

Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach

Diocese of Palm Beach
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement on School Alliance

(Palm Beach Gardens, FL) October 17, 2011 - The Diocese of Palm Beach is announcing an alliance agreement between Holy Name of Jesus Catholic School and St. Juliana Catholic School, both located in West Palm Beach. It will consolidate the two schools onto one campus on the grounds of St. Juliana Catholic School at 4355 S. Olive Avenue. The merger will occur at the end of the 2011-12 school year and become effective at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year.

Parents from both schools were informed this week that the pastors and both school advisory boards had made the recommendation for the merger to the Most Reverend Gerald Barbarito, Bishop of the Diocese of Palm Beach, and that the Bishop has given his approval to move forward with the plan.

Bishop Barbarito said "This alliance has been very carefully planned in the best interests of both schools as well as the future of Catholic School education within our Diocese. It is a proactive step and is in conformity with one of the recommendations from our Diocesan Catholic Schools Task Force. It reflects our commitment to the priority of the mission of Catholic Schools."

The school will be called *St. Juliana Catholic School: A Ministry of St. Juliana and Holy Name of Jesus Parishes*.

This consolidation will be of benefit to both communities, as fixed costs are shared, and as two classes per grade will allow for a stronger academic program for all the children. In fact, there are many improvements made possible by a larger base of students, which will enhance curriculum areas such as math, language arts and religion in the middle school. There are also plans to hire a resource teacher, allowing the school to be of better service to children with special needs, as well as to challenge higher achieving students.

The two schools plan to work closely together throughout the remainder of the 2011-12 school year to help students and parents get acquainted with one another and to begin building one school community. Older students will have opportunities such as socials or retreats to help with the transition.

"I commend all those who worked so hard to bring about this alliance, which will present a unique opportunity for cooperation between parishes in the important ministry of Catholic School

education,” said Gary Gelo, Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Palm Beach. “The merger guarantees students from Holy Name School the opportunity for enrollment at St. Juliana Catholic School as well as giving the teachers and staff of Holy Name of Jesus the first opportunity to apply for open positions at St. Juliana’s as well as other schools in the Diocese.”

Fr. Gavin Badway, Pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, commented, “The merger was the one way we felt we could offer our students the best possible education within one school community, if we could not continue to operate Holy Name School to its fullest potential.” Fr. Badway continued, “Although we have existed as two separate schools for many years, we are one Catholic community, as well as one Church, and the opportunity for us to come together as one school is a great blessing for both our parishes”.

Fr. Alfredo Hernández, Pastor of St. Juliana Parish, commented “St. Juliana Catholic School welcomes the students and families from Holy Name of Jesus School. We are confident that our school will be enriched by the addition of these children and their families. We are going to be able to provide an excellent Catholic education, more effectively and more economically, in a way that will be of benefit to all of the children and families of both school communities.”

Holy Name of Jesus Catholic School is located at 345 South Military Trail and St. Juliana Catholic School is located at 4355 South Olive Avenue, both in West Palm Beach. They are two of 14 Catholic Elementary schools in the Diocese of Palm Beach, which also has three high schools, two private elementary schools, and two preschools, within the Diocese of Palm Beach’s five-county area.

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