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## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. ANN

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May 13, 2020

*Feast of Our Lady of Fatima*

Dear St. Ann School Family,

As I prayed and reflected this morning on the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the three children of Fatima in 1917, I contemplated the reason Our Lady appeared to children; she did not come so that we would see her, but rather she appeared to the “little ones” – those who see with new eyes and are guided by a perfect, trusting faith in God, like that in which we see in our own children. She came to remind us that God’s light dwells within us and protects us, even in the midst of trials such as those we’re facing now.

I understand that these past weeks have presented complex and unprecedented challenges for many, but especially for you as a parent navigating through this pandemic and caring for your family. We are grateful to you for your hard work and efforts to support your child in this new, but temporary, learning environment. Though not under ideal circumstances, I hope that you have had the opportunity to see, even if just in small part, the unique power classical education has to stir the imagination and illuminate the truth.

This first year of implementing the Catholic classical model of education has yielded many fruits. As you know, I wrote to you last week about our desire to extend your child’s learning experience further and deeper into the Catholic classical model. I write to you again today to share our plan for taking this next decisive step forward in furthering classical education at St. Ann School for the next school year.

I have consulted with my brother Oratorians, members of diocesan schools office, as well as several members of our local school and parish community. With their recommendation, I have appointed Rev. Peter Cebulka, C.O., to assume the responsibilities and duties of the principal, effective beginning in the 2020/2021 school year, as he continues to serve as Head of School for St. Ann School. This will be the first time in its history that St. Ann School is helmed solely by a Head of School, a leadership role common among classical education institutions.

In this newly envisioned role, Fr. Peter will be heavily involved in curriculum and teacher development and will also continue working with a broad range of constituents – faculty and staff, the diocesan office of schools, parents, benefactors and the local business community to advance Catholic classical education in Raritan and beyond. He also plans to continue, in some capacity, to teach in the upper grades. As an experienced administrator who is familiar with our school and the classical education model, Fr. Peter’s assumption of these responsibilities is an important step for our school community, one which will also serve to strengthen our school’s financial position.

Fr. Peter has a great vision for the school and a way of teaching that reinvigorates students in the classroom and engages them in a natural way. All the faculty, and many of you, already know him and know of his love for the students. In his role, he will lead us in further developing our Catholic classical education model and will work closely with the faculty and guide the school's advancement and development efforts. We are confident that the ardor he shows for the beauty and dynamic power of classical education will spark that same passion among our students, their families and our faculty and staff.

Much like the children of Fatima – the “little ones” – may we be granted the gift to see with new eyes, keeping our eyes fixed on the hope that comes from a perfect, trusting faith. As we begin this transition, clinging to our Mother for her protection and help, I pray that our school community may continue to be sentinels of the dawn, a source of hope for others, and a beacon of truth and light for all who surround us.

Blessings and Peace in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Thomas Odorizzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Thomas Odorizzi, C.O.

Pastor