

Strongest Start for the Children

Fulcrum honored Dick Abrams with the prestigious Archbishop's Award at the Celebration of Light 2023 for his long-time advocacy and support of Catholic education in Western Washington.

"If you've studied any theology, you know that humility and charity are the parents of all of the other virtues," said Archbishop Paul D. Etienne as he presented the award. "And if you know Dick, you know he is a humble and incredibly charitable man, and because of that, we've come to know him as a very virtuous man as well."

Dick and his late wife, Sharon Abrams, both grew up attending local Catholic schools, including St. Teresa School (now St. Therese Catholic Academy) and Seattle Preparatory School for Dick and the Forest Ridge Convent (now Forest Ridge School of the Sacred Heart) for Sharon. They also raised their children in local Catholic schools.

Dick and Sharon were called to give back to Catholic causes, including Catholic education. As long-time supporters of the Fulcrum Foundation, the Abrams championed the creation of the St. Cecilia

Catholic School Patron's Endowment (Bainbridge Island) at Fulcrum.

Dick and Sharon also recognized the value of a strong start for children who have access to quality early childhood education. Even after Sharon passed away, Dick continued leading the charge in the creation of the Early Childhood Education Endowment at Fulcrum, a program that benefits 1,700 young students currently attending the 56 early learning programs in local Catholic schools. Early learning is foundational to the health of local Catholic schools with its positive impact on enrollment in grades K-8 and beyond.

"[I] say a prayer to the Holy Spirit: kindle in us the fire of Christ's love. It is a fountain of powerful inspiration," said Dick Abrams. "Why the focus on early childhood education? Most simply because 90 percent of human brain growth occurs by the age of five and, in today's society, so many children need a healthy environment for brain formation [and] development of basic mental, emotional, spiritual, and social circuitry."

The Fulcrum Foundation will be forever grateful to Dick Abrams for being a shining example of Holy Spirit-inspired generosity and a witness to how a strong start in early learning can give children the best chance to become all that God imagined.



A Beautiful Blessing

of Fulcrum's Theiline Scheumann Guardian Angel Memorial

Theiline (Ty) Scheumann lived her life as an advocate for Catholic education. Throughout her life, Mrs. Scheumann partnered with the Fulcrum Foundation to change the lives of countless Catholic school students and families. Mrs. Scheumann believed whole-heartedly in Fulcrum's mission and joined Fulcrum's Legacy Society, including Fulcrum as a beneficiary of her estate.

In 2021, Mrs. Scheumann decided to expedite her estate gift, giving a truly transformative donation of \$11.4 million to Fulcrum in support of local Catholic schools and students.

Sadly, Mrs. Scheumann passed away on December 30, 2021.

"My mom believed strongly in the value of Catholic schools and the education they provide," said Lee Rolfe, daughter of Mrs. Scheumann. "She understood the lasting importance of a good education and the essential nature of cultivating motivated and enthusiastic students and teachers."

In honor of Mrs. Scheumann's generous heart, and all the lives she changed, Fulcrum partnered with Holy Family Parish and School in Kirkland to create a permanent guardian angel memorial in the Holy Family School children's garden, as Holy Family had been Mrs. Scheumann's family parish and school.

The child-sized granite memorial represents what a guardian angel Mrs. Scheumann was, is, and will be to generations of children in local Catholic schools throughout Western Washington, thanks to her extraordinary generosity to the Fulcrum Foundation.

Surrounded by Holy Family students and many of Mrs. Scheumann's family members, Bishop Frank Schuster blessed the memorial in a special dedication ceremony on Jan. 31, assisted by the Holy Family pastor, Fr. Bryan Dolejsi.

Holy Family students added much to the spirit of the dedication, singing songs in the open air of the garden and reading a special responsorial for the blessing:

"Christ our Priest, your angels light the way for our bright futures. We thank you for Mrs. Scheumann's generous heart that lives on in all Catholic school students, as we walk hand in hand with our guardian angels into the future."

Mrs. Scheumann's guardian angel memorial will permanently stand watch over two park benches in the children's garden at Holy Family. The garden is often used for science classes and is a place where students cultivate vegetables and flowers that bloom and grow with the seasons, now under the watchful eye of a very special guardian angel.

The legacy of Mrs. Scheumann will live on in the Catholic schools she supported with her whole heart. Fulcrum is honored to be a part of this legacy.

For more information about Fulcrum's Legacy Society, please contact the Fulcrum team at 206.219.5826 or email info@fulcrumfoundation.org.



CELEBRATION OF LIGHT 2023: Fulcrum Community Makes a Transformative Difference

Celebration of Light 2023 was a wonderful evening full of generosity for Catholic education! More than 1,000 guests joined together and raised a record \$3.3 million in support of children and families in Catholic schools in Western Washington.

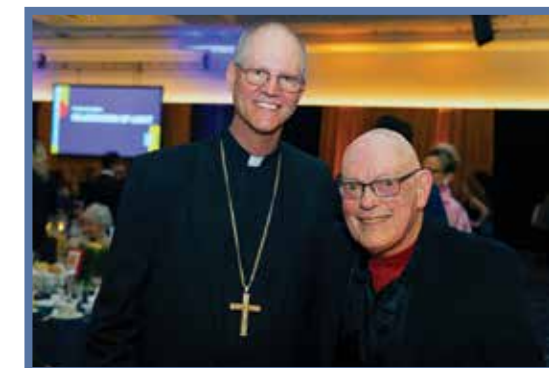
"The biggest Fulcrum impact is where it should be—with our children," said Nicholas Ford, the superintendent for Catholic schools. "We believe that each of our children is a thought of God, willed, loved, and necessary...These children will grow up to be future leaders in our communities."

Fulcrum friends, both old and new, gathered in the beautiful Sheraton Grand Seattle ballroom for the first time in three years. The night featured distinguished speakers, including Archbishop Paul D. Etienne, Nicholas Ford, and representatives from the Office for Catholic Schools (OCS) and local Catholic schools, such as Dave Mayer, director of early childhood education at

OCS, Sheelagh Carleton, early childhood education director and instructor at St. Cecilia Catholic School, and Kathy Wartelle, principal of Our Lady of Hope School.

"Your support benefits all that Fulcrum does, from tuition assistance and early childhood development to teacher leadership development and school partnerships," said Tony Audino, chair of the Fulcrum board. "All are critical and interconnected in determining the success of our children and our schools."

"I get to share the Fulcrum story locally, but I get to share it nationally as well," said Nicholas during his speech. "And when I share it with my colleagues nationally, I recognize in a different way just how unique the Fulcrum Foundation is, how blessed we are by the vision that was established 20 years ago...Fulcrum truly has set, what I believe, is a gold standard."



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