



Dear Catholic School Supporters,

[Donate Now](#)



Watch to see how your STO donations help bridge the gap for families and benefit you with the 75% tax credit!

[Watch now](#)

With 7 weeks to go, we're presently at 50.4% of our goal.

The families supported by the Our Faith STO need your help!



**Quick Facts:**

Did you know that just over **1 out of 3 students across the Archdiocese is receiving STO tuition assistance** during the 2021-22 school year? 2,954 students currently receive STO grants; this is 34% of the total enrollment.

Did you know that STO grants are the primary source of tuition assistance and that when giving is down, the schools must try to supplement needs with local funds?

Your help with the 2021 campaign is important, as it puts less strain on the local schools, who must raise funds without the help of the 75% STO tax credit

**Campaign Status Update:**

This year donations are pacing ahead of the last two years, but **we are only at 50.4% of our 2021 goal**. This means that, yes, tax credits are still available; it also means that as of today, the number available is decreasing by the day!

**Tax Tips:**

Are you planning an end-of-year meeting with your tax professional?

Ask them about the **"above the line" deduction for 2021 for those not itemizing on their Federal tax return**. Your charitable cash donation to the STO might help you reach this \$300 deduction for singles and \$600 for married returns.

Do you live in a school district that has a School District Surtax? Your contributions to the STO can help you reduce what you might owe with this tax.

Would you please ask your tax professional about these items and your STO donation's impact on your tax scenario?

Thank you very much for your continued support of Catholic education and the STO program. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Take Care and God Bless!

*Deacon Brian Zeman*

**Why do I choose to teach in a Catholic School?**



**Mary Ann Krammen**

St. Benedict Elementary-Decorah

20 years teaching

3rd Grade

**Why do I choose to teach in a Catholic school?:** While I was teaching in a public school in Texas, one of my students tragically died. We were all heartbroken. Because it was a public school, I was not allowed, by law, to comfort my students or myself in the only way I could—to pray. I was not able to discuss with the children heaven, angels, Jesus, or any of the beliefs I hold dear. I knew then if the chance came to get back to my roots, to the Catholic schools I would take it. By a very winding path, my family ended up in Decorah where St. Benedict school had an opening. It is a decision I have never regretted.

**How has God affirmed that I've made the right choice?:** One year I had a large class that, by all accounts, was difficult. The students were to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation individually, and only one priest was available. It meant a very long, quiet wait—over 45 minutes. A nearly impossible task for squirmy eight-year-olds, when a small miracle occurred. One of my students began to spontaneously begin praying the rosary—in a whisper. I quickly sent another student back to the classroom to gather our rosaries and in a moment everyone was praying together—quietly, sweetly, almost like a song. Then the time went by too quickly. It remains one of my loveliest memories as a teacher.

**Family Bio:** An interesting fact is that in my 40's I went back to college to earn my teaching degree. My husband Dan and I have been married 42 years. Our two grown children are married. Our greatest joys are spending time with them and our little grandson, Max.

**A Family Testimonial about the impact of the STO**

*from Kyle and Stephanie Klapatauskas- Dubuque*

**"We experience many blessings through our six children, and one of the many blessings we've been fortunate to experience is their Catholic education.** Our oldest son attends Wahlert, our second son attends Mazzuchelli, and our third and fourth sons attend St. Columbkille's.

Here in Dubuque, we have many strong public schools to choose from, but what put the Catholic schools at the top for us is the fact that when our children are not home with us, they are still being steeped in the faith. All of the strong academics and robust extracurricular offerings are viewed through the lens of our Church. Our kids' spiritual growth is every bit as important as their academic, physical, and emotional growth.

As one might guess, **it would be difficult, if not impossible for our family to attend these schools without assistance.** Thanks to the aid we receive through STO due to its generous donors, our children are blessed to be able to grow in this environment. We couldn't do this without you. "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Luke 6:38) Thank you for giving – you enable families like ours to be a part of Catholic schools. You support us in making our children's education full of grace."

**For more information contact:**

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