



Parish of the
Assumption



April 18, 2026

Dear Parishioners, Families, and Friends,

For generations, families across the Seacoast have entrusted Saint Mary Academy with the formation of their children – forming not only minds, but hearts rooted in faith, virtue, and love. It is a place where children are known, nurtured, and challenged to become who God created them to be.

Today, we share important and exciting news about the future of our school.

After years of prayer, study, and discernment – and through what can only be described as a remarkable alignment of generosity, need, and opportunity – we are now proceeding with plans for the relocation of Saint Mary Academy from its current campus on Central Avenue in Dover to a new home in Somersworth, on the campus of St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish.

This effort represents a true collaboration across our local Church. Saint Mary Academy, the Parish of the Assumption, St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, and the Diocese of Manchester have partnered together in a shared commitment to strengthen Catholic education and ensure its future for generations to come.

The new campus is envisioned as a shared 10.25-acre site with St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish, thoughtfully designed to serve both parish and school life. Providing direct access to a church, as well as 284 parking spaces, ample green space for recreation and gathering, and an environment that reflects both excellence in education and the beauty of our Catholic faith.

The new school will be a state-of-the-art Catholic school serving approximately 250 students in Pre K-3 through 8th grade. Fully integrated into parish life, students will have daily access to the Sacraments, forming them not only academically, but spiritually within a vibrant, multi-generational faith community.

Throughout this process, Saint Mary Academy will remain at its current location at 222 Central Avenue in Dover, continuing its mission without interruption as plans move forward.

If completed as envisioned, the new school would open its doors in Somersworth in 2028, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter in its long and faithful history.



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The total cost to build this new school is estimated at \$20 million. With deep gratitude and great excitement, we share that an anonymous donor has stepped forward to make a gift of \$15 million toward the construction of a school on the St. Ignatius of Loyola Campus – the largest single gift to Catholic education in the history of our diocese. This extraordinary generosity provides a strong foundation as plans continue to develop.

With this extraordinary foundation in place, efforts will now focus on raising the remaining \$5 million needed to bring this vision fully to life. In the months ahead, we invite you to be part of this historic effort. More information, including ways to support the project, will be available at www.saintmaryacademynh.org/building-our-future

This moment is nothing short of a blessing! It is a testament to faith, to vision, and to the belief that our children deserve the very best – an education rooted in truth, beauty, and goodness.

In the months ahead, we will share more details about this exciting project and how you can be part of this historic effort. For now, we ask for your prayers, your support, and your continued faith as we take these next steps together.

With gratitude and hope,

Rev. Agapit Jean, Jr.
Pastor, Parish of the Assumption

Rev. Andrew Nelson
Pastor, St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Mary Parishes

David Thibault
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Brandy Houle
Principal, St. Mary Academy



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Initial Renderings of the New St. Mary Academy School Building

