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***St. Mary's Preparatory Basketball Ushers in New Era***

ORCHARD LAKE, MI (9-14-15) – Dreams really do come true, especially for a young boy who took pride in his grandmother working for Fr. Ziembra at SS. Cyril & Methodius Seminary, attended years of the Polish Country Fair, and watched his cousins play football at St. Mary's Preparatory. That boy went on to become a man of St. Mary's Prep who achieved All-State in golf and All-State Dream Team in baseball, but always felt his true passion was on the basketball court. Today, Todd Covert steps into the shoes of his biggest role model – George Porritt – to become his St. Mary's Preparatory Basketball Head Coach successor.

“It is an honor to now lead one of the most storied basketball programs in high school athletics and continue our tradition,” said Covert, Prep Class of 1992, “but more importantly, the opportunity to guide and prepare our student athletes for their journey through life.” He knew, when Coach Porritt decided it was time to retire from his basketball role to spend more time with family, that he wanted to be the next one to help carry on the Orchard Lake St. Mary's basketball tradition and values.

“Coach Porritt has been a mentor, coach and father figure to me for over 25 years,” added Covert. “I learned some of life's most important lessons in my years at the Prep, both as a student and as an assistant basketball coach, including being accountable for your actions, the ability to be prepared, and remembering that it's not about going it alone but rather relying on your team.”

Covert's mantra is continuous improvement through a daily process, one that student athletes can carry with them throughout life. He is a big believer in four pillars: Be prepared, accountable for your actions, tough both physically and mentally, and focused in the process. "Our tradition of FAITH first will continue to be the foundation of our program and scholar athletes," said Covert.

His wife, Chris, and daughters, Adyson (8) and Alivia (6), are his biggest fans. Adyson is already calling the assistant athletic director to try to arrange a bake sale as a team fundraiser. The family is developing even stronger bonds with the campus. "St. Mary's is close to my heart," said Covert. When asked what St. Mary's can do for him, he replied, "Stick together."