



Our Lady Queen of Apostles Regional Catholic School

The Catholic School in Center Moriches

2 St. John Place + Center Moriches, NY 11934 + 631.878.1033 + www.olqany.org

3 September 2018

Feast of St. Gregory the Great + Labor Day

Dear OLQA Families:

The first day is almost here! I hope you're as excited as I am! The truth: I'm a little nervous too. Maybe you are as well!

I want to provide some updates about all that has been happening here at OLQA! The past few weeks have been pretty intense! We're doing great things for our school community, so our school community can do great things in the months ahead!

New Faculty. I am very excited to welcome the newest members of the faculty to the OLQA team:

- **Ms. Elizabeth Archambault** – Spanish
 - Students in Grades 6/7 and 8 will now be taking Spanish every day!
- **Mr. Brian Frey** – Early Childhood Physical Education
- **Ms. Cindy Fiscina** – Mission Science
- **Ms. Jeanne Hogan** – Early Childhood Education/Tech/Library
- **Ms. Cassandra Minogue** – Mission Social Studies/Intermediate and Mission Physical Education

Building Updates. We have done a lot of work on our school building. We have painted and cleaned. We have new lights and a brand new cafeteria set up (I think you're going to like it). We have most things in place for the first days.

One project that is clearly "in progress" is the David Turpin Sports Complex. That's because of nature! We have completed the half court basketball court and are now preparing to re-grade the field. Our science scholars can tell us that the best time of the year to plant natural grass is now! Some of you commented that the grass is all brown. That's the first step in the process. You'll be able to see the field come to life in the months ahead.

Recess will take place in school parking lot and the convent backyard in the weeks ahead.

Here's another update! Our Auditorium will remain air-conditioned! We have worked it out to keep the existing units. We will be moving them shortly and working to change our electrical set up for them from temporary to permanent.

Lunch Program. I want to thank you for your patience with this process. Since becoming principal, I have worked with some parents and members of the staff to come up with some good options for our students, faculty and staff. I think we're close to finalizing things and hope to be able to announce some more information in next week's mailing or at Back to School Night. We will likely not begin a hot lunch program during the week of September 10th. We may need a little more time to pull the pieces together.

For this week, there is no lunch service. Students will be in the Cafeteria on Thursday and Friday for lunch. Students should come to school with everything they need for lunch (and maybe a snack for the Principal too!).

For planning purposes, plan for a brown bag lunch for next week as well. If things change, I will let you know.

Drop Off/Pick Up. Please remember if you are picking up your student he or she must come to school with a note. Your child's safety and security are our most important priority. Please help us to maintain this by sending in a note with your child.

Student Handbook. We are updating our school handbook. I had hoped to have it ready during the week of the 20th but have had some good and productive conversations with our faculty and staff about ways we can be more consistent and effective in what we say and do. Therefore, we will provide an update, I hope, by Back to School Night.

One policy change I want to be clear about is the use of electronic devices. I love electronic devices. I have about five of them! However, when it comes to the academic environment they can be a distraction. **Therefore, effective immediately, no electronic devices are to be used or are to be out before school (this includes the gathering time) and during school.** Students may have them on the bus and may use them after the school day has ended. From the moment they enter the building – this includes the gathering time in the Auditorium – until bus dismissal, they are not to be used. Any electronic device found out during the school day will be collected and only returned to the student's parent. There will be a consequence for the student. We will gradually introduce this but by October 1st all students must adhere to this policy.

I am going to try and meet students half way. I am working on setting up a charging station in the Principal's Office...\$10.00 for the first hour, \$5.00 for each additional hour. Just kidding! I am working on the charging station though. Once I have it set up, I'll let you know.

Opening of School Mass. Our Opening of School Mass will take place this Friday, September 7th. Bishop Robert Brennan, Vicar General of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, will preside at the Mass. We'll have a community snack afterwards. I hope you and your family will be part of the liturgy on that day.

Please make sure you are attending Mass each Sunday! You're making an incredible investment by sending your child to OLQA. As Catholics, the celebration of the Eucharist is what we count on for our spiritual strength and nourishment. If you come to OLQA from another faith tradition, make sure you are living out your faith as called to!

Back to School Night. We will gather for Back to School Night on September 11, 2018. To be honest, that's always a hard day for me. We will begin Back to School Night this year in the Church with an opening prayer service and presentation and then move to the different classrooms.

Family Unity Network. Thanks to those who signed up for the Family Unity Network. What an awesome response! If you haven't signed up, please do so...you are always, always, always welcome to become more involved here.

I am also mindful of the commitment you make through our Mandatory Fundraising Program. I understand the need for this program but also understand the struggle. I would like to consider offering a fifth event – a 5K Run/Walk. If you're interested in being a part of a conversation about this, please let me know. (PLEASE SIGN UP FOR ONE OF THE OTHER EVENTS AS YOU PLANNED. If we make an additional event, I will let you know.)

Thank you. Before ending this letter, I want to thank you for your support, patience and understanding over the past month (well, not even a month). Taking on this role is a significant challenge for me but I am doing so because I believe in this school community and each of you.

Please pray for me.

Sincerely,



Reverend John Sureau, Ph. D., LCSW
Principal

The only true riches are those that make us rich in virtue.
Therefore, if you want to be rich, beloved, love true riches.

If you aspire to the heights of real honor,
strive to reach the kingdom of Heaven.

If you value rank and renown,
hasten to be enrolled in the heavenly court of the Angels.

-St. Gregory the Great