

## Father Robertson's Homily – Catholic Schools Week 2026

### FIRST READING

Eph 4:7, 11-13

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and Sisters,

Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

### GOSPEL

Mt 28:16, 18-20

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

The Gospel of the Lord.

### HOMILY

In our first reading today from the Letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul gives us a powerful picture of what the Church is meant to be. He reminds us that grace is given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. God gives different gifts to different people—not for their own sake, and not so that everyone does the same thing—but to build up the Body of Christ, the Church. Teachers, leaders, servants, witnesses—each with a role to play, all working together so that the Church may grow, mature, and become more fully what Christ intends her to be.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives that Church its purpose. Standing before His disciples, He says, "*All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*" This command, which we call the Great Commission, is not given to a few specialists. It is given to the whole Church.

Catholic schools are a very real, lived experience of Paul's vision and our Lord's commission coming together and being put into action.

In our schools, the Church described in Ephesians is not just an idea or a theory—it is alive and at work every day. Students bring their gifts: curiosity, generosity, creativity, and faith. Teachers share their vocation, forming minds and shaping hearts, not simply through lessons but through witness. Parents and benefactors support the mission through sacrifice, prayer, encouragement, and trust. All of it is directed toward one goal: forming disciples of Jesus Christ.

That is what makes Catholic schools different from any other kind of school.

Our Catholic schools are not just buildings.

They are not simply academically strong programs.

They are not just powerhouses of excellent sports teams.

They are not merely an alternative to public schools.

They are the gifted people of God gathered together in the mission Christ has given us.

When we gather at St. John the Baptist Primary School, Our Lady of Peace Intermediate School, Columbus Middle School, and Columbus High School, we are not just part of a school system.

We are part of the Church at work—teaching, forming, and sending. What happens in your classrooms, gymnasiums, cafeterias, playgrounds, and sport fields is all part of the Church's response to our Lord's command to make disciples of all nations.

Because of this, we are truly blessed. And it is important that we recognize this profound truth. Catholic schools are not simply one option among many. They are a gift—a gift to students, to families, to the Church, and to the world. They form minds in truth, shape hearts in virtue, and send young people out prepared not only to succeed, but to serve.

At the end of the Gospel, Jesus not only gives us the Great Commission but he also makes a promise that sustains and strengthens us in what he charges us to do: *"Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."* Christ is with us in our work. He is with our students as they grow. He is with our teachers as they teach and guide. He is with our families and benefactors as they support and sacrifice.

And so today, during Catholic Schools Week, we give thanks—for the gift of Catholic education, for the people who make it possible, and for Christ, who remains with us always as we build up His Body and carry out His mission in the world.