



ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

December 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you as a fellow Catholic school superintendent and one who has become quite familiar with Vocation Ministry and Rhonda Gruenewald. The Diocese of Syracuse just concluded, with the end of this liturgical year, the *Year of Vocations* which had been announced and designated by our bishop, The Most Reverend Douglas J. Lucia.

As part of this *Year of Vocations*, each of our schools became very intentional about how we promote vocations in our schools and throughout our diocese. To that end, we engaged with Rhonda throughout the past school year to provide an introduction to vocations, training and staff development for our teachers and principals. We continued that momentum with an invitation to Rhonda to serve as our keynote speaker on our opening day Mass and professional development day. We have plans to continue this year and beyond utilizing strategies and techniques that Rhonda provided to each of our schools.

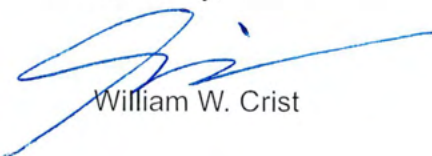
In her new book, *The Harvest*, Rhonda definitely answers the Why in education? Catholic school education is a marathon of an immersion in Christ. Hours, days, years of closeness to Christ organically provides countless opportunities to feel and live with Christ while experiencing a Catholic school education. Being intentional about providing the nourishment and sunlight to allow for genuine discernment of a vocation a young person is being called to serve, is WHY the focus is on education.

Some have characterized our Catholic schools as places with a captive audience to share the Good News of the Gospel. To the contrary, I like to think of our schools as vessels for a contemplative audience. A place where, when provided the proper cultivation and care, young people can witness and contemplate the true calling that they are being summoned to follow.

As I stated in my endorsement of *The Harvest* by Rhonda Greuneweld, this book provides a prescriptive roadmap to navigate the paths towards increased vocations in our diocese - and it will for your diocese as well. I welcome a discussion regarding your own vocation promotion and I hope that you will commit to Vocation Ministry as a resource in your diocesan planning to assist the next generation of Catholics to come forth and identify their chosen vocation.

Blessings, Peace and Joy!

Sincerely,



William W. Crist

