



Catholic School

## The DePaul Catholic School

---

December 13, 2016  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Eileen Violini  
eviolini@independencemissionschools.org  
610-200-5100 x105

### **The DePaul Catholic School and Independence Mission Schools Purchase St. Francis of Assisi Parish Buildings in Germantown**

**PHILADELPHIA PA, December 13, 2016** — The DePaul Catholic School, the only Catholic elementary school in the Germantown, and Independence Mission Schools (IMS), the Philadelphia non-profit network for 15 independent Catholic schools, announces the purchase of the St. Francis of Assisi Church, School and Rectory at the corner of Greene and Logan Street in Germantown.

“We are thrilled to have the support of the Independence Mission Schools network in purchasing the St. Francis of Assisi Church and Rectory. Our student body has nearly doubled in size in the past four years, and the purchase will allow us to provide more programs to our growing classes,” said Katie Wardlow, school Principal. “We have a lot of ideas about how this new space will allow us to enrich our academic program, strengthen our Catholic identity, and bring our community of staff, families, and students together. In the coming months, we will be working with stakeholders to determine how to best use this additional space in service of our students and our community.”

DePaul has seen tremendous growth as part of the IMS network. Increased scholarship assistance for families and the unique blended learning program has swelled school rosters from 270 in 2013 to over 400 today, making DePaul the largest blended learning Catholic school in the United States. The school’s emphasis on character formation, college readiness and high-quality academics in the Catholic tradition has brought the school to the forefront of education reform in Philadelphia.

The St. Francis of Assisi Church closed in 2011 due to declining attendance despite its great service to the Germantown community for over a century. The acquisition of the property is due to the diligence and foresight of Fr. Sylvester Peterka, CM and the Parish council of St. Vincent de Paul, Germantown, who assisted the school and IMS in purchasing the property.

The DePaul Catholic School was founded in 1901 as St. Francis of Assisi School to educate the growing number of children in the neighborhood who attended St. Francis of Assisi Church. In the past century, the school has continued to serve the several church communities including St. Vincent DePaul, and St. Madeline Sophie, and Immaculate Conception. It was re-named DePaul Catholic School in 2004 to pay tribute to its Vincentian heritage. In 2013, DePaul became part of the Independence Mission Schools network.

“This acquisition is the next chapter for DePaul which has an incredible opportunity to build on this strong foundation and provide quality Catholic education for low-income families and continue to serve the Germantown community,” said DePaul Catholic School Board President, Sean Flynn.

### **About The DePaul Catholic School and Independence Mission Schools**

The DePaul Catholic School, located in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, is an innovative Catholic elementary school committed to academic excellence and a transformative educational experience for a growing enrollment of over 400 students from Pre-K to Eighth Grade. Faculty and staff work collaboratively to carry out the legacy of St. Vincent de Paul by empowering students to become life-long learners, leaders, and servants who build the Kingdom of God. Strong teacher leadership, data-driven decision making, our unique blended learning model, and a college-bound, value-based student culture characterize DePaul. For more information visit [www.depaulphila.org](http://www.depaulphila.org)

DePaul is proud to be a part of the Independence Mission School (IMS) network. IMS is a Philadelphia non-profit providing transformative Catholic education to elementary-age students of all faiths from low-income communities in Philadelphia. Founded in 2012, the network of 15 independent, tuition-assisted schools serves nearly 5,000 inner-city students offering an affordable and innovative academic curriculum in the Catholic tradition of service to underserved communities. For more information about Independence Mission Schools visit [www.independencemissionschools.org](http://www.independencemissionschools.org).

###