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In First Publication, Consortium Calls for “Courageous Renewal” of Catholic Schools

The Mid-Atlantic Catholic Schools Consortium has released its first publication, a monograph entitled *Courageous Renewal: Catholic Schools in the Mid-Atlantic Region*, which calls on all Catholics to be part of a vibrant new commitment to strengthen Catholic schools.

The Consortium was launched in 2006 as a collaborative effort among the Archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington and the Dioceses of Arlington, Richmond, Wheeling-Charleston and Wilmington to address the challenges shared by their Catholic schools in the areas of Catholic identity, funding, leadership, and governance. The Mid-Atlantic region is home to more than 115,000 students in more than 340 Catholic schools.

In *Courageous Renewal*, the Consortium declares that, “Catholic schools perform an indispensable role in the life of the Church and the world,” while acknowledging that they must face obstacles including secularism and funding difficulties.

The monograph asserts, however, that it is a time for hope. “Solutions to the challenges facing Catholic schools, when sought with courage, creativity and the combined wisdom of the Catholic community, can and will be found,” it says before outlining the Consortium’s work to identify and implement those solutions.

Reflections from the (arch)bishops of the six Mid-Atlantic (arch)dioceses are included in *Courageous Renewal*. In his letter introducing the document, Cardinal William H. Keeler, apostolic administrator of Baltimore, urges all Catholics to work for the success of Catholic schools. “Our schools, even as they face mounting financial pressures, have been a source of hope to countless families,” he says.

“This document displays yet again the bishops’ recognition of the valuable role Catholic schools play in faith formation, evangelization and academic excellence,” said Dr. Mary Ellen Hrutka, the Consortium’s executive director. “It highlights the vibrant and innovative commitment by the Mid-Atlantic Catholic community to renew our Catholic schools.”

Courageous Renewal is just one of the Consortium’s successful efforts in its short history. On September 19, more than 130 education leaders from the six (arch)dioceses will gather in Maryland for the first Summit on the Future of Catholic Schools.

To obtain a copy of *Courageous Renewal*, please send an e-mail to midatlanticcsc@gmail.com. For more information on the Consortium, please visit www.midatlanticcsc.org.