

From the Desk of Principal D'Amico

September 2019

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a brand new school year. It seems that the summer goes by so quickly and without much time to relax. I am sure you had some time to make nice memories with your most precious gifts - your children! Here at the Academy of Our Lady of Grace we have not stopped. Summer is a time to collect my thoughts, and make positive changes that will impact our school community. I am confident you will find some of the changes exciting as well as beneficial to your children's education.

If you come down our gym stairs, you will notice that we freshly painted our stairwell and added a new non-slip floor to the bottom landing leading into the gymnasium. Inside the cafeteria, we freshly painted the walls and purchased new lunch tables that will fold up making the cafeteria another space for students and parents to utilize. We are excited about our brand new roof which cost close to \$73,000 to complete.

Recently, we have purchased a new math series for grades 7 and 8. Our 7th grade schedule will have two levels of math. This program is being piloted to see how our students will benefit from it. Sadly, we had to say our good-byes to some of our teachers. Mr. Kaiser will be replaced with Mrs. Susan Toth, who has over thirty years of physical education experience. This past year she had taught our preschoolers through third grade. She will challenge and keep our students active. I am so very fortunate to work with her on a brand new curriculum this summer which I will share with you in the next few weeks. She has also been monumental in securing some grants which allowed the purchase of new equipment. The new athletic director, Mr. Jason Solan, will lead our sports teams and volunteers. His passion for sports and good leadership skills will be a perfect fit for our school. Due to a personal conflict, Ms. J, our art teacher, has been replaced by Mrs. Stitz, a newly retired Fairview Public School teacher. She has a strong foundation in art and is excited to join our team. Sr. Rini will be replacing Mr. Negrin who accepted a full time position instructing Spanish. Sr. Rini will be teaching Italian to students in grades K-5. She is well equipped with some new materials and has studied the culture, lived in Italy for many years, and speaks the language so beautifully. Ms. Cari who has been a part of our parish and staff has now become our new Pre-K 3 head teacher. She will be co-teaching with Mrs. Joia. I will formally introduce you to our new and current staff and the changes that have been made at our Back to School Night on September 12th.

A principal's job is very intense who has numerous round-the-clock duties. A school can be maintained as a well-run school due to its staff and volunteers. Together, we do make AOLG one of the most successful schools in the Archdiocese of Newark. I am happy to welcome as my assistant, Mrs. Caterina Cuoco. She will assume some of the duties of Mr. Feliciano. She will begin her 17th year here at the Academy of Our Lady of Grace and has always been proud of where she works. She shares her time and talents with our school and parish. I am excited to work with her and have her be an integral part in decision making.

Our theme this year will be, "4 Keys for Success @ AOLG." *Respect, Responsibility, Safety, and Persistence*. Each month, teachers or students can email the principal to nominate a student explaining why that student deserves a key. The keys will be blue for respect, red for responsibility, green for safety and purple for persistence. Special character lessons will be presented through teacher lessons and assemblies.

I look forward to seeing everyone at this year's Back to School Kickoff in the early evening of September 6th. Our new programs and initiatives will be available for your perusal. May God watch over all of us! I wish you a great start to a new year.

Respectfully,
Mrs. D'Amico