



**A Statement from Fr. Jack Kolodziej, OSFS  
Provincial of the Wilmington-Philadelphia Province  
Personnel Transition at St. John Neumann**

Dear Members of the St. John Neumann Catholic Community –

The Oblates of St. Francis de Sales have asked Fr. Michael S. Murray, OSFS to assume a new leadership role at Salesianum School in Wilmington, Delaware.

Salesianum is what we consider our “flagship” apostolate – it is our oldest, continuously operating ministry in North America. The Oblates have created the first-ever Chief Mission Officer to strengthen our presence and charism throughout the school community. As a second-generation Salesianum graduate with deep knowledge of Salesian spirituality, Fr. Murray is perfectly suited for this role. He looks forward to taking on this new challenge, effective July 1, 2026.

Fr. Murray deeply appreciates the warm welcome the parish has given him for the past four years. The Oblates remain committed to staffing St. John Neumann Parish. Fr. Kolodziej has presented Fr. Marc Gherardi, OSFS, to succeed Fr. Murray as the next administrator of St. John Neumann Parish, which has been accepted by Bishop Burbidge. Fr. Gherardi will be joining the Saint John Community on July 1, 2026.

The Oblates are honored and humbled to minister with the St. John Neumann community since the parish’s inception. Even though individual Oblates of St. Francis de Sales have come and gone over the years, the constant at St. John Neumann is how you, the lay faithful, have embraced Salesian Spirituality and made it your own. For this, the Oblates are eternally grateful, and we look forward to ministering with you for many years to come.

Thank you for ministering alongside the Oblates and Living Jesus together!

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