

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

## Blue Ribbon schools celebrate and are celebrated

By Mary Chalupsky  
Transcript Reporter

MADISON – Blue ribbons fluttered everywhere on the campus of Our Lady of Mercy School as it celebrated its achievement of being named a 2012 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education during a special ceremony at the school Dec. 11.

Similar celebrations took place on Nov. 12 at St. Dominic School in Southington and Dec. 13 at Corpus Christi School in Wethersfield.

Our Lady of Mercy was among 219 public schools and 50 private schools – including St. Dominic and Corpus Christi – to receive the honor for academic excellence that was presented to school principals at a national awards ceremony Nov. 12-13 in Washington, D.C.

Archbishop Henry J. Mansell congratulated the students, faculty, administration, parents and community for the achievement; and presented Sister Carol Sansone, principal, with a plaque from the archdiocese to mark the occasion.

Schools receiving the award were required to have all grades score in the 85th percentile or higher in reading and math on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Dr. Dale Hoyt, superintendent of schools in the archdiocese, praised the school for its belief “in excellence in learning” and parents who made a commitment to put their resources in Catholic education “where faith and knowledge come together.”

“It’s all of you,” he told the

gathering, “who make this a Blue Ribbon school,” he said.

He drew an enthusiastic round of applause from the school’s 209 students when he announced that there would be “no homework tonight” as a reward for their achievement.

Also praising the school community, Sister Carol, a member of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, revealed that she had just accepted the assignment as principal two years ago when she was informed that the school was applying for the Blue Ribbon award.

“You are students of excellence,” she said. “You make us all so very proud.”

She also announced a new ABC’s for the school to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to Catholic education: “A” for acceptance – encouraging everyone to pray one Hail Mary daily to eradicate bullying, “B” for blessings in recognizing “what a great place this is” and “C” for commitment to service.

Msgr. John Conte, pastor of St. Margaret Parish in Madison, and Father James Shanley, pastor of St. George Parish in Guilford – the school’s two co-sponsoring parishes – blessed a newly designed school lapel pin with a logo featuring the Blessed Virgin Mary with Child that was distributed to students.


The National Blue Ribbon Schools award honors public and private elementary, middle and high schools at which students perform at very high levels or where signifi-



**FIRST OF THREE SCHOOLS HONORED** – Archbishop Henry J. Mansell presents a plaque from the Archdiocese of Hartford to Sister Carol Sansone of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, principal of Our Lady of Mercy School in Madison, congratulating the school for its recognition as a 2012 National Blue Ribbon School for academic excellence by the United States Department of Education. The school is among 219 public schools and one of 50 private schools, including St. Dominic School in Southington and Corpus Christi School in Wethersfield, to receive the high honor. Similar ceremonies were held at those schools on the two days following. Also pictured, from left, are Dale R. Hoyt, superintendent of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford; Msgr. John Conte, pastor of St. Margaret Parish in Madison; Father James Shanley, pastor of St. George Parish in Guilford, the parishes that sponsor the school; and Father Jeffrey V. Romans, secretary to the archbishop and vice chancellor. (Photo by Mary Chalupsky)

cant improvements are being made in students’ levels of achievement.

In its 30-year history, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed this coveted award on nearly 7,000 of America’s schools.



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