



SAINT MARTIN DE PORRES

CLEVELAND'S CRISTO REY HIGH SCHOOL

November 21, 2017

As you know, I am incapable of speaking or writing about Saint Martin with anything less than a heart that is truly on fire. Today is no different. During this reflective season of thanksgiving and preparation for Christmas, I find myself filled with a renewed sense of faith and hope. The Saint Martin Community is as strong as ever. Our students are working hard to develop into the leaders that will continue to transform our city and world. The first phase of our new school will open this spring, and our strategic plan for the next 15 years is taking shape. The strong commitment to community is evident in the ways our faculty, staff, students and families communicate with and take care of each other. Therefore, I am confident the time is right for me to transition into a new role at Saint Martin.

After much thought, prayer and discussion with the board together we have agreed to begin the search process for Saint Martin's next President.

Many of you have heard me recount my experience in a small chapel at a school in urban Peru in 2000, before the Cristo Rey Network even existed. In the chapel I was overcome with intense feelings of fear, love and gratitude. It was this experience that began to open my heart and mind to the urgent need for a school in Cleveland that would provide a co-educational, college preparatory Catholic High School education *exclusively* for those who could otherwise not afford it. This is what led to the founding of Saint Martin de Porres, Cleveland's Cristo Rey High School in 2003. I have been afforded many blessings in my lifetime, but none have been as unexpectedly life-changing and absolutely transformative as the calling I received 17 years ago.

Since Saint Martin welcomed its first class in fall of 2004, I am proud to say that together as one family we have begun to truly transform urban education in Cleveland. I look forward to remaining a part of this community, and once the next president is identified, I will shift my focus to supporting our work with strategic and community partnerships. Until that time however, I will remain the President, ensuring our continued success and a strong foundation for my successor.

There is still a lot of work to be done to ensure that we are creating access to high quality educational opportunities for all of our children. I'm ready, and I hope I can continue to count on your support as well. I ask for your prayers for our search committee and for those who may feel called to explore this opportunity. Please also pray for me as I prepare for this exciting transition. I welcome the chance to answer any questions you may have, or give you a behind-the-scenes tour of our new building — a Presidential privilege while I still have it!

Peace,

Richard F. Clark
Founding President, Saint Martin de Porres High School