



Maureen Gillespie

12th Grade Theology Teacher, Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls, Phila., PA

Maureen Gillespie began her career at Little Flower twenty years ago, after completing a year in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. According to the colleague who nominated her, at that time theology classes were merely tolerated by the students. Ms. Gillespie was determined to change that mind set.



One immediate step she took was to foster “academic diversity” in her classes. She did this by advocating for students to not be grouped by ability levels for Theology. That gave them the opportunity to learn with people from a wide variety of backgrounds, and was a game-changer for many. Ms. Gillespie also took on the role of Student Government Moderator at Little Flower, helping to empower the young women to recognize their own potential and become the best version of themselves.

Sadly, she also became a primary grief counselor for the students, when a fellow classmate died in a car crash in 2007, and another was killed in a food truck fire in 2014. **Ms. Gillespie reminds us that *caring about students* is a major component in *educating* them.**