

Dear St. Rose Parents,

The term bittersweet refers to an emotion or memory that is sad, joyful, and nostalgic all at the same time. It is with bittersweet sentiments that I announce the retirement of two women who have dedicated many years of their lives to teaching the children of St. Rose School. Mrs. Linda Szczech and Mrs. Lynn Paulsen are both retiring at the end of this school year. Linda has been the second grade teacher at St. Rose for 29 years. Lynn has been our music teacher for 14 years. Both of these wonderful teachers made this decision months before Covid-19 appeared in Sonoma County. Although they will be sorely missed, we are very happy for them as they move into this new phase of their lives.

Linda Szczech's tenure at St. Rose can be summarized in three words: faith, enthusiasm and service. Linda has joyfully prepared over a thousand 2nd graders for the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. Through the process she instilled in each child a deep reverence for God and the beauty of the Catholic faith. She puts her heart and soul into every religion lesson and her strong faith permeates everything she does in the classroom. Linda's zeal for teaching and willingness to grow her craft has been an inspiration for all of us who work with her. She has always been willing to try new things and think outside the box in order to meet the needs of her students. No one who spent a year in her classroom will forget her love of pigs, the paper mache art projects or the beautiful Christmas angels they made for their parents. Linda's strong spirit and faith was on display for all to see during in the aftermath of the Tubbs Fire. She not only lost her home, but had to create two alternate classroom spaces for her students in one school year. Yet she arrived at school each day with a positive attitude and a smile on her face. Linda will leave an indelible imprint on St. Rose School and will always remain a very special jewel in our crown. Linda will be continuing in a volunteer capacity to serve as our religion coordinator and will have lots more time to spend with her grandson, Rohmer.

Lynn Paulsen's gifts and talents often go unnoticed by parents unless they are attending the Christmas Program or Spring Concert. Fourteen years ago when our music teacher resigned suddenly just a few weeks before the scheduled Christmas Program, Lynn showed up and pulled together a lovely program for St. Rose parents to enjoy. Since then Lynn has shown herself to be an excellent talent scout. There are currently three young adults studying opera whose vocal talents were discovered by Lynn during St. Rose music classes. She has inspired a number of our students to learn to play musical instruments and some of them come back during high school to help her teach the beginning band. She has a wonderful ability to connect with children who have not yet discovered their niche at St. Rose and for some, her music program is the main reason they come to school each day. Lynn has quietly helped a number of our students develop poise, responsibility and leadership skills. When she made her decision to retire back in January, Lynn had plans to finish strong. She was excited about hosting the diocesan music festival and the concert band members were well on their way to mastering an arrangement of Bohemian Rhapsody for the Spring Concert. These cancellations were a loss for us all and not the way Lynn had hoped to conclude her career at St. Rose. Lynn will continue to pass on her love of music by providing private music lessons in her studio for children across Sonoma County.

Both of these women are leaving big shoes to fill. The faculty is currently working to create a virtual Move-Up Day Ceremony on the last day of school, June 4th. Part of that program will honor Linda's and Lynn's service to St. Rose School. I have already found two great candidates for the Second Grade and Music teacher positions. However, I want us all to take a few days to appreciate Linda and Lynn before I announce who the new teachers will be.

Sincerely,

Kathy Ryan