



**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS** *in the*  
**ARCHDIOCESE of NEW YORK**

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**Media Contact:**

Gerald J. Wutkowski, Jr.  
Director of Communications and Digital Media  
Office of the Superintendent of Schools  
Archdiocese of New York  
O: (646) 794-2761 | C: (917) 890-6812  
[Gerald.Wutkowski@archny.org](mailto:Gerald.Wutkowski@archny.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Associate Superintendent Linda Dougherty Honored with 2024 Lighting the Fire for Catholic Education Award**

**QUEENS, NY** – The Catholic School Administrators Association of New York State (CSAANYS) has awarded Linda Dougherty, Associate Superintendent for Catholic Identity and Secondary Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, the prestigious 2024 Lighting the Fire for Catholic Education Award. The award was presented on October 18, 2024, at St. John’s University, recognizing Dougherty’s exemplary dedication, leadership, and service to Catholic education.

The Lighting the Fire for Catholic Education Award is one of the highest honors conferred on Catholic school leaders in New York State. It recognizes individuals who, through exceptional leadership, ignite a passion for and promote excellence in Catholic education. Awardees are celebrated for their steadfast commitment to fostering students’ spiritual, academic, and social-emotional development while advancing Catholic schools’ mission to form students in both faith and knowledge. This award underscores the recipient’s lasting impact on the Catholic education community and their ability to inspire others to continue the mission of Catholic education.

### **About Linda Dougherty**

With over 40 years of experience in education—spanning elementary schools, high schools, community colleges, and universities—Linda Dougherty has significantly and enduringly impacted Catholic education. Before her current role with the Archdiocese of New York, Dougherty served as principal of four schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn for more than 25 years and taught in both public and Catholic elementary schools. She holds degrees from Fordham University, Boston College, Manhattan College, and Seton Hall University, providing her with a strong academic foundation for her leadership in Catholic education.

Dougherty's unwavering commitment to nurturing students' spiritual and academic growth has earned her widespread respect and admiration in the Catholic education community.

### **A Leader Who Inspires**

Sister Mary Grace Walsh, Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, praised Dougherty's exceptional service: "Linda is a legend. She is passionate about educating young people and evangelization. If you ask anyone who works with her, they'll tell you how deeply generous and faith-filled she is. Linda keeps the fire of Christ's love burning in our office, the schools she visits, and among those she mentors. She truly deserves this honor, and we are all so proud to celebrate her."

In her acceptance speech, Dougherty reflected on the importance of Catholic education and the responsibility it entails: "I was most moved today that the Gospel was one of my favorites: 'The harvest is great, but the laborers are few.'

She continued, 'I have this index card that I kept for many years as principal. It says, "To teach and proclaim the message of the Gospel... To build community rooted in the Holy Spirit, and to serve with community and humanity." I could not do this alone, and I receive this in everybody's name.'

The Lighting the Fire for Catholic Education Award symbolizes more than just individual achievement—it represents a deep commitment to the mission of Catholic education, impacting entire communities. Leaders like Dougherty set a high standard for excellence in faith formation, academic achievement, and community engagement. Their contributions extend beyond the classroom, influencing the well-being of students, staff, and the wider Catholic education community.

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### **Photo Caption:**

**DOE-ADNY-LD1:** Linda Dougherty, Associate Superintendent for Catholic Identity and Secondary Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, stands with Sr. Mary Grace Walsh, ASCJ, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of New York, after the Lighting the Fire for Catholic Education Award at St. John's University on October 18, 2024. (Office of the Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of New York)