
Milford Catholic Elementary School's Pledge to the Congo

When school began this year, Mrs. Andrea Tavaska, the principal of Milford Catholic Elementary School, was inspired by an article in the Catholic Free Press about children in the Congo who do not attend elementary school because their families cannot afford it. The article and accompanying picture of the children tugged at her heart strings. A Congolese priest, Father Salvatore Musande, A.A. who is working on his Master's Degree at Assumption College in Worcester, has started a program to help provide scholarships for these children to attend school. Mrs. Tavaska charged the MCES Student Council with an assignment – adopt this great cause!

During Catholic Schools Week, the Student Council sponsored a "Breakfast for the Congo," along with a dress-down day. Many families and staff joined us before school on a cold winter morning for hot chocolate and donuts. We were able to send $234 to Father Musande for "his" kids, hopefully helping up to five of them attend school.

On March 25, 2011 Father Salvator Musande, A.A. visited MCES to speak to the students. Along with showing a poignant slideshow of the children and their homes and schools made from mud and grass, he spoke of the hardships these young children had to endure – torn clothing, no shoes, no toys, and only one meal a day. The students listened attentively as he shared his own story of the way his father took him from his village to a better place where he could finish school, since the dropout rate in his village was so high. Father explained that this is the reason he is so passionate about helping the children in his Congo village. He ended his presentation by expressing sincere gratitude for the money raised by the MCES students. It was a touching presentation that left all the children realizing how lucky they are and, thus, wanting to continue supporting this worthwhile cause.