



April 7, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Hopefully you and your family are doing well as we adjust to the changes that have become incumbent upon us during this COVID-19 pandemic. Each day your family is remembered in prayer by your school community, your parish, and Bishop Malooly. Please continue to follow the guidance that has been provided to us by our leaders in government and healthcare.

As we conclude three and one-half weeks of virtual education for your children, we are pleased to report that although our school buildings are closed, school remains in session. It is truly amazing to witness the quality Catholic education that takes place each day in our diocese from Pre-Kindergarten 3 through Grade 12. Our commitment is that our students in Catholic schools will be taught the requisite knowledge and skills to complete their current year of education and be ready for the upcoming grade. More importantly, we continue our mission of faith formation in partnership with you so that our youth are formed, informed, and transformed by their Catholic school experience.

We continue to follow the school calendar for 2019-2020. From Thursday, April 9, through Friday, April 17, school will not be in session for the Easter break according to the diocesan school calendar. If your school has communicated to you otherwise, please adhere to the local school calendar. We encourage you to make Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter (the Sacred Triduum) meaningful for your children through virtual participation in the liturgies that are offered. Your school has provided information to you about opportunities for participation or you may find sites and times available at the diocesan website (www.cdow.org).

During Easter Week our administrators and teachers will be participating in the National Catholic Educational Association Convention. This annual conference which draws 8000-10,000 educators is held in a different archdiocese across the nation each year. For 2020 it was slated to be held in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and all of our administrators and teachers were scheduled to be there during April 14-16. With the turn of events, the conference had to be offered in a virtual forum. Our administrators and teachers are still required to participate in this event. The professional development obtained during a national convention of Catholic educators makes this opportunity one which we would not wish our administrators and teachers to miss. Next year the convention will be held in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, not a convenient location for our educators to attend.

School will resume on Monday, April 20, through Friday, May 15, in a virtual environment and in person on Monday, May 18. Parents have emailed inquiring if school will be closed for the remainder of the academic year, since 12 states nationally have reached this decision by orders of their governors. The only information that can be offered as of today is what we know. Should the schedule for the in-person return date be altered, you will receive communication from me.

Through random phone calls made to parents, we have received a number of complimentary remarks about our teachers and the instruction that has occurred. A parent of a high school student reported that his son has been working diligently in an Advanced Placement course since the student is required to take the AP exam in May to qualify for college credit. Several parents commented that they appreciated the routine that their children have experienced in middle school with a regular schedule of class times, office hours for teachers for individual assistance, and independent assignments given at the start of the week to be submitted at the end of the week. And, at the primary level, a parent was grateful for the evening sequence where students gathered in pajamas to hear a story read by a guest reader, shared their thoughts about the story, and concluded with the Angel of God prayer. These are but a few of the experiences that typify the outstanding planning, preparation, and instruction of our teachers. Our Catholic school educators are to be commended for their work, effort, creativity, and communication during this unusual time in our history. Please join us in thanking them by sending a brief email to them and remembering them in prayer.

We count on your support through tuition collection as we conclude the 2019-2020 school year. As student instruction continues, we wish to fulfill our obligations to our educators. In some schools you may learn that finances have led to layoffs, furloughs, or a reduction in hours or pay for professional or support staff. While we regret these changes because of their impact on the livelihood of families, they are necessary if we are to continue in the financial environment in which we operate. Our schools are funded through two primary sources – tuition and parish investment. As parish offertory declines in places where contributions have diminished, parishes are unable to provide the investment they previously did. Hence, your tuition remittance remains of utmost necessity to keep our operations intact. If you experience difficulty with your tuition payment, please do not ignore it. Rather, contact your school administrator to discuss the matter and come to an arrangement regarding finances. We do not wish to see any student leave a Catholic school because of tuition difficulties.

These days find all of us in challenging times. It is in these moments that our faith becomes more significant to us than ever. We rely on our God who is our hope and our salvation. What better time to turn to the Lord with our gratitude and our needs than during the three holiest days of our liturgical year – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. Let us join together in prayer for the well-being of all in the three days ahead of us and let us rejoice in the Resurrection of Jesus for the fifty days of the Easter season as we celebrate all the blessings the Lord provides us, most especially his mercy and the gift of eternal life.

Happy Easter!

Sincerely,

Louis P. De Angelo

Louis P. De Angelo, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools