



# SALESIANUM SCHOOL

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**\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \***

## **SALESIANUM TO HOST FIRST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH WILMINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY**

*Drawing on a European Tradition, This Student-led Initiative Fosters Christian Love, Fellowship, and Joy*

**WILMINGTON, DE** - For the first time, Salesianum School will open its doors on Christmas Day, welcoming residents from numerous Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA) locations for an afternoon filled with food, song, and cheer. The event is from 12-3 PM and is expected to unite more than 100 WHA residents with hundreds of Salesianum students, families, alumni, and friends. The event is a nod to a tradition that began in 1982 with the Sant'Egidio community in Rome. Today, Christmas Lunch is celebrated in more than 600 cities worldwide and directly aligns with Salesianum's patron saint, Francis de Sales' teachings: "It is to those who have the most need of us that we ought to show our love more especially."

Salesianum senior John Casale is spearheading the luncheon and related fundraising. John shares, "I have always loved helping others and want to do something special for people most in need during Christmas. The goal is to bring us together as one family to hang out and enjoy our time together. I was surprised to learn that of the many special service initiatives we participate in as students; this is the first time we are partnering with the WHA. I'm honored to play a small part in this new tradition."

Salesianum students have recruited hundreds of event volunteers who will prepare and serve food and provide companionship to WHA residents who may have otherwise spent Christmas alone. In addition to volunteers, students have solicited sponsorships and personal donations to help defray the event's cost and have surpassed an original goal of \$25k. To help expand the impact of this event beyond those who are able to attend, additional food items and donations will be provided to Wilmington's St. Patrick's Center.

***Continued...***

***Salesianum First Annual Christmas Lunch Continued:***

Salesianum's Principal, Reverend J. Christian Beretta, OSFS shares, "The message is simple: no one should spend Christmas alone. John Casale has been working hard since the summer, and I am so grateful for the WHA staff who have helped him create an event to best serve their residents. The most powerful part for me is our students and families sitting down with residents and breaking bread with them. In the end, community and connection sustain us just as much as food, especially on Christmas."

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*Salesianum is an independent Catholic secondary school for boys founded by the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales in 1903. Our mission is to educate and develop the whole person through the teachings and spirituality of St. Francis de Sales, summarized as being called to "Live Jesus."*