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Dear Friend,

Blessings to you this Advent Season!

The gift of faith is transformative and your commitment to supporting Catholic education is changing lives! Children and parents are eager to find a sense of purpose and to be filled with hope for the future. As we enter into the Christmas Season, I ask you to consider making a "Gift of Faith".

Most of the Catholic children in Central Washington are not enrolled in Catholic schools. The responsibility for teaching the faith rests on the shoulders of the families, along with our priests and religious educators. This past spring, I had the opportunity to visit Our Lady of the Desert Parish in Mattawa to see firsthand the impact your gifts are making. Hundreds of people were in attendance for the Sunday evening Mass. When I arrived, I was lucky to snag a seat in a prayerful space that was two full rooms away from the main part of the church. The experience was very moving and the stories I heard following the Mass reminded me of our call to put on the Armor of God.

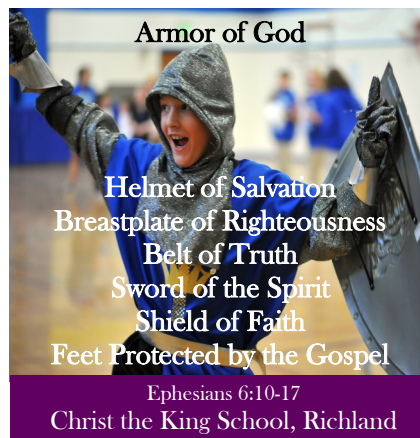
In a community where 100% of the school district children qualify for free and reduced lunch, grants of \$2,500 and \$3,500 over the last two years have helped Our Lady of the Desert Parish to grow the Confirmation program from one class to three classes totaling 180 students. Erika Erazo, one of the Confirmation teachers says, *"I see that through our religious education program we have built a really strong community. The program motivates the students to learn, to think wisely. Religious education has been helping us in teaching them how to pray."* On the back of this letter, I have included more information about this robust program and I invite you to watch the full video which can be found on our website at [www.cwatholicfoundation.org](http://www.cwatholicfoundation.org).

The Foundation provides support through the Celebration of Faith event and the thirty-eight endowed funds to ensure that the parishes, schools, and ministries throughout Central Washington are in a position to support the faithful and the underserved, but I have to tell you, our work is not done. The need is great and we can do more. Today, I ask you to help further the mission of supporting this vital ministry by responding to our Annual Appeal with a generous "Gift of Faith". Your end-of-year gift will ensure that funding for the operations budget is secure. You may also designate your gift to one of the endowments. Gifts of stock or a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA can increase your capacity to give. Contact the office or visit our website to learn more.

In supporting one another, we realize the possibilities of what can happen in our own communities and we can better appreciate the blessings we have already received. It is through faith in Christ that one finds hope, compassion, and strength to face life's challenges. Your end of year gift during this season of hope will lead our children and our faith communities to put on the Armor of God, fortifying them to stand against the many challenges they will face today and in the years to come.

May your joy be full this Christmas,  
Kathleen Wilmes

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**"Put on the Armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the devil's schemes."**  
Ephesians 6:11

**Give the "Gift of Faith" Donate to the 2018 Annual Appeal today!**



*Have faith in your heart,  
Because God is there with you,*

*Let the candle of hope burn through,  
Because the blessings of the Lord are with you.*

*Blessings to you and  
yours during this  
Holy Season.*

*Merry Christmas!*



## You are Fortifying our Communities of Faith

"Mattawa is a place where kids and young people come to celebrate the faith. Our church is packed during Masses and sometimes they are standing outside. We have a lot of kids—thanks to God! They are coming to learn, to be with our Lord. We would like to provide them with good resources. I have seen the kids come into the classes and they come back later to Mass to celebrate with their parents and I think they are putting all of the things they have seen in religious education into practice with their parents."



Fr. Alejandro Trejo, Pastor  
Our Lady of the Desert, Mattawa

I want to say thank you to the Catholic Foundation and their efforts in all of the parishes because you are transforming and changing lives." Fr. Alejandro Trejo



Jessica Arrellano, Our Lady of the Desert,  
Mattawa, Freshman, Stanford University

*"Faith has given me the strength to chase the impossible and make it possible. It has healed the broken in me. Faith is what has made me who I am, a fearless, caring, and courageous follower of God. Throughout my difficult times, every time I thought I had failed or had no better alternative, something always told me to try again. And that was faith."*

*Through your support, our program has been able to change my life and the lives*

*of many other students. My desire is that students across the diocese will have the same opportunity to grow in faith that I had."*

Jessica Arellano, Confirmation Teacher, Our Lady of the Desert Parish and Freshman, Stanford University

Make a **Gift of Faith** today to ensure that all kids have an opportunity to put on the **"Armor of God"**

Excerpts from the 2018 Celebration of Faith videos. Visit our website at to view the full videos.

The next time you review your estate plans, please consider including a bequest with the Foundation to benefit your favorite Catholic ministry. The concern and generosity you now direct through your daily activities can be continued forever through a gift in your estate. Your legal advisor can show you how you can provide for your family as well as leave a **Legacy of Faith.**



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