



St. Mary's Catholic Church
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Dear St. Mary's School & Parish Families, Teachers, and Staff -

First, the gratitude. Last spring, in response to falling enrollment numbers at St. Mary's School, a number of parents and parishioners came together to help. Over a number of months, what started as a "mere" marketing effort quickly expanded into a valuable and reaffirming lesson about the heart, uniqueness, and vast potential of St. Mary's Community.

Forming a "Marketing and Research Committee," Shanna Tucker, Emily Skoro, Julia Grant, Lesleigh Box, Kristi Running, Carrie Noriega, Tami Springer, Nick Smith and other parents and parishioners worked tirelessly to interview two dozen former, current, and potentially future St. Mary's families. Collectively, these individuals worked hundreds of hours to clearly understand and distill our strengths and weaknesses. Through their hard work and your feedback through the process, we are now able to not only confidently identify who we are and what we have to offer those coming into our St. Mary's Family, we have the opportunity to address some of our weaknesses and challenges as we seek to better serve our families and children.

Thanks to the efforts of the Committee, the Parents and Parishioners, and our new Principal Brian Olmes, the School already finds itself on strong footing once again, only this time with a clear path forward. School enrollment numbers are up and many new families have already found their way into St. Mary's School and Parish. The fruits of their labor this past year are now just starting to be visible, but here are a few things you'll be seeing or hearing about over the next few months and into next year that will positively impact both the School and Parish Communities:

- Redesigned and expanded outdoor area that better serves our children and reflects the welcoming spirit of our community. While the details are still being worked out, by this time next year, the grounds are expected to include additional green area for our kids, new basketball hoops, replacement of our old chain link fence, and other features.
- Improved communications and tools to better connect and engage families, students, parishioners, and staff. The new School website is expected to be launched in December, but will be incrementally built out to ensure information is complete, current, and easily accessible online. We plan to leverage some of these improvements to allow for more information-sharing and collaboration between the School and Parish.
- Building out and expanding School programs that target dual language and reinforce cultural diversity, and focus on STEM, the arts, and other enrichment opportunities for our kids.
- A refreshed and reimagined School interior will start to take shape, which will focus on bringing the School and classroom tools up to date and making the space more functional.

Now, a call for action. Yet even beyond these near-term goals, our work will only have just started. To help ensure St. Mary's will continue to flourish and grow long into the future, I am working closely with Principal Olmes, the School Advisory Board, the Parish Diocesan Financial Committee (DFC), and members of the PTO and Parish to craft and implement a 3-5 year Strategic Plan that will benefit our whole Community. St. Mary's

Strategic Plan will focus on enriching, expanding, and sustaining both the School and the Parish, and will be driven by the Marketing and Research Committee's findings and the Community's feedback. We will work together to further define and prioritize needs, and design and implement lasting and creative solutions. But we need your time, talent and treasure to do it.

So here lies my call:

- We are blessed to have so many individuals so deeply invested in the success of St. Mary's School and Parish. Please stay tuned for future communications from me as we update you on progress against the Strategic Plan and next steps. There will be specific asks and requests for your time along the way: from completing surveys asking for your constructive feedback, to requests to serve on committees, to manual labor as we transform St. Mary's grounds and infrastructure. Please consider giving your time as you are able.
- Our Community is rich with the talents and experience needed to develop plans and lead efforts. We will soon be asking you about the talents, experience, and knowledge you might consider sharing with us as we drive forward to make St. Mary's School and Parish better. Please consider answering these calls for your talent as you are able.
- Finally, we are appreciative of your generous donations of money, which we realize affirms your trust and excitement about the great things we can accomplish together. Recently, the Boxes hosted an event inviting a few dozen sustaining donors within our St. Mary's Community to help fund some of the near term plans mentioned above, and kick off our strategic planning efforts. We were humbled as donations and pledges of \$35,000 or more were received from that single event. With the year coming to a close, we would be grateful if you are able to join them in hosting a similar event to share our plans or contributing some of your treasure towards achieving our vision for the future.

Please join me in thanking those who have so generously given of their time, talent and treasure. And moreover, please join all of us by answering this call to action as you are able, willing, or inspired to do by reaching out to by giving us your information on the following form, or contacting one of the following so they may let us know about your interest.

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e-Signup Sheet:	https://forms.gle/MbHrRxJ4Du6R2QSF7	

Blessings to All,

Fr. John Worster