



# The Selection of a New Principal for St. Benilde Catholic School

## ***A Statement from Reverend Father Robert T. Cooper***

To the Parents, Faculty, Parishioners, Alumni, Benefactors, and Friends of St. Benilde Parish and School:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

It is with great joy that I take this opportunity to announce the new principal of St. Benilde Catholic School for the 2018-2019 school year. Because our parochial school is the largest ministry of St. Benilde Parish, every effort has been made to select a principal who is not only qualified to lead as an educator and administrator but, more importantly, one who manifests a deep, personal faith, who has a fervent love for the Church and Her teachings, and who expresses a sincere commitment to the children entrusted to his care.

After much prayer and careful discernment, in collaboration and consultation with the members of the Search Committee and the Office of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, **I find it pleasing to the Holy Spirit and to me to name Mr. Thomas E. Huck as the new principal of St. Benilde Catholic School.** I make this announcement with a joyful heart and much gratitude to God for the numerous talents and gifts that Mr. Huck will bring to our school community. I have full confidence in Mr. Huck's ability as an educator, administrator, formator and, most importantly, as a spiritual leader. Mr. Huck's appointment is effective July 1, 2018.

A native of Picayune, MS, Mr. Huck is a graduate of Mississippi State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education. He has also earned a Master of Arts degree in Theology and Christian Ministry from Franciscan University of Steubenville and a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Holy Cross. Mr. Huck comes to us with 14 years of experience as a parish catechist, classroom teacher, and school administrator. He has spent six years as a faculty member of Archbishop Hannan High School in Covington, LA, serving as teacher, coach, Theology Department Chair, and Director of Campus Ministry and Summer Programs. Currently, Mr. Huck holds the position of Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at St. Michael the Archangel High School in Baton Rouge, LA. Mr. Huck feels passionately about the importance of Catholic Education in forming young minds and hearts in Christ's image.

In his Philosophy of Catholic Education, Mr. Huck writes, “The purpose of Catholic education is to provide each student with a unique encounter with Christ by means of his or her formal schooling. Catholic education has the obligation to balance faith and reason by developing the whole child: mind, body, and soul. Through this formation, Catholic education does not only seek to yield productive citizens of society, but more importantly, to form faithful and merciful servants of Holy Mother Church.”

Mr. Huck is an avid tennis player, kayaker, reader, college sports enthusiast, and devoted fan of the Who Dat’ Nation. He looks forward to entering into both the St. Benilde School and Parish communities along with his beautiful bride, Audrey, and their three young children.

The Catholic school principal serves not only as the educational leader but also as the spiritual exemplar of the school. Emphasizing qualities of excellence, commitment, creativity, and innovation in all school endeavors, the principal guides a community committed to the development of the whole child. The principal is responsible for establishing, demonstrating, and promoting the highest standards and expectations for academic performance, behavior, and spiritual growth of all students, as well as directing and nurturing all members of the school staff and the school parents, who are recognized as the primary educators of their own children. Current research confirms that the academic and spiritual success of a Catholic school is greatly influenced by the administrative skill, educational expertise, and moral integrity of the principal.

As Pastor, I firmly believe that Mr. Huck will build on the strengths of our past and set forth a vision to ensure that the “St. Benilde difference” is grounded in the heart of Christ and in the mind of the Church. I ask that faculty and staff, parents and parishioners, open their hearts to welcome Mr. Huck as he takes on this new leadership role and to provide him with the resources necessary to ensure a smooth transition as we move forward in the days, weeks, and months ahead. May we hold each other in prayer in this time of transition and new beginnings!



**Mr. Thomas E. Huck**