Yellow, 1-Pink, Kindergarten-White; Y-5's-Mint Green (added in 2010)

Since the existing Holy Family building on St. Andrew property was at capacity, it was proposed to build a second campus for grades 4 through 8 and renovate the existing building for Kindergarten, Grades 1-2-3. Ten acres behind St. Mary of the Hills Church, donated by Father Eugene Strain, became the holy ground upon which the second campus would be constructed. Vision 2000 committee made the decision to upgrade all the Catholic schools in the area. On June 4, 2000, the ground was blessed by the five pastors, Sister Karen and Mrs. Vandercruyssen. Construction of the South Campus by Rewold and Sons Construction Company began.

## 2000 – 2001 Theme: Moved by the Spirit to Go Forth

### Symbol : Dove

Enrollment for the 2000-2001 was 556 students.

To begin the 2000-2001 school year, Monsignor John Quinn, Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools and the five pastors celebrated the opening Mass. Holy Family celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. A birthday cake was presented to Father Strain, who was the first pastor of Holy Family and to Father Tim Babcock who was the present pastor of Holy Family. The Administration, Teachers and Staff along with Parent Representatives began the process for the Archdiocesan Accreditation. After the self-study and the team visit,

Holy Family was re-accredited and Sister Karen rejoiced with her favorite word, "YES".

Throughout 2000-2001, Sister Karen and Mrs. Carla Vandercruyssen went to the construction site of the South Campus to meet with the construction workers. Each session in the construction trailer began with prayer. Frank Rewold and Sons Construction Company and IDS Architects realized they were working on a special building on holy ground.

The Board of Directors of Holy Family Regional School decided to keep Holy Family as **ONE school with a North and South campus**. Holy Family would have **ONE Philosophy and Mission Statement, ONE Principal** with Assistant Principals at each campus, and **ONE Board of Directors**. The Spirit of Holy Family would remain strong because **JESUS CHRIST is the REASON** for our school.

Registration for 2001-2002 year began after Christmas. Springtime brought construction workers to the North Campus to begin working on the library in order to convert it into a Media Center and install bathrooms across from the head-end room. Teachers tested over 500 students as potential Holy Family Students for the following school year. A job fair was held for teachers. Approximately 150 teachers came to be considered for the 40 new positions. As the year was ending, teachers began to sort through the classroom books and supplies to determine what would stay at North Campus or be transported to South Campus. Each campus had a semi trailer in the parking lot for books and supplies. Teachers emptied the classrooms due to the renovation in all classrooms that would begin when the school year closed. New students were invited to meet the Principal and the teachers of their grade level for the following year at a summer class picnic.

## 2001-2002 Theme: New Beginnings: One in the Spirit

### Symbol: dove

The expansion of Holy Family became a reality as 940



students and 76 teachers and staff members entered Holy Family North Campus and South Campus. Opening Mass, celebrated by Bishop Kevin Britt and our 5 Pastors, brought North and South Campus together for prayer in St. Andrew Church. WE ARE ONE!

### **Blessing of the North Campus**

After Mass, Bishop Britt blessed the renovated North Campus. Kdg. Gr. 1-2-3 students and teachers entered their classrooms while the South Campus students and teachers encircled the outside of the building, holding hands to signify our unity and to bless the students and North Campus.

### **Blessing of the South Campus**

In **November, 2001**, the South Campus was dedicated and blessed by **Cardinal Adam Maida** during Mass celebrated in the gym. The founding parents of 1980 were honored for their Vision of a Catholic school that became Holy Family Regional School to give many students the choice of a catholic education.

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the Class of 2010 were the first Kindergarten students of the expansion.

The Holy Family Statue in front of the North Campus was donated by the grandfather, Mr. Polselli, of the Gunn, Cattanaach, and Michetti Family; The Holy Family Statue in front of the South Campus was donated by Frank Rewald and Sons Construction Company who built the South Campus and renovated the North Campus.



### **2002-2003 Theme: Jesus Lights our Way**

#### **Symbol: Candle**

The Holy Family Stained glass CROSS in the Rotunda at the South Campus was designed by Mrs. Mary Coppola, South Campus Media Director.

In gratitude, Holy Family dedicated the gymnasium at the South Campus to Father Tim Babcock, pastor of St. Andrew and Pastor of Holy Family during the expansion. Catholic Schools Week focused on Peace. The North Campus made a Peace Train and the South Campus made a Peace Chain. Father Tom Slowinski became the pastor of St. Andrew parish and the pastor of Holy Family.

This year produced a FIRST – ALL Page Color Year Book. The South Campus introduced the Media Tech Club for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Ms. Martha Ball became the Assistant Principal at the South Campus and Director of Curriculum. Holy Family graduated 60 eighth grade students. Enrollment totaled 1,075 students.



### **2003-2004 Theme: Turn to the Son and Follow in Peace**

#### **Symbol; Sunflower**

Holy Family continued as a School of God and a School of Academic Excellence. The thousand seeds of the sunflower theme in 1996 were planted and Holy Family numbered an enrollment of 1,132 students. Holy Family 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students continued to be strong in the annual Scholastic Olympics at Bishop Foley, Notre Dame Prep, Brother Rice and Marian High School. In competition with other local 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, Holy Family excelled in academic competition.

Sister Karen and Mrs. Carla Vandercruyssen were students in a third grade art class and created a water color creation in Japanese art. Sister Karen's framed masterpiece became an item for the silent auction of the Development Council. The Athletic Commission presented a check for "Fund for the Future" to Sister Karen, Mrs. Carla Vandercruyssen and Dr. Michael DePorre, President of the Board of Directors.

In June, 2004, Father Eugene Strain, Pastor of St. Mary of the Hills and Founding Pastor of Holy Family Regional School became Pastor Emeritus. Father Stanley Ulman became the Pastor of St. Mary of the Hills.

To honor Father Eugene Strain, the Media Center at the South Campus was named in his honor.

Holy Family Regional School graduated 87 students.

### **2004-2005 Theme: Shine in the Light of Jesus**

#### **Symbol: Star**

During the opening Mass of the 2004-2005 school year, the South Campus Students gifted the North Campus students with a Holy Family Mosaic, designed by Mrs. Faye Placinski, art teacher. Signifying our ONENESS in two campuses, the mosaic is on the wall at both the North and South Campus. Holy Family enrollment stood at 1,167 students. Holy Family Regional School graduated 87 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



### **2005-2006 Theme: Jesus' Light Colors our World**

#### **Symbol: Colors**

Holy Family Regional School celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year of Catholic Education.

At the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year, Holy Family welcomed 1,185 students and 106 staff members.

The visionary leadership of Sister Karen Hawver, S.C. brought us to our 25<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration.

Holy Family was celebrated as a holy, happy, healthy place for children, teachers and parents.

Holy Family Regional School graduated 114 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Jesus Christ is the Reason for Holy Family Regional School**

#### **A School of God**

#### **A School of Academic Excellence**

#### **YES!**

### **2006-2007 Theme: Peace**

#### **Symbol: Dove**

The school year was dedicated to Peace. Holy Family was ready for a PEACE MISSION in the spring. Families were challenged to participate in a peace activity that would involve the entire family. After school, weekend and evening hours were set so parents could turn in their family peace activity for a piece to put into the Holy Family Peace Puzzle. (on display at the South Campus in the Multi-Purpose Room)

Father Steve Gavit, from the Saginaw Diocese gave peace talks to students by grade level. Parents were invited to share a peace evening with Father Steve. The Faculty and staff had a retreat with Father Steve. Mini-workshop sessions including prayer, reflection and activities of peace were prepared for all students by grade level. The Peace Mission concluded with an evening Family Mass when the School



Board President, Mr. Dick Danforth, and his family put in the last piece of the Peace Puzzle. Holy Family Regional School graduated 123 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Holy Family declared a Proclamation of Peace.

## **2007-2008 Theme: Bless the Earth**

### **Symbol: Globe**

Holy Family ended the 2007 school year with a Proclamation of Peace. We began the 2007-2008 school year with living our commitment to Peace. Parts of the proclamation stated:

As members of the Holy Family Regional School Community, we proclaim our commitment to be people of peace.

:A peacemaker chooses to think of others first.

A peacemaker chooses to share talents and strengths to help the world.

A peacemaker chooses to forgive.

A peacemaker chooses to respect the differences in all God's people.

Let us go forth in PEACE to love and serve God by loving and serving one another."

New words were being used in technology as teachers were becoming familiar with Smart Boards and Elmo machine to be used in the classrooms.

After an intense Self Study, Holy Family prepared for an Accreditation Team to come in and begin a process that would enable us to know the strengths of the expansion of Holy Family and to receive recommendations for improvements into the future. Holy Family was re-accredited with the Archdiocese of Detroit and the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools.

Holy Family 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Basketball Team won the 2007 CYO Tournament Championship.

Holy Family Regional School graduated 100 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## **2008-2009 Theme: Reach for the Star**

### **Symbol: Star**

The 2008-2009 school year brought incentives from the recommendations of Accreditation to embrace and improve ourselves as a School of God and a School of Academic Excellence. Holy Family continued as a School of Peace as students signed commitments at the beginning of the year and offered them at the first Mass of the school year. These commitments were a symbol that we would work to be in a school that would eliminate bullying. Realizing the potential of gifts and talents to be used within this new school year, we continue to grow in the affirmation of our Philosophy and Mission Statement.

### **"Jesus Christ is the Reason for our School."**

The opening Mass blessed 14 students from South Korea who came to be part of a Catholic school system. Bishop Daniel Flores, new to the Archdiocese of Detroit, celebrated Mass with the South Campus Students in the fall. To begin the new year of 2009, Bishop Flores celebrated with the students at the North Campus. The use of technology continued to grow as Holy Family contracted with PMV Technologies for performance and technical support help. As service traditions Holy Family continued its Food Drives for Gleaners and Light House, Gently Used Coat Collection in November, Teddy Bear Collection for hospitals at Christmas Time, Middle School Service to the School, Parish and Outreach. Holy Family Regional School graduated 128 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## **2009-2010 Theme: Grow and Blossom in God's Love**

### **Symbol: Flower**

Holy Family was growing and blossoming in academics, spirituality, friendliness, hospitality and peace. Introducing Random Acts of Kindness program, made students know that teachers and staff are aware of their individual embrace of

living the message of Jesus Christ. Students selected each month choose a charity to send a Holy Family donation. The original donation was funded by a grandparent.  
Holy Family Regional School graduated 126 students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## **2010-2011 Theme: Celebrate Our Story**

### **Symbol: Balloon**

The 2010-2011 school year celebrates the **30 years of Catholic Education in Holy Family Regional School. Jesus Christ is the Reason for our School.**

To honor this year of celebration, Holy Family is planning activities to celebrate the past, present and into the future. The opening Mass on October 1, 2010 helped the present 1,028 students become aware of Holy Family's rich history.

Each morning, as the school day begins with prayer led by Sister Karen at the South Campus and Mrs. Carla Vandercruyssen at the North Campus, a piece of our story is told and we pray for 10 of our present families.

An anniversary committee set up three celebrations: Thanksgiving Mass on Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> to honor our founding parents and our founding pastors; on March 19, 2011, the alumni will be welcomed home with an evening Mass at St. Andrew and hospitality in the Activities Building; on July 15, 2011, the present parents, students, friends will be honored at a 1:30 outdoor Mass at the South Campus with family picnics and activities after the Mass.

Holy Family students continue their commitment to Peace with peace pledges and the commitment that our school is known for zero tolerance of bullying.

In this 30<sup>th</sup> year, Holy Family Regional School will graduate 132 students, the largest 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the History of Holy Family.

**With strategic planning, Holy Family continues into the future as a School of God and a School of Academic Excellence because**

### **JESUS CHRIST IS THE REASON FOR OUR SCHOOL!**

(Philosophy)

We pray to strengthen our faith and that of our children.

We respect the uniqueness of all and encourage the development of each person's gifts.

We commit to follow God's call, inspiring children to attain their full potential in a peaceful environment where everyone is safe and valued.

With the help of Jesus, we will accomplish this mission.

The Administration, Faculty and Staff of Holy Family Regional School  
(Mission Statement)  
2007-2008

