

Friday, May 30, 2008

Edwin F. O'Brien  
Archbishop of Baltimore 320  
Cathedral Street Baltimore,  
Maryland 21201

Your Eminence,

Welcome to Baltimore and our Archdiocese. Thank you very much for your letter of May 5<sup>th</sup>, extending "conditional" recognition of Saint Thomas More Academy as a Catholic school within the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

We are especially grateful for the time and efforts of Ms. Carol Goldbeck and the Archdiocesan team of educators for their on site inspection, review, and survey of our school. The interaction of the team with our community was valuable to all. We are especially encouraged by the team's "unanimous," "strong" recommendation for recognition. I believe the results of the survey clearly illustrate our Catholic Identity and the satisfaction of the parents with the Academy and its curriculum. The Saint Thomas More board and principal consider the team's report an affirmation of our sincere adherence to Catholic principles and doctrine since our founding in 2000. The reason we seek recognition is for our parish priests to have permission to celebrate mass at our school and that our students will have sacramental preparation accepted in their parishes.

The board is working to review your initial requests in a timely manner. We are working to secure the enthusiastic support and participation of our constituents, parents and teachers in the processes that are required. The pressure of end of school-year activities, and crowded schedules is competing with our efforts to this end, and we thank Dr. Valenti for anticipating our crowded schedule with the release of his email letter of May 14 to preclude our need to adhere to "the end of the current academic year" timeline. While we will not tarry in our efforts to meet the timelines outlined in your letter, the board humbly requests your appreciation of the board's obligations to fully inform, explain, and educate our Saint Thomas More community regarding what will be required for recognition as a Catholic school.

Again, thank you for your consideration of Saint Thomas More  
Academy. Sincerely,

Dr. James A. Merkel  
President, Board of Directors  
Saint Thomas More Academy