



Living and Sharing the Gospel of Christ

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To our entire Saint Leo School Community; our Teachers, Staff and Families,

The last few days have certainly been eventful ones for all of us. After thirteen years with us, first as a Teacher, and the last four as our Principal, Jenn Miller has resigned. Over the past few days, she and I had numerous conversations. I know how she struggled with the final decision but I know that God will bless her for her faithful service to us and lead her to another position, where she will flourish. All who know her will universally attest to her “good heart” and her love for our children and devotion to Catholic Education. Please keep her and her family in your prayers as they move on to that next chapter in their lives.

We too, move on to this next chapter in the life of our School and, after much thought and prayer, I have asked Mary Jo Diffendall to serve as our Interim Administrator. I have known Mary Jo for 20 years and she has been a devoted member of our Parish for over 35 years. Like Jenn, she is a holy and faithful Catholic woman. Her background, however is a bit more varied as she brings a slightly broader perspective in her new role. She began her professional career as a Teacher, at Saint Joseph’s Academy in Columbia. After a successful career as a business owner, she joined the Development Staff of Lancaster Catholic High School in 2006, and then served as Director of Advancement and Marketing at St. Anne’s Retirement Center until 2024. She has served as our School’s Development Director for the past 2 years, working closely with Jenn and Michelle Navickas, our Vice Principal, our School Board and our Volunteers in countless areas. I have the utmost confidence that Mary Jo will lead our School in this interim period with great energy and commitment.

She and Michelle have been meeting with our Teachers over these past days and will continue to do so as we move forward. I know our Teachers have a great relationship with her and I know that Mary Jo knows how much we regard and respect all our Teachers for the great work that they do.

To our Parents, we will continue to keep you apprised of further changes and developments. As you may know, three of our Teachers will not be returning next year and we are actively seeking qualified persons to replace them. Our Leadership Team of me, Deacon Frank, Mary Jo and Michelle are meeting almost daily. We have interviewed a number of candidates and Mary Jo will be updating all within the next few days concerning any final hiring decision. We have already posted on our Diocesan Website the opening for our School Principal.

Over the past few years, we have sought to emphasize our identity of our School as “Catholic, Excellent, Affordable”. We will continue to do so and I also want to advise all that I have asked Mrs. Tina Johnson, our Parish Director of Communications, to assume a new Role as “Director of Spiritual Life and Discipline” in our School. Tina has a B.A. Degree in Liberal Arts in the Great Books Program of Saint John’s College and is completing her Certificate from the Theology of the Body Institute, so she will bring that insight that our Bishop has asked our Schools to incorporate in her new role. Many of you know Tina. She and her husband, Brian, have raised five boys, which I think makes her a bit of an “expert” in helping to guide our children.

Certainly, the hallmark of a “Catholic Education” is the respect that all are called to exhibit, how that is reflected in the “uniform policy” and in the conduct expected of all students, which requires a commitment from the Administration for a consistent application of our Behavior Policies. I believe that Tina’s presence will add greatly to this effort.

So, as we move forward, I want to thank Mary Jo for her willingness to take on this new role. As I have stated, I have absolute confidence in her and her abilities to guide us through this period of transition.

I want to thank Michelle Navickas. Her impact as our Vice Principal over this past year has been immeasurable. She continues to spearhead the implementation of those aspects of our Catholic Classical Approach so that again, our School can stand out for its academic excellence.

To our Teachers, I thank you for your commitment and your dedication. In these times of “change”, all of you have expressed your commitment to dedicate yourselves to our mission. We will continue in conversation with you over these next weeks as get ready for another great School Year.

And to our Parents, thank you. We take the responsibility of educating your children as a solemn and serious one. We ask you to make a conscious commitment to partner with us in our task. We anticipate that some of our policies may be enforced with a bit more regularity as we begin the new year. We need you to join us so that we will make Saint Leo’s the best it can be.

May God continue to bless all in our Parish and School Family. I pray that each day, all of us may grow in the life and love that God wishes to share with us in His Son, Jesus, our Savior and Lord, so that we may become more like Him and grow in the love He wishes to share with us now, always and one day, forever in the glory of heaven. God bless you.

Monsignor Hahn