

July 27, 2021

Dear Community of St. Michael Catholic School and Parish,

Just over a year ago Fr. Brian Park invited me to come to St. Michael, and “make disciples” with him. This description is one that I have used relentlessly throughout the year as a guiding principle for my time of service. To put into words the road traversed over the course of the past year would be nearly impossible.

I knew that beginning a position as principal in the midst of global pandemic would be a challenge, yet I said yes, believing that God would provide along the way. Throughout the year, I found myself in awe of God’s providence. The way our staff loved and served our students often left me speechless. Witnessing the love each student received when they crossed the threshold of our school building was a beautiful testimony to the love Christ has for each of them. Please know that I am incredibly thankful for each and every single faculty member and family that I was able to encounter.

The cost of working for the salvation and education of our students during the past school year was immensely difficult. It was a task worthy of undertaking, but one that took its toll on me immediately. Creating reopening plans and navigating the waters of uncertainty overshadowed many of the primary efforts of our school day. Beyond my role at the school, the Lord also permitted great personal suffering and loss throughout the last year. I share this with you, not to garner pity, but to shed light on the reality of the cross that each of us bears, oftentimes silently and unknown to those around us.

As these difficulties mounted, I began meeting with Fr. Park to discuss what I was experiencing and my ability to shoulder these burdens well. He posed a question for me to consider: Could I be healthy, happy, and holy and continue to serve as principal of St. Michael Catholic School? Over the course of the next four months, I sought out the counsel of others and continued to pray. It became evident as summer began that the reprieve I was hoping for was not going to be sufficient for me to recover in order to serve the souls of our community with the zeal and hope they deserve.

I long to serve this community. I long to lay my life down for the sake of many souls encountering Christ and entering into heavenly glory; however, I cannot do so at the sacrifice of my own mental and spiritual well-being. St. Michael Catholic School needs a leader that is healthy, happy, and holy. Recognizing that this is essential, I must step away. I plan to stay in this community and would ask for your prayers in the coming months. I want what is best for our students, and I recognize that this means I must allow space for the Lord to provide for them in a different manner. God is here. He has always been and will continue to be faithful to the St. Michael community. I trust in His providence and care for you, and I pray that you are able to find Him working all things out for good for those who love Him in the midst of this journey (Romans 8:28).

Peace,

Melissa Ginther