

The Sacred Heart School of Glyndon

Loving. Learning. Serving.

Dear Members of the Sacred Heart School Community,

Sacred Heart School has had a strategic plan in place for many years. It has been revised and updated continuously to reflect the changing needs of our students and the goals of our community. The most recent plan was written in 2018 and is in effect until 2022. You can find the plan on our school website under the “About Us” tab. I strongly encourage all community members to read it if you have not already done so.

The strategic plan is the roadmap for any organization, a plan that must be constantly revisited and revised as circumstances and community needs change. Two more recent sections to the plan, Parental Involvement and Diversity and Inclusion, are examples of areas of focus that became apparent through evolving needs. Our parent service hours program, which was launched last year, had to be put on hold as the pandemic emerged and shut down not only school for many months but also changed the ability for parents to volunteer altogether.

The Diversity and Inclusion section of our strategic plan calls upon us to foster an environment of open dialogue, meaningful engagement, and student advocacy that reflects a variety of cultural lenses and viewpoints. We are called to deliver diverse, culturally inclusive curriculum, to facilitate understanding and acceptance of different cultures and faiths, and to discuss tough issues such as racism, equity, social justice and inclusion through the lens of Gospel values.

The mission of The Sacred Heart School of Glyndon is to develop the unique, God-given gifts of each student in a safe, nurturing, and diverse environment through innovative academics, service to others, and spiritual preparation for a fulfilling life that follows in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Our mission itself is encapsulated in our school motto: Loving, Learning, Serving.

How then do we help our students grow up in this challenging time? How do we help them in a world of pandemic, of social isolation, of violence and conflicts broadcast on social media and news channels across the across the globe, 24/7?

How can parents and the school support each other and educate our children so that they can follow and live the Gospel values upon which our Catholic-Christian faith is built? How do we help them understand what it means to “follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ?”

The principles of Catholic Social Teaching help to provide us with a framework and context for how we live our lives and how we treat all of God’s children.

In its statement about solidarity, one of the eight principles of Catholic Social Teaching, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) states the following:

“We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a

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shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Pope Paul VI taught that if you want peace, work for justice. The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.”

The Department of Catholic Schools in the AOB encourages all schools in the diocese to incorporate lessons on the topic of peace and racial justice into religion classes. These lessons are under development by multiple stakeholders including school counselors, DCS leaders, principals and associates.

Our administration and faculty have engaged in professional development training over the last few years to facilitate our own personal understandings of differing cultural lenses and viewpoints and to create a school culture that is deliberately inclusive.

Just this past summer, we formed a committee on diversity and inclusion with a small group of parents, teachers, our school guidance counselor, administrators and the director of our parish social justice ministry. We meet monthly online to discuss how we can better serve our students as they struggle with issues surrounding racism and social injustices and how to find their own voices in today’s world. We would love more parents to join with us as we discuss what we can do to help our students reject the current toxic popular culture and to grow up to develop strong Catholic-Christian morals, values, and beliefs. Please email me directly if you are interested in joining with us. We would love to have more voices and minds join with us. Our hope and goal is to send our students out to serve others and to share their gifts and talents with the world.

As parents, there are many resources you can use with your own children to help them grow in awareness and understanding about racial inclusiveness and cultural differences. *Today’s Parent* magazine online has many good articles and guides for age appropriate discussions.

In our school’s strategic plan, the section on Diversity and Inclusion states: “We are all children of God created in the same divine image”. We strive to help our students see themselves as equally special in God’s eyes and to celebrate their differences.

I believe that together we can fulfill our mission to help our children learn what it means to “follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ” and encourage them to work to create a world where racial tensions, violence, and divisiveness will be no more.

Sincerely in Faith,
Mrs. Jeanne Cossentino
Principal