



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 30, 2019

Dear Parents:

I am appreciative of being able to see so many of you last Thursday evening at the St. Mary's Academy at the School's Curriculum Night and Open House. I was impressed and motivated to see such an energetic and committed community that is St. Mary's Parish and Academy. The School has a great year planned and I am happy to be part of the journey.

As we discussed on Curriculum Night, there were recent changes to the leadership team at St. Mary's Academy and, so for those of you who were unable to attend Curriculum Night, I want to recap those changes here.

As many of you know, Renae Henderson resigned as the School's Principal last Thursday. Many of you received an e-mail from Renae last week, in which she announced her resignation, stating that she decided to resign because she "did not feel that the environment allowed [her] to fulfill [the School's] mission[.]" I'm not sure what that language was meant to convey, but Ms. Henderson has never raised any concerns with me about the school's environment, and I am unaware of her having done so with anyone else.

My office had been addressing management issues with Renae in cooperation with the St. Mary's parish that required some change, and we thought that a good improvement plan had been developed to make these changes. However, Renae chose to resign a few days later. We respect her decision in this regard, and we thank her for her service to St. Mary's Academy and wish her every success in the future.

Regardless, I have been able to spend some time at St. Mary's Academy interacting with students, staff, and the new leadership team. There is an abundance of positive energy and excitement about upcoming changes. The leadership team is being led by Sr. Marcia Barry, providing academic support and mentoring. Sr. Marcia has been a part of the Diocese of Syracuse in many ministries - teacher, counselor and principal. Suffice to say, Sr. Marcia is well versed in Catholic school education and will be a wonderful addition to the school on an interim basis.

The Catholic School Office will soon commence to work closely with Fr. Cliff and his team at St. Mary's to begin a thorough search process for a permanent principal. More information will be forthcoming to solicit and include parental representation on this search committee.



Finally, I want to thank you for placing your confidence in our diocese and St. Mary's parish to educate your children and provide them with a safe and Catholic-Christian environment where they can know, live and share our faith in an academically stimulating school setting. The faculty, administration and entire team at St. Mary's Academy takes this commitment very seriously. As part of that commitment, we all strive to remain as transparent and supportive as possible. If you have any questions or wish to discuss anything, you are free to do so with Sr. Marcia, Fr. Auth, or me.

In Christ, Peace and Joy,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill".

William Crist
Superintendent