



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Communications • *The Long Island Catholic* • *Fe Fuerza Vida*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF NEW OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN SUFFOLK AND NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL AT HOLY NAME OF MARY SCHOOL, VALLEY STREAM

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK – April 22, 2021 – As part of the Morning Star Initiative to revitalize Catholic elementary schools on Long Island, the Diocese of Rockville Centre (drvc.org) announces the formation of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School (olgschools.org), a new dual-campus N-8 elementary school and a new pilot approach to school oversight and strategic planning in partnership with Holy Name of Mary School in Valley Stream.

“For the last year, the Morning Star Initiative Team, the Department of Education and our schools have been hard at work to transform Catholic education on Long Island,” said Bishop John Barres, Bishop of Rockville Centre. “During that time, the Morning Star Initiative has accelerated digital learning during the pandemic, helped our schools return to in-person learning, and provided new academic tools and insights to our teachers all in line with the four pillars of the Morning Star Initiative: (1) Robustly Catholic culture, (2) safe and supportive community, (3) academic excellence and (4) our Catholic Schools are here to stay. These two initiatives represent the next step in this transformation process.”

Our Lady of Guadalupe School

Our Lady of Guadalupe School will have new leadership, new governance and will be a pilot for a new approach to Catholic elementary school education. The school will be guided by the support of the Marianist Brothers and will operate as an upper and lower school on the current school campuses of Saints Cyril and Methodius School in Deer Park and Our Lady of Providence Regional School, Central Islip.

“As a Diocese, we have recognized the need to strengthen our offerings for a growing population of Hispanic Catholic families in Suffolk County, specifically in the areas of Central Islip, Brentwood and Deer Park. We also recognize the unique value that a diverse learning environment offers all of our families and we are excited to bring our communities together,” said Bishop Barres. The west campus, Our Lady of Guadalupe West, will find its home in what is currently the SS Cyril and Methodius School building in Deer Park. The east campus, Our Lady of Guadalupe East, will open in what is currently Our Lady of Providence Regional School in Central Islip. These changes are a commitment to revitalizing school communities with new investments in academics for the Catholic families of Central Islip and Brentwood. The school will begin in September 2021.



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“Our goal is to grow both campuses of Our Lady of Guadalupe to fully utilize building capacity,” said Dr. Denise Smith, interim superintendent of education, Diocese of Rockville Centre. For the 2021-2022 school year, Our Lady of Guadalupe West will educate students in Nursery through Grade 8 including Our Lady of Providence students from Grades 5-8. Our Lady of Guadalupe East will serve as the home for the current Our Lady of Providence Nursery through Grade 4 students while renovations are made to update classrooms and common areas and prepare the school for future growth.

Beginning in the Fall of 2022, Our Lady of Guadalupe West will serve as a Middle School for students in Grades 5-8. Our Lady of Guadalupe East will serve as the Lower School, educating students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Our Lady of Guadalupe West and East will both operate a Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten program this fall that will continue in into the future at both campuses.

Key features of the new school include:

1. Extended School Day. School will start earlier and end later to provide time for rigorous academic pursuits with special attention given to the development of strong mathematics and reading skills.
2. After-School Program. All students are encouraged to participate in the after-school program to experience a wealth of enrichment opportunities for academic, spiritual and social-emotional growth.
3. Dual-Language Program. A dual language immersion program will begin in the Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten classrooms, starting children on the path to becoming bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish.

These new offerings provide a new and exciting opportunity for both English and Spanish speaking families, who will benefit from a dynamic learning environment which improves critical thinking skills and boosts social and emotional well-being of students.

This effort came about due in part to the decline in enrollment and mounting financial pressures faced at SS Cyril and Methodius and Our Lady of Providence Regional. The new, combined Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School will bring together the SS Cyril and Methodius and Our Lady of Providence Regional communities and will expand to serve more families in Central Islip, Brentwood, and Deer Park with its unique offerings.

Bishop Barres, Bishop Romero, The Morning Star Initiative team and Department of Education will be hosting a special Zoom webinar for parents from SS Cyril and Methodius and Our Lady of Providence Schools on April 23, 2021 at 5 p.m. For more details On Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic School, visit www.olgschools.org.



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Pilot Partnership at Holy Name of Mary School, Valley Stream

The Diocese of Rockville Centre also announces a new partnership to support students in Southwest Nassau County. The Morning Star Initiative team and the Department of Education have entered into an agreement to pilot a new governance model at Holy Name of Mary School in Valley Stream.

Under an agreement with Father David Regan, pastor of the Parish of Holy Name of Mary, the Morning Star Initiative team will support Holy Name of Mary Catholic School to achieve bold spiritual, moral, cultural, and academic growth as it expands to serve a number of transfer students from closing neighboring schools. The parish will continue to provide spiritual and material support for the school and the Department of Education and Morning Star Initiative team will assist Fr. Regan and Principal Pamela Sanders with strategic planning and academic leadership to help ensure a sustainable future aligned with the four pillars of the Morning Star Initiative.

To learn more about the Morning Star Initiative, visit www.morningstarinitiative.org.