



## **ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS**

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### **THE OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION ANNOUNCES PARISH SCHOOL CLOSURES**

*Seven schools throughout the Philadelphia region to close in June 2011*

PHILADELPHIA (February 28, 2011) – The Office of Catholic Education today announced that seven parishes will close their respective parish schools at the end of the current academic year. The parish schools include:

- Ascension of Our Lord Parish School in the Kensington section of Philadelphia;
- Our Lady of Fatima Parish School, Bensalem, Bucks County;
- Saint Anne Parish School in the Kensington section of Philadelphia;
- Saint Cyprian Parish School in the Cobbs Creek section of Philadelphia;
- Saint Hugh of Cluny Parish School in the Fairhill section of Philadelphia;
- Saint Martin of Tours Parish School in New Hope, Bucks County; and
- Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish School in Croydon, Bucks County.

The decision to close these parish schools is due to low enrollments. It became clear that sustaining the schools would require a dramatic tuition increase that would preclude many families from providing a Catholic education to their children. Therefore, the parishes concluded that maintaining their schools was no longer a tenable option. Faculty members were informed of the decision at the end of last week, letters were mailed to all school families last Friday, and announcements were made at all Masses over the weekend. Additionally, families received information concerning accommodations at neighboring parish schools.

“It is always a heartbreaking and difficult decision to close a school, especially when so many have given their time and talents to try and sustain it,” said Mary Rochford, Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of Philadelphia. “The reality is that these parishes can no longer sustain their schools with so few students. We would rather provide affordable options to those families interested in Catholic education than levy a high tuition upon families simply to buoy a school with either sharply declining enrollments or the inability of the parish to meet the class size expectations as outlined in the Standards for Quality Catholic Schools.”

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**Background:**

**Ascension of Our Lord Parish School, 735 E. Westmoreland Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134**

Ascension of Our Lord Parish School had a projected enrollment of 118 students for the 2011-12 school, compared to 204 students five years ago (a 43% decrease over five years). Students from Ascension of Our Lord will be welcomed to Our Lady of Port Richmond School, 3233 East Thompson Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134.

**Our Lady of Fatima Parish School, 2915 Street Road, Bensalem, PA 19020**

Our Lady of Fatima Parish School had a projected enrollment of 132 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 187 students five years ago (a 30% decrease over five years). Students from Our Lady of Fatima Parish School will be welcomed to Saint Charles Borromeo Parish School, 1704 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020.

**Saint Anne Parish School, 2343 East Tucker Street, Philadelphia, PA 19125**

Saint Anne Parish School had a projected enrollment of 151 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 246 students five years ago (a 39% decrease over five years). Students from Saint Anne Parish School will be accommodated at Our Lady of Port Richmond Regional School, 3233 East Thompson Street, Philadelphia, PA 19134.

**Saint Cyprian Parish School, 6225 Cedar Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143**

Saint Cyprian Parish School had a projected enrollment of 115 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 229 students five years ago (a 50% decrease over five years). Students from Saint Cyprian Parish School will be welcomed to Saint Francis de Sales Parish School, 917 South 47<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143; Mary Mother of Peace Parish School, 6328 Buist Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19142; or Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish School, 345 North 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139.

**Saint Hugh of Cluny Parish School, 3501 North Mascher Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140**

Saint Hugh of Cluny Parish School had a projected enrollment of 99 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 225 students five years ago (a 56% decrease over five years). Students from Saint Hugh of Cluny may attend nearby Saint Veronica Parish School at 3521 North 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19140.

**Saint Martin of Tours Parish School, One Riverstone Circle, New Hope, PA 18938**

Saint Martin of Tours Parish School had a projected enrollment of 126 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 143 students five years ago (a 12% decrease over five years). From the time of its establishment in 2000, Saint Martin of Tours Parish School has operated at less than half of its full capacity of 300+ students, and is not viable long-term without jeopardizing the financial stability of the parish. Students from Saint Martin of Tours Parish School will be welcomed to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 225 East Ashland Street, Doylestown, PA 18901 or Saint Andrew Parish School, 51 Wrights Road, Newtown, PA 18940.

**Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish School, 130 Walnut Avenue, Croydon, PA 19021**

Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish School had a projected enrollment of 116 students for the 2011-12 school year, compared to 197 students five years ago (a 42% decrease over five years). Students from Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish School will be accommodated at Holy Family Regional School, 2477 Trenton Road, Levittown, PA 19054; Saint Charles Borromeo Parish School, 1704 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA 19020; Saint Mark Parish School, 1024 Radcliffe Street, Bristol, PA 19007 or Saint Michael the Archangel Parish School, 130 Levittown Parkway, Levittown, PA 19054.