

FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE



If you heard a collective sigh of relief this past Friday, it may have been the administration, faculty and students at the School of St. Mary exhaling as they completed the second quarter of the current academic year. The midway point provides cause for reflection and gratitude. We have been able, with the commitment of the faculty and administration, and the support of families and students, to provide in person education since we opened the doors back in August 2021. We anticipate the next two semesters of the year will be filled with the students learning, the faculty teaching, the administration leading and the benefactors and families supporting the many educational efforts that make our school the Blue-Ribbon school that draws families and students from over 20 communities.

The School administration and faculty have been planning exciting and fun events for the Catholic Schools Week at our school. Catholic Schools Week begins on Sunday, January 30. The School of St. Mary will be offering a virtual open house on Sunday, January 30 at 11:00am for current and future parents of students to learn about the many offerings and the quality education provided at the school. There are other events that will take place in the school throughout the week. Information for these events will be promoted through the parish and school websites as well as many social media posts. The theme for the 2022 week of celebration is **Catholic Schools Week: Faith – Excellence – Service**. It is not possible to list the many positives that take place each day in the school. For more information regarding enrollment, please contact Mandy Castle, Director of Admission, at the School of St. Mary.

The annual national Collection for the Church in Latin America (CLA) will be the weekend of January 22-23. The 2022 campaign highlights the faith of Latin America and the many opportunities we have to *share faith* with them. We also recognize the tremendous benefit of having our Latin American brothers and sisters in the Church and the revitalization their fervor brings to the faith. In addition to offering our help and support to the Catholics of Latin America, we have much to learn from them.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops invites you to aid our faithful brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church of Latin America. To learn more about who the collection benefits, visit How to Give: www.usccb.org/committees/church-latin-america/how-give_to to participate next weekend. To learn more about who the collection benefits, information is available at www.usccb.org/committees/church-latin-america. By following either of these links you will hear that Bishop Octavio Cisneros invites you to help strengthen families, fund Catholic education, and foster priestly and religious vocations by giving to the Collection for the Church in Latin America. For over 50 years, Catholics in the United States have expressed solidarity with the Church from Mexico to the Caribbean, to the southern tip of South America through the Collection.

As we worship this weekend, the second Sunday of Ordinary time, we are taught by the first of Jesus' signs recorded in the Gospel of John, The Wedding Feast at Cana. Like the couple at the wedding, do you know people who have had the "wine run out" in their lives? People are bogged down by the injustices of the world. People struggle caring for their families. Families struggle in their faith, prioritizing the importance of prayer, worship, and the Eucharist in their lives. Some feel distant from God rather than knowing and trusting that God is always with them. Repeated struggles leave many in our world feeling empty. It is easy to lose hope at such moments in our lives. May we deepen our trust and resolve to turn to God, to seek out Jesus in our lives this year, supporting family and friends struggling, giving thanks for the support that comes our way when we are in need.

May God bless you in 2022,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Mike Vacur".