



23 June 2019

Dear Holy Cross families and friends,

Happy summer vacation! Summer is a wonderful time and I pray that you are enjoying these blessed days. Our office staff is finishing up preparing report cards and records to mail out and they plan to do that by the end of this week. We know that the children are eager to get them. Please resolve any invoices so that they can send out your children's reports in a timely fashion. If you are unsure if you owe anything, please contact Mrs. Burke in the front office. She will be working most days in the summer and is there to help in anything you need.

We had another wonderful year at Holy Cross Academy. Receiving the Purple Star Award was a big highlight. The Purple Star designation is awarded by the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on the Educational Opportunity for Military Children to military-friendly schools that have demonstrated their commitment to meeting the needs of military-connected students and their families. We are proud of our military families and are happy to serve them in any way.

We celebrated many successes with our students this year – most notably the multiple scholarships our graduates received, and their acceptance into challenging programs, such as Governor's School and the International Baccalaureate Program. Our high schools continue to let us know how well prepared our students are as they move into secondary education. We are very proud of our graduating class of 2019 and look forward to hearing about their accomplishments. We had another amazing National Day of Giving during Catholic Schools Week. Your generosity allowed us to purchase a classroom set of Chromebooks for our students and Chromebooks for our teachers. We hosted a very successful Google Academy after school ended, and several teachers have taken the challenge to become Google Certified educators. Holy Cross is well positioned to move into a one-to-one program in the near future.

We accomplished 2 other important goals this year: revising our Writing program and implementing a Social and Emotional learning curriculum, Top 20! Moving forward, HCA will continue to accomplish our goals from our 2016 Design for Excellence Self Study.

We are saying goodbye to Fr. Colin Davis with great gratitude for all he has done for our parish and our school. He will be missed by all of us. Later this week, Saint Mary Parish will be welcoming a newly ordained priest, Fr. Sean Koehr.

We are very grateful to our teachers and staff members who are leaving HCA, for their dedication to our school community. They have enriched us during the time they have been with us, whether it is 1 year or 21 years. We will miss them greatly. We said good-bye this year to Mrs. Susan Halsey, our amazing Business Manager, Mrs. Rebecca Darling, our dedicated school counselor, Mrs. Molly Dalton, who was HCA's chief cheerleader as our Marketing Director and coordinator of many programs, Mrs. Lori Jeffers who took such good care of our new families as they joined our community, Mrs. Jenn Bliven who served our Morning Care and our Copy Room this year, and Mr. Tom Sherman, our caring Phys Ed teacher and coach since our opening.

We have been blessed by the presence of several Oblate Sisters during our 21 years of service to HCA. Sr. Michele Elizabeth and Sr. Mary Vincent are still remembered very fondly for their time here at our school. Sr. Miriam Elizabeth has delighted our community with her dedication to both our elementary Spanish classes and to our Aviat Care program. Sister has guided and aided countless parents, teachers, staff, and students during her 9 years with us and has shared her deep spirituality with our faculty and staff, and all her students. She has made a difference in the lives of many and we are grateful for her time with us and her willingness to serve in any way she is needed.

Sr. Frances Carol has been with HCA since our beginning, helping to establish our school and put many programs and initiatives into place. Sister has taught 2nd, 4th and 6th grades and has initiated multiple interesting opportunities for our students, most notably the Science Squad and the Robotics program. Sister took over the Young Catholics Service group when she went to Middle School and was a big part of our Liturgical Music team. Sister is well-known for her traffic directing skills and her contributions to our technology program have been instrumental in getting us where we are today. More than any of this, Sr. Frances Carol has guided her students to *"Be who you are and be that well,"* and has been a source of inspiration and strength for our community. Her contributions are innumerable and her stamp on HCA is enduring.

We have been blessed with wonderful new teachers and staff members who will bring their gifts and fresh insights to our school. We welcome each of them to Holy Cross Academy. Mrs. Kathy Whetzel is our new business manager. Mrs. Miriam McCabe is taking over our Phys Ed program. As a longtime HCA Mom, she is well known to our community. Mrs. Jennifer Kingsbury will be teaching 8th grade Religion and Language Arts, allowing Ms. Peggy Magruder to direct our Aviat Care program and to serve as a Math Resource teacher in the elementary grades and Mrs. Carter Henley will be teaching Language Arts in 6th grade, as well as grade 7-1. Mrs. Carla Rivera will be teaching all the Middle School Social Studies and Mrs. Julie Appleton has moved to 6th grade to teach Religion and Science, including 7th grade Science. Mrs. Victoria Ellis has moved to 3rd grade and we will be hiring a new Librarian. As you know, Dr. Stephen Fry has been appointed principal of Holy Cross Academy. We are very proud to hand over to him such a beautiful school and wonderful community. We know that

you will all welcome Dr. Fry and the new faculty and staff as they begin their ministry among you.

The Oblate Sisters will be moving on Friday so this is truly our final farewell. We love you all and always will. Never hesitate to contact us with a prayer request or just to say hello. Holy Cross Academy will always be dear to our hearts and each of you hold a special place in our affection. It has been our honor to serve you for the past twenty-one years.

Our Sisters asked me to include a message from them to all of you.

From Sr. Frances Carol:

Dear Parents and dear friends of HCA, in a short time, we will be departing from Fredericksburg. Before this happens, I want to take time to thank each of you. For the past 21 years we have worked side by side. We have formed very special friendships and spiritual bonds. Throughout these 21 years, I have come to know and respect you and truly appreciate all of your love, care, support and concern. You have been great sources of inspiration for me. Holy Cross Academy and St. Mary Parish will always have a very special place in my heart and most especially in my prayers. Although leaving here is very difficult, I pray each of you will find peace remaining close to Our Lord. Following the counsels of St. Leonie Aviat, "Let us work for the happiness of others."

Know that I appreciate each of you, your support and all you have done to make these years in Virginia very special. I thank God for each of you and for all you have done to help make HCA such a wonderful and vibrant school and St. Mary's such a special parish. I promise I will pray for you and ask you to pray for each of us as we endeavor to serve where Our Lord is calling us. Following the advice of St. Francis de Sales, may each of us, "Be who you are and be that well". With gratitude and the assurance of my prayers, I am, Sr. Frances Carol.

From Sr. Miriam Elizabeth:

I want to thank all of you for your love and care during my years at Holy Cross. It has been a grace to work with you. I will continue to pray for you and your families. May God bless you in the years to come. In Christ Jesus, Sr. Miriam Elizabeth

Fittingly, we leave the final word to St. Francis de Sales: *"The greater the external distance between us, the closer do I feel our inward link and union to be. I shall never cease to pray God graciously to perfect his holy work in you, that is to say to further your excellent desire and design to lead a perfect Christian life, a desire which you should love and foster tenderly in your heart as given to you by the Holy Spirit and as a spark of his divine fire. As for me, I am wherever you yourself are, since his divine Majesty has willed it so for all eternity. So let us go on, happily and joyously doing the work which our Master has marked out for us."*

With the promise of my prayers,



Sr. Susan Louise Eder, OSFS
principal