



# More Than a Dream: The Cristo Rey Story: How One School's Vision Is Changing the World

*G. R. Kearney*

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In a big city there are many big dreams, but only a special few come true . . .

The Cristo Rey story is one of the more improbable and inspiring educational success stories in decades. In the early 1990s, the Jesuits in Chicago had an audacious dream—to start a new college prep school for the children of Hispanic working poor. But questions needed to be answered: With so many established Catholic high schools closing their doors, did it make sense to try to build a new one? Would parents support a demanding prep school? Could students overcome deficient academic backgrounds? How could such a school be financed?

Despite many real and potential barriers, the Jesuits set to work—and in 1996, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School opened its doors in Pilsen, a predominantly Mexican-immigrant inner-city neighborhood on Chicago's Lower West Side.

In *More Than a Dream*, G. R. Kearney shows how one daring vision became a reality and turned into a resounding success. Through Cristo Rey's innovative curriculum, creative financing model, and intense devotion to the needs of Hispanic students, the lives of thousands of families continue to be changed. In demonstrating how Cristo Rey has sparked an educational revolution in urban America, the book leaves every reader with a bold challenge: Attempt to change what seems unchangeable.

“Cristo Rey is magical. What you see there is hope and optimism.”

—Melinda French Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

They built more than a school—they built a future!

Brick by brick, Chicago-area Jesuits saw their dream of starting a new college prep school for the children of Hispanic working poor come true. Student by student, they saw a better and brighter future unfold. You'll be truly inspired as you read how this Jesuit vision—now a national model for educational success—continues to challenge those who have much and to change the lives of those who have little.

“*More Than a Dream* shines a light into the soul of urban education, illuminating the extraordinary challenges and the breathtaking and transformational results of the Cristo Rey—model schools.”

—Darren Jackson, CFO of Best Buy

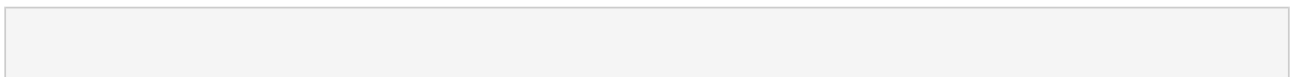
“Cristo Rey schools change children's lives. This is a story that needs to be told.”

—Laura Vanderkam, member of *USA Today*'s Board of Contributors

“An enticing tale of inspiration, improvisation and innovation . . . A testament to the will and wisdom of a hearty lot who believed in poor kids and who had faith that the impossible is possible in urban education.”

—Jerome T. Murphy, Dean emeritus and Harold Howe II Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

Thank you—by purchasing this book, you participate in the ongoing story of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School. G. R. Kearney and Loyola Press will donate a portion of the proceeds from the sale of this book to Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago.



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