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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Agnes Academy Announces Retirement of Headmaster James Stankiewicz

Search Committee is Named to Find Successor

DALTON, Mass., January 15, 2019 - St. Agnes Academy, Berkshire County's leading parochial school serving students from pre-school through eighth grade, has announced the retirement of Headmaster James Stankiewicz, effective June 30. Rev. Christopher Malatesta, pastor of St. Agnes Church, reaffirmed his commitment to the Academy, announcing the formation of a search committee to replace the long-time educator.

"Jim has been a steady hand, a strong leader, and a great contributor to our school, advancing our mission as an institution of academic excellence," said Rev. Malatesta. The pastor appointed Brian Duquette, school board chairman, and school board member Thomas Callahan, a long-time Dalton educator, to chair a search committee. Notwithstanding the changing Berkshire County demographics and a competitive market, Rev. Malatesta said the Academy remains steadfast in its mission to offer a disciplined approach to academic excellence and strong Catholic values.

"We will continue to seek new and creative ways to boost enrollment, secure a strong financial base, and grow in the years to come," said Rev. Malatesta. "Jim's work has left us a strong foundation and we expect to make an easy transition as we identify new leadership."

After retiring from a 35-year career in public education, Stankiewicz took over the headmaster's post in 2011 and oversaw the school's reorganization which included a rebranding as St. Agnes Academy. Stankiewicz oversaw an ambitious strategic plan which included numerous renovations and an alignment of the school's curriculum. "Most important, Jim left his mark on

our students and families,” said Rev. Malatesta. “Jim’s friendly and approachable manner and his professionalism will be missed; we all wish him the best in retirement.”

In his retirement letter to parents and students, Stankiewicz said “the past eight years have flown by and I truly thank God that he chose to put me on this path with you, your children, our exceptional faculty and staff, dedicated PTO, school board, and Fr. Chris.” Stankiewicz has no immediate plans, except for spending time with family and becoming more active in music.

Stankiewicz’s long education career in Pittsfield and Dalton spanned 43 years. After earning a degree in music from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell, he started as a music teacher in 1976 and rose to administrative roles as assistant principal and principal, later serving as Central Berkshire Regional School District’s assistant superintendent of schools. He was named Central Berkshire Superintendent of Schools in 2009 and served in that role for two years. Stankiewicz also earned a master’s of education degree from the former North Adams State College, now known as the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA).

St. Agnes Academy, founded in 1957, currently has an enrollment of 144 students in pre-school through grade eight.

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