

## Catholic Education...*Oh What a Gift!*



**Rick Small**

School: St. Augustine, Napoleon Grades 1-8

Rick has been married to his wife Ann for 21 years. They have three children and reside in Defiance. He is Director of Operations, Clear Channel Defiance/Napoleon and Morning Show host Mix 98.1.

While a student at a Catholic elementary school, I didn't realize the positive impact that it would have on the rest of my life. I have many cherished memories of Mass celebrations, school productions and projects, as well as friendships that are still solid today. However, until you reach adulthood, you don't realize that your Catholic education is truly a gift of God and is the foundation for living your life accordingly.

Today, as a husband, father and professional, I try and utilize the gifts that were so generously given to me during my school years. Catholic school, along with the guidance of my parents and family, taught me the importance of giving of my time and talents to God and community. A Catholic education inspires service which creates a desire in students to carry it into their communities. For this reason, I wanted my children to experience this education enriched through Christ's teachings.

I encourage parents and grandparents to look deep into their hearts, listen to God's guiding voice and explore the many gifts that await your children through a Catholic education. Catholic schools are truly "Different by Design".



**Francis C. Westrick**

School: St. John, Defiance Grades 7 & 8

Francis is married to Magdalene; they have 6 grown children and reside in rural Defiance. Francis is retired from Public Service jobs.

In 1934 in the midst of the Depression I attended St. John Catholic School for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The opportunity became available when my brother started hauling milk from our farm to Defiance Dairy on Perry St. He would leave me off at St. John's and then attend Defiance High. Even though I could not attend daily Mass and sing in the choir on Children's Sunday I received a very good, faith based education. Discipline was excellent, Sr. Agedia the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and principal saw to that. I received training in The Palmer Method of Writing and in writing news articles neither of which were available in my previous school. I was aware of the kind Sisters of St. Agnes, having a sister and aunt in that Order. Who could forget such great nuns as Sr. Jane & Sr. Antonia? My Catholic education started me on the right path and kept me God-Centered through military service. In college I met my wife at the Catholic Newman Club and God has blessed us with 60 years of marriage.

*"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it"*

~Proverbs 22:6