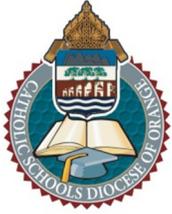


# DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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August 11, 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Orange County Catholic Schools!

It seems like only moments ago that we were congratulating the class of 2011 and wishing all of our students a safe and enjoyable vacation. Yet somehow through the magic of disappearing summer we are beginning again with a new school year.

On behalf of Bishop Tod Brown, Father Gerald Horan, Vicar for Faith Formation and Mrs. Sally Todd, Associate Superintendent, I want to welcome you all to the 2011 – 2012 school year and wish your students every success and blessing of the coming year. We recognize the sacrifices so many of you make to provide this opportunity for your children, and we are grateful for the trust you place in us. As primary educators, you have a profound impact on your student's formation through your choice of school and your involvement in their lives. We know that by working together we can provide the best education for your daughters and sons.

Catholic education is much more than buildings, textbooks, or even technology. The heart of the Catholic school system in Orange is our excellent staff and faculty across our K-12 school system. From school administration, to classroom teachers and aides, to support staff, these women and men are united in their dedication to the mission of Catholic education and desire to provide your students with the best academic preparation. Through the WCEA/WASC accreditation process, all of our schools continually review, revise, and improve their programs and services to provide the most effective instruction for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century student. In partnership, you as parents can help your student by your awareness of what they are doing in classes and by encouraging them to show responsibility and integrity in completing assignments. All schools provide assistance in various forms to students experiencing academic difficulty. Parents should be aware of these opportunities and encourage students to take advantage of them if needed. Working together we will help your children discover their gifts and realize their greatest potential.

As integral partners in this, I encourage you to cooperate with and support the school. Should problems arise, please work directly with school personnel, following appropriate communication channels, in a spirit of respect with the goal of resolution. If ultimately these efforts prove unsuccessful, please know that my office is available to help. In the midst of a society where the media values anger over understanding, confrontation over cooperation, and shouting over polite conversation, it is my sincere wish that we might work together cooperatively toward our shared goal of your child's success.

A central value is the faith-filled environment beginning in our schools and lived out in our parishes. In our Catholic schools students learn the truths of their faith and participate through prayer, liturgy, and service in living it out. We ask you as parents to support this formation through weekly attendance at mass with your student at your local parish and through your own participation in the life of the parish. Catholic schools continue to be the greatest single source for the Catholic leaders in our church and in our community, and with your support, we will build the leaders of tomorrow.

Our Catholic Christian faith unites us in respect for all members of the school community. Students have never been more challenged by the conflicting messages of the world in which they live. The superficial values found too often in popular media and the ongoing challenges of the evolution of social media make this generation in particular need of direction and support. Our students, your children, cannot escape these challenges, but in our Catholic schools we work to create a framework of respect-based discipline and provide Gospel values to help direct their maturity. You add to this value through your participation in the life of your child, by being vigilant of online activity, by encouraging and modeling respect for all with particular direction to avoid bullying behaviors whether in person or online, and by supporting the school's efforts to create a safe and happy environment.

A Catholic education goes beyond the classroom, beyond the family, beyond the parish. Together we are working to create a better world. May God bless you and your sons and daughters in this good new year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory Dhuyvetter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Gregory Dhuyvetter  
*Superintendent of Catholic Schools*