MARIST SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 26, 2022

Robb Elementary School
Principal
Mandy Gutierrez
715 Old Carrizo Rd.
Uvalde TX 78801

Dear Ms. Gutierrez,

I am writing on behalf of Marist School, an Independent Catholic School in Atlanta, Ga., to express our solidarity with you and your school community during this awful moment that defies logic and leaves us with more questions than answers. There are no words to adequately capture the depth of the pain, shock, and sadness that are now your constant companions. We wish to assure you that you do not suffer alone, even though that acknowledgment does little to bring relief to the misery you must now endure.

Marist School is home to 1,095 students from grades 7 to 12. Our faculty, staff, administration, parents, and their families are like yours, who love young people and want nothing but the best for them. Over its 121-year history, our school community has lost its share of students and faculty. Each loss is felt keenly and pierces the heart of the school community that students refer to affectionately as the "Marist Fam." Your ordeal hits home and moves us to reach out to you in a spirit of solidarity and draw you close to our heart that aches with yours.

In response to what seeks to rob us of our will to fight for all that is good, we at Marist can only recommit to doing what we promised we would do. That is to from our students to become faith-filled servant leaders who will work for justice, equality, peace, and reconciliation in a world torn by violence and intolerance of the worst kind.

I know that eventually, you will regroup and recommit to loving and teaching your students to seek all that is true, noble, and right. And that will include reversing the gains the darker forces have achieved that have led to this sad and tragic loss of your colleagues and children who had already made the world a better place just by their youthful exuberance and the promise they offered for a better world. Making this world a better place, in particular by ridding it of the scourge of gun violence, is a battle worth fighting. To that end, you do not fight alone. I urge you to follow the advice of Rev. B.W. Maturin who reminded people of goodwill not to underestimate the power of good because they realize the power of evil.

I will end with these words of Sen. Robert Kennedy. In Indianapolis, he had announced the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to a grief-stricken and shocked citizenry, much like yourselves. He concluded his thoughts with these words with which I wish to conclude mine. "Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world."

With kindest, personal regards, and on behalf of the entire Marist School community, I am

Sincerely with prayers,

Bill Rowland, SM

Fr. Bill Rowland, SM
President – Marist School