

January 20, 2012

It is with deep sadness that I must announce the closure of St. Mary Magdalen Regional School effective at the close of this 2012 school year. This, along with the closure of Notre Dame Elementary School and Sacred Heart High School, is not without concerted effort by our principals, pastors and the Diocesan School Office. Beginning in December 2010, we were left with the challenge to come up with a plan to make Catholic Education in Cumberland County attainable for future years to come. As pastors and principals, we met, we brainstormed, prayed and sought God's Will. Nevertheless, we were unable to come up with an agreeable plan that we thought was fair.

The choice of merging, closure, reconfiguration and sharing of resources proved to be insufficient. We therefore, as pastors and principals, returned this challenge to our Diocesan Office. They, too, after reviews by the Diocesan Audit Committee as well as the Diocesan Finance Council, reluctantly presented their decision to Bishop Joseph Galante. As your pastor, I wish to inform you that Sr. Rosa Maria, our local school board, and School Development Office, have exhausted incredible hours in hoping to keep St. Mary Magdalen Regional School alive. The financial burden of our school (\$508,000 indebtedness) as well as the drop in enrollment (from 173 to 150), has left us with no real alternatives. My deepest sympathies go out to our children, their parents, their grand-parents and all alumni.

The school office is willing to continue to assist those parents who wish a Catholic Education for their children by providing a \$1,000 voucher for the up-coming school year 2012/2013. The two remaining schools in Cumberland County, Bishop Schad and St. Mary's East Vineland, will try to help children in this transition.

This is an incredible loss to our parish and I ask that we try to support each other during this trying time.

If I or Sister Rosa Maria can be of any help we will make ourselves available. For further information you may contact Peter Feureherd, the Director of Communications for the Diocese of Camden, at (856)583-2851 or the Diocesan web site: www.camdendiocese.org.

With deepest regrets, I am,

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Paul Olszewski
Pastor

St. Mary Magdalen and All Saints, please pray for us.