

**EDUCATORS GATHER FOR NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
NEW MODELS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS  
At Boston College, June 26-28**

*Meeting on "Design for Success: New Configurations for Catholic Schools"*

CHESTNUT HILL, MA (6-25-2008) -- Changing demographics and rising costs are forcing a re-examination of the traditional parish-centered model of Catholic schools to ensure that Catholic education is available for the next generation of children. New and successful models of Catholic school systems, from consortiums to mergers, are the topic of "**Design for Success: New Configurations for Catholic Schools**," a national summit for Catholic school educators being held at Boston College June 26 to 28. The conference is co-sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the Boston College Lynch School of Education's Center for Catholic Education.

"The important message is that the old way of doing business doesn't work and people who care about Catholic schools need to look at new models," says BC Lynch School of Education Dean Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, SJ. "There is an urgency to save Catholic schools and this conference will showcase new ways of organizing Catholic schools that are really working. It will be very helpful for our attendees to see what others are doing."



Rev. Joseph O'Keefe, SJ

Five successful reconfiguration models are being presented at the meeting to serve as models for the audience of Catholic school teachers, principals, superintendents and pastors.

Those Catholic school systems being showcased are:

**Chippewa Area Catholic Schools** in Chippewa Falls, WI;

**St. Augustine Elementary and High School** in Laredo, TX;

**Risen Christ School** in Minneapolis, MN;

**Twin City Catholic Educational System** in Neenah, WI, and

**Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools** in Sioux City, IA.

Profiles of the model programs can be found online at:

[http://www.ncea.org/services/spice\\_08\\_descriptions.asp](http://www.ncea.org/services/spice_08_descriptions.asp)

Speakers at the conference are: Fr. O'Keefe; National Catholic Educational Association President Karen M. Ristau; Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, the Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life at Harvard University; Rev. Phillip J. Brown, JDC, assistant professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. and executive coach and consultant Bea Mah Holland.



The summit is part of SPICE (Selected Programs for Improving Catholic Education), an ongoing joint venture between Boston College and the NCEA to honor successful K-12 Catholic school programs and promote them as national models for other educators.