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JEFF HULETT
is a freelance
writer,
musician and
PR consultant
in Memphis.
He lives in
the Vollintine
Evergreen
neighborhood
with his wife,
Annie, two
girls, Ella and
Beatrice, and
dog, Chalupa.



Holy Rosary

PRIDES ITSELF ON SERVING THE WHOLE CHILD

BY JEFF HULETT

Holy Rosary Catholic School Principal Darren Mullis has lived most of his life in and around Holy Rosary. In fact, he began attending church at Holy Rosary with his parents and five siblings at just 2 years of age.





He was a proud and active Ram through eighth grade, and then he attended Christian Brothers High School, where he graduated in 1986. After earning his degree at the University of Tennessee at Martin, he came home and began his work as Youth Director and Director of Religious Education and served as a teacher at Holy Rosary. He was appointed principal in 2003.

"I've basically been a part of Holy Rosary since I was 2 years old," said Mullis.

Today, Mullis is happy that school is off to a more traditional start and is excited that the parents and kids are back safely and fully experiencing their lessons without distractions.

"You want to see the kids having every opportunity they should have in school without having the limitations," Mullis said. "Learning is very visual, and you certainly want them to see and hear their teacher and engage in their classrooms."

Holy Rosary Catholic School serves around 400 students a year from pre-school through eighth grade and prides itself on serving the whole child no matter where they are on their educational journey. The Learning Center (TLC) works with students with language-based learning differences that affect reading, mathematics and writing such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.

With a 4:1 student to teacher ratio, students get the best of both worlds as they receive core instruction in TLC and then go to lunch, art, recess, religion, field trips and more with the rest of the student body. This includes clubs and sports as well.

"The Learning Center has been running for six years and the success stories are abundant," Mullis said. "The goal is to have them transfer into the regular classroom in no more than three years."

Serving this diverse and unique population is a point of pride for leadership at Holy Rosary. In their sixth year, the Learning Center has served 48 students and 45 families.

"I am proud that we are able to serve the needs of this community and have the support of our administration," said TLC Coordinator Kim Shadrack. "These kids are typical in every way and this program helps them with their learning struggles."

The ANGEL Program has been operating since 2010 and is for children who are on the autism spectrum. Students in the program spend their days with a registered behavioral technician who works alongside each student in the classroom following a behavioral plan.

Teachers in both the ANGEL Program and TLC are certified and trained to serve children struggling with learning disabilities.

Additionally, Holy Rosary offers Quest, a critical thinking program designed to provide learning opportunities for the academically gifted student. This program is a supplement to the general classroom curriculum within the regular school day.

The ANGEL Program has become so successful in part because of the ANGEL Fund, a nonprofit created by parents to run the annual Autism 5K. In its eighth year, the race raised more than \$100,000 and was a gigantic success.

Holy Rosary has always been a hard-working community where everyone asks how they can help out. It's a great representation of our city and how we show up for each other."

Then there's the Italian Fest hosted every year in Marquette Park. This fundraiser, going 33 years strong, helps offset the cost of athletics, uniforms, travel and more.

This year someone won a Chuck Hutton Chevrolet car in the raffle by purchasing a \$10 ticket. This fundraiser is all-hands-on-deck and led by the Holy Rosary Men's Club.

Last year, Holy Rosary graduates went off to great schools in and around Memphis. In fact, one alumna who went to St. Agnes Academy was named valedictorian.

"When you leave Holy Rosary, students are academically ready, spiritually involved, well-rounded and prepared for what's next," said Director of Development and Stewardship Nora Boswell. "Our students stand out in other schools as they are compassionate, kind and prepared for high school."

Stay tuned for more articles each month about all of the schools in the Diocese. †

For admissions information go to www.holyrosarymemphis.org