



Our Lady of the Hamptons Regional Catholic School
160 North Main Street,
Southampton, New York 11968

July 18, 2021

My dear Parents,

So much has happened since March 13, 2020.....and we do not need to be reminded of the changes in our personal and corporate lifestyles, educational modifications....and life, in general. In the past weeks, we have seen much discussion and concern about how the “new normal” will be played out in September. While it is too early for us to make any definitive statements on exact procedures for the opening of school, this is a great time to touch base about something totally essential to the core of OLH....**our spiritual life!**

Our Bishop has announced that, **effective August 14**, all Catholics will once again be bound by the **obligation** to attend Mass on all **Sundays and Holydays of Obligation**. Our parishes have worked very hard over these past months to provide the weekly and daily masses virtually, observe all protocols, and make their services accessible to all. **August 14** will signify a “homecoming of sorts” for those who have not yet returned to the physical church setting! Knowing that we will be able to take the school children over to church for our monthly liturgies is yet one more sign of hope!

Attendance at Sunday Mass should be a priority especially for families whose children are Catholic school children! One hour out of a family’s “busy schedule” should not be a problem! Daily and weekly Religion classes do stress the Gospel, sacraments, love and respect. The carry-over into Sunday liturgy should be smooth and a sign of faith development.

Those stated facts seem to be a proper setting for these next few notes. Please read them and see how these recommendations and explanations fit best for your family and the tremendous role your family plays at OLH!

- Catholic elementary schools were created more than a century ago with the primary purpose of developing the faith in children. Since 1961, the physical structure of Our

Lady of Poland (becoming Our Lady of the Hamptons in 1982) has attempted to stay close to that mission. As we look at the current registration for September, we note that there are some children who were not able to receive First Penance or First Eucharist during the pandemic. The new second grade class will be prepared all year for their May reception of sacraments.

- There are also some of our newer students whose parents are Catholics who have not yet had their children baptized due to time and place. **PLEASE use this period of return and renewal to make arrangements for these sacraments on a personal level.** (This can be done in school, but the best preparation is with you and your pastor!
- I am sure that you noted the \$500 differential in tuition for those who are NOT registered and supporting parishioners. That was explained in March and again in the letter accompanying your most recent tuition bill. Please **KNOW:**
- Each of our supporting parishes sends a monthly subsidy to the school to supplement tuition and fees. The amount represents the parish's support of families who are actually in the pews on Sunday...and **do provide financial support to the parish** via the weekly envelope system. What a family gives to the parish is not known to the school and is only known to the pastor.
- The **additional \$500 is passed on to all who are NOT registered, supportive** members of the parish. The only way we can accurately record a family's status is by asking families to see the pastor, have a discussion, register if necessary.....and get a special card signed. The pastors will be given those cards. Once that card has been submitted to school, the extra \$500 will disappear from the bill.
- The process for obtaining the pastor's signature should not be difficult, but will require your making an **appointment and actually having a conversation** with your leader. We are so fortunate that each of our pastors cares so deeply about our children and provides support, sacramental service and attendance and visibility in school! Certainly there must be ideas that you could share with your pastor that would also help the parish community grow in this time...because of you!
- Our parishes have suffered the loss of **services of our families during the pandemic.** There is great need at this time for altar servers (boys and girls from grades 3-8), choir members, cantors, ushers, lectors, Eucharistic ministers. This is a perfect opportunity for you to see where the needs may be...and where you may be of service. Your personal involvement would be a great gift to your parish...and tremendous example for your children.

Please know how much we care about you...your family...your parish...our school. Just remember that this is all rooted in..and nourished by our faith!

SKathy