
EX UMBRIS IN VERITATEM



ARDEN, NC

CANONGATE CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL
EST. 2013

September 1, 2024

Dear Friends of Canongate,

I am taking a bit of a risk by making our annual financial appeal through this letter. I had the opportunity to spend a lot of money to produce and mail out a full color brochure, replete with beautiful graphics and catchy descriptions of Canongate. There certainly is a time and place for such professional marketing.

However, one reason Canongate exists is to build a different kind of culture for those of us weary of the slick, shiny and disposable. At Canongate, we seek to immerse our students in the real, whether it is the real of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, or the real of natural and artistic beauty. We also operate frugally. I want the majority of your financial support to go directly toward our mission of preparing faithful, intelligent young Catholics to shape the future of Western North Carolina, and to secure their own eternal salvation.

When I took over as principal about this time last year, I found just what I expected: families earnest for their children to receive an authentically Catholic education, students who strive to do their best academically, teachers who love their disciplines and who, more importantly, love their students. In short, I found a Catholic community committed to imparting the good life of a well-formed soul, mind and body to the next generation.

I also found something I did not expect: a school that operates on a touch-and-go budget, and a school which needs significant financial growth in order to ensure long-term stability.

It was my hope to hire a second full-time staff member for the 2024-25 school year. I learned of an alumna of the University of Dallas who had the ideal combination of teaching and administrative expertise. We emailed, met over zoom, and were both growing convinced this would be a good fit. The opportunity collapsed when I shared what her salary would be. She wasn't greedy or unrealistic. I just could not offer her a living wage. A similar scenario repeated itself several times during the past few months as I sought to fill some of the part-time teaching positions I had available.

I am immensely grateful to the teachers who have worked here at Canongate for years with minimal compensation (some *pro bono*), and for our new teachers who have stepped forward to provide the expertise we need for the 2024-25 school year. These men and women believe strongly enough in this mission to sacrifice their time, and to offer their knowledge and wisdom

without just financial compensation. Their dedication is going to make this year's curriculum even stronger and richer than what we offered last year. We are moving in a good direction.

Nonetheless, such sacrifices on the part of our teachers are difficult to sustain year after year. They too have mouths to feed and bills to pay. There are only so many good teachers in a position to make this kind of sacrifice, and good teachers who need just compensation are beyond my ability to keep on staff long-term, or to hire.

In order for Canongate to move beyond subsistence mode into a sustainable and growing school, the honest truth is that we need significant financial growth. There is more than one strategy needed to achieve this, and I am working hard on multiple fronts. However, the financial bedrock of any thriving school are good folks like you who believe in the mission, and who do the quiet, unseen thing of supporting us through monthly and/or annual gifts.

If you believe in our mission, and do not currently support us, please consider making a monthly pledge.

If you do support us, thank you so much, and please consider doubling your monthly donation.

If you are interested in making a large donation to meet some of our high-dollar needs, such as endowing a faculty chair, or providing student scholarships, please reach out to me directly at 828-712-8924, or by email at eallen@canongatecatholic.org.

Please use the remittance envelope to update your monthly donation or go to our website canongatecatholic.org and select the "Donate" button in the top right-hand corner.

May God bless you and Mary keep you.

St. Margaret of Scotland, pray for us.

In Christ's peace,



Erick Allen, Principal