



Fall 2020

Dear SV Families and Friends,

This year has certainly been like no other. Although we have experienced much hardship as a community, country and world, at times we have been surprised by unexpected silver linings. Time away from the office and school has allowed more quality time with family. Possibly, many have noticed that when life slows down, we see the important things just a little more clearly.

At St. Vincent de Paul High School, the silver lining for us remains our generous community of donors. Few, if any, schools can rely on tuition income alone, and SVHS is no exception. You have supported our mission to provide for the academic, spiritual and social development of our students coupled with a strong college preparatory program. Your generous gifts to our **Annual Fund** campaign make it possible to continue offering a strong college-preparatory Catholic education here in Petaluma, based on Judeo-Christian principles and traditions and open to all. *This year IS truly different and we ask YOU to make the difference.*

Despite the many challenges, we entered into the beginning of the school year dedicated to giving our students the best possible education. The faculty and staff gave up most of their summer vacations to create three separate plans for returning to school, depending on what the health directives would eventually require in August: 1) full-time classroom learning on campus; 2) a hybrid approach, with elements of on-campus and distance learning; and 3) full-time distance learning. As required by our county, we are currently in a distance learning mode. Our ultimate goal is to return to the campus full-time, as soon as it is safe and permissible to do so.

We have spent much time and financial resources getting our campus ready to return to full time classroom learning. This has included reducing the number of desks in classrooms in order to provide for social distancing, purchasing signage and safety equipment and implementing necessary health and safety protocols, all of which are included in our new Health and Safety Guide. These modifications, while required for continued operations, have resulted in significant deficit spending and very limited reserves to draw upon.

We also invested in new technology for our classrooms. Flat screen televisions on moveable carts with webcams and microphones have been installed in each classroom to facilitate lessons through Zoom until we return to campus full time. This new technology has allowed our students to easily see their teachers presenting a lesson on a smart board and/or whiteboard, and increased our student's engagement in their classes.

Another area that we are proud to highlight is the restructured College and Academic Counseling Department. The result is a streamlined process which truly focuses on the individual student. We are committed to preparing our students and their parents for the competitive college application process.

While academic success is key, honoring the development of the spiritual and social potential of our students is at the center of our mission. Our Campus Ministry and Athletic Departments have been focused on opportunities for outdoor retreats and providing ongoing service opportunities, organized cohorts, and pre-conditioning workouts. These allow our students to stay active and involved, supporting their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. *We have followed all guidelines recommended by the California Department of Public Health, CDC and Sonoma County Office of Health.*

We are happy to announce that our WASC/WCEA Accreditation process has been successfully completed! It was great to hear the visiting team say that our faculty is "qualified, cohesive, professional, and resilient." This singular statement confirms the wisdom of recent hiring decisions, the high quality of our current faculty and staff, and their ability to teach and support our students.

The construction of the Linda Gonzalez Art Studio and surrounding Art Village has been a remarkable achievement, a clear sign of our school's continued residual strength in very challenging times. Thanks to many generous donors, this

building is being constructed directly behind Monsignor Tillman Hall and will be the new home for the SVHS Art Department. There will be more information to come regarding the dedication of this new building.

As we put 2020 behind us, we can look back and be grateful for all that YOU have done thus far to help us provide a diverse Catholic secondary school education here in Sonoma and Marin Counties. *This year of greater need IS truly different and we ask YOU to make the difference.*

We ask you to join us in our *Second Century of Educating Students* by recommending SVHS to your family and friends and by giving your tax deductible gifts to the **St. Vincent de Paul High School Annual Fund**. We thank you in advance for your support of this important annual campaign, *BECAUSE, this year the DIFFERENCE is YOU!*

Sincerely,

Patrick W. Daly
Principal

Fr. William Donahue, Class of '76
Pastor & President



From left to right, Back row: Ryan, Class of 2023, Claire, Class of 2020 Hudson, Class of 2024 and Matthew, Class of 2023
Seated: Lily, Class of 2023 and Vanessa, Class of 2023
Front: Sarah, Class of 2020 and Maggie, Class of 2020