



September Newsletter

With the use of "Flock Notes" we will be sending monthly newsletters to all of you. If you do not have email, they will also be available on the parish website, stmaryoticanhoc.org and Facebook. (If you do have an email address and would be willing to share it with us, please call your parish office (Portage 608-742-6998) or Briggsville (608-981-2282) so that we don't have the expense of mailing this newsletter to you.)

This month we officially welcome two of our staff in their new positions in the parish and one new staff member. Hannah Haseley begins her role as Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization; Jamie Hahn and Josh Schuenemann, while both long-time staff members, begin new roles: Director of Advancement for Parish and School, and Principal of St. Mary School, respectively. They each offer a few thoughts of their new roles below. Lisa Clemmons, Director of Parish Administrations; Samuel Clemmons, Director of Liturgical Music; Christine Daly, Finance Manager and Nancy Davis, Director of Pastoral Ministries, will continue in their respective roles in Portage. Sr. Anita will continue to serve as Pastoral Minister and Director of Faith Formation for Briggsville. We are blessed to have such a dedicated, talented and committed staff in our parishes.

Jamie Hahn – Director of Advancement for Parish & School

I was welcomed into the St. Mary's community in 2008 as the school principal. During my time as principal, one of my goals was to foster relationships with school families, parish members, local agencies and community leaders. Through these partnerships and the work of our dedicated school staff, and volunteer committees, St. Mary School has gained enrollment and increased the school's visibility in the Portage community. I am excited to carry this momentum to the parish level, as I focus on advancement efforts for St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish.

As Director of Advancement, I will be working closely with parish and school leaders, to coordinate and promote stewardship within the parish and school community. I am looking forward to establishing partnerships with other institutions and businesses in line with our mission. My goal is to develop close connections with registered parishioners through hospitality and stewardship initiatives. I will assist the parish and school's advancement efforts by overseeing enrollment management, marketing, alumni relations, fundraising, grant opportunities, and giving.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss these advancement efforts, or are interested in opportunities to contribute to St. Mary Parish and School. My office is located on the second floor of the parish center. I can be reached at jamhahn@stmarysportage.org or 742-6998 x211. I am excited to continue to be a part of this parish and amazing faith community. I look forward to hearing from you.

Josh Schuenemann – Principal, St. Mary School

It is with great excitement that I write this short introduction to you as the newly appointed principal of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception School. I am honored to have the opportunity to continue to lead this school community! As most of you know, St. Mary School is not new to me. I started working at St. Mary School ten years ago as a part-time music teacher. From there, I added Informational Technology, Religion, and the role of Associate Principal.

I have had the great privilege to support this school community in these different roles over the last 9 years, but my greatest blessing comes not professionally, but personally as I am proud of my family. The "Schuenemann Five" resides in the Town of Green Lake with my wife, Kimberly, our three children - Noah (6), Olivia (4), and Austin (14 months), and our dog, Gatsby. I have often heard educators say, "treat your students like your own kids." I learned early on here at St. Mary School that we have the most dedicated and talented group of teachers and staff who care for our students much like our own. Our amazing staff will continue to create a learning environment where our students will learn their faith, set goals, and learn how to become the best versions of themselves!

Hannah Haseley – Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization

Hello Portage! My name is Hannah Haseley. I am the new Director of Faith Formation and Evangelization. I am originally from Port Washington and went on to get a degree at St. Norbert College. My goal this year is to get every child familiar with the Bible, and not just the good ole stand-by stories either. I am a museum person. Learning is my greatest joy and if I spend a day without learning something new, I feel like I have wasted an opportunity. I approach life and faith with an open book mentality because I want to learn about other people; I want to form genuine connections. How can we speak of faith without an honesty surrounding the moments that created it? I am most excited about the opportunity to Evangelize and help others become comfortable evangelizing as well. I look forward to meeting you all.

GRATITUDE

We offer special prayers of gratitude to our friends and parishioners who remembered St. Mary Parish in Portage upon their death in their estate plans:

Virginia Witkowski and Peter Leahy, Jr., whose estates contributed to the Renovation Fund, and Catherine O'Brien, whose estate offered a substantial gift to the St. Mary School Endowment Fund.

Have you remembered your parish in your plans?

COVID WILL NOT WIN

The COVID pandemic has severely restricted the fullness of participation in parish life, and will continue to do so in the months ahead. This does not make us less of a parish, it simply compels us to find new ways to be a parish. While large gatherings are restricted, we continue to be church with and to one another. We must make it a priority to keep our personal prayer life active; to gather for Mass when you feel you can do so safely; to unite "online" for Mass if necessary on a weekly basis; to continue your stewardship and charity efforts to the parish, local needs and beyond. We must continue to live as the Body of Christ every day, bringing Christ into each other's lives by our concern, compassion and faith. Don't let COVID win!

To quote St. Paul: *"What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? As it is written: 'For your sake we are being slain all the day; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

MASS GUIDELINES

When you come to Mass, sit with your family and those "in our bubble," but keep a safe (arm's reach) distance from others. Pews are sanitized before every Mass, but feel free to wipe them down before and after Mass yourself, as well. All are required to wear a mask covering their nose and mouth (unless a medical reason restricts you from doing so). Sanitize your hands immediately before you receive Communion. These simple efforts will help keep you and all who gather safe and healthy.