



Media Advisory: September 17, 2015

**It's a Papal Party this Sunday with Fun & Substance Going Hand in Hand**  
*Catholic Coalition for Special Education Presents Kids Who Will Meet the Pope*  
*Also Presents Grant Checks to 7 Catholic Schools*  
At Its Annual Fall Festival Picnic -- Sunday, September 20, 2015 3 – 6 p.m.

(Kensington, Maryland) – With the visit of Pope Francis just days away, the Catholic Coalition for Special Education (CCSE) is throwing a Papal Party on Sunday from 3 – 6 p.m. to mark its tenth anniversary.

*“Whoever receives  
one child such as  
this in my name  
receives me”*

(Matthew 18:5)

Several lucky students who have intellectual disabilities (and who will be at the picnic) are going to get the thrill of a lifetime when they meet Pope Francis at the Apostolic Nunciature on September 23 – just as they hoped when starring in the CCSE Welcome Pope Francis Video earlier this summer.

There will be papal fun, moon bounces and balloons for the dozens of Catholic school students who have special needs along with their siblings, friends and supporters; and the Welcome Pope Francis Video will be playing (<http://bit.ly/ccsevideo>).

Pope Francis said earlier this year that children with disabilities have a "treasure chest" that must be shared with others. In this video, our treasured children show Pope Francis the treasures of our nation's capital in advance of his historic trip.

During the picnic, CCSE will present checks to seven Catholic schools in Maryland totaling \$66,000 for the current academic year in grant funding to support special education teachers, programming and technical assistance.

At the Catholic Coalition for Special Education, we know how important it is for children with disabilities to be fully included in our Catholic schools. It's important to the children with disabilities, who benefit from the friendships, spiritual and moral instruction, and a quality **and inclusive education**. And, it's important for the schools, teachers and students, who benefit from being part of a more open and just society. All students benefit from an inclusive education.

CCSE's mission is unique and its innovation has gained national attention. The Catholic Coalition for Special Education is a non-profit that assists area Catholic schools in educating students with intellectual disabilities in an inclusive environment through grants, program support, technical assistance and professional development.

CCSE also provides spiritual and practical support to parents who are on a journey to raising a child with a disability. CCSE is what Pope Francis preaches: inclusion; support, love and hope for those who often are relegated to the margins of society. Children with special needs have worth; they are treasured.

*The mission of the [Catholic Coalition for Special Education](#) is to ensure that children with special needs are able to attend and receive an appropriate education in their local Catholic elementary schools and high schools. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI “no child should be denied his or her right to an education in faith, which in turn nurtures the soul of a nation.” CCSE provides grants and technical assistance to help Catholic schools in Washington, D.C. and Maryland achieve this goal.*

**CATHOLIC  
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