

March 21, 2021

Dear Parents,

My name is Kayla Elrich, and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as the Saint Mary School principal beginning in Fall 2021! I have had the privilege of meeting some of you, and I look forward to many more introductions over the following months.

I grew up in Carroll, Ohio with my parents and six siblings, and I graduated from Saint Mary School in Lancaster. It is wonderful to be back at my alma mater! After my time at SMS, I attended Fisher Catholic High School followed by Ohio Dominican University where I majored in Middle Childhood Education and minored in Theology. During my time at Ohio Dominican, I was involved with the pro-life group, campus ministry, and Saint Paul's Outreach. I also participated in the Honors Program, and I was a student representative on the Board of Trustees.

After I graduated from Ohio Dominican University, I discerned that I was called to be a candidate with the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles. During my time with the sisters, I taught at Saint Joseph's School and worked in their Advancement Office. I am forever grateful for all that I learned while I was a candidate and for all the ways that our Lord worked in my life during that time.

In April 2013, after prayer and reflection, I decided to return to Columbus where I began working at Saint Mary School in German Village. I taught in the middle school for two years, and then I became principal in July 2015 where I have remained for the last six years. During this time, I earned my master's degree in educational leadership from Ohio Dominican University. Working as a principal has brought so much joy, purpose, and fulfillment to my life. I especially love the complexity of the role, and I feel blessed to be a part of such a vital mission in our Church.

While I have truly loved my time in German Village, I am looking forward to planting my roots near my family and returning to a community that holds a special place in my heart. My grandparents, sister, and cousins were married at Saint Mary Church, and many of my family members are still parishioners. Walking down the hallways of the school during my interview brought back many wonderful memories of my time as a student, and I am truly honored to return and serve a community that was such an integral part of my life. To this day, the friendships that I formed at SMS and FCHS still remain, and I will always call Lancaster my "home."

In my spare time, I enjoy traveling, reading, skiing, sledding and spending time with my family, especially my nieces and nephew. I also love spending time with my husband, John, who is a police officer with the Chillicothe Police Department. John and I met in college, but it wasn't until we reconnected seven years later that we felt called to marry one another. He proposed after the Christmas Eve Mass in 2019, and we were married this past November. Having John in my life brings me so much joy, and entering into the vocation of marriage has been one of the greatest adventures and blessings.

I look forward to working with each of you as we strive to help the students at Saint Mary School grow spiritually and academically. My ultimate goal is to help lead your children to heaven, and I am humbled and honored to embark on this journey with you.

May God bless you and your families!

In Christ,

*Kayla Elrich*