



Catholic Pastoral Center | 2800 McGavock Pike | Nashville, TN 37214-1402 | 615-383-6393

March 26, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families,

Just two weeks ago I wrote to you to announce potential closures of schools and plans for “learning at home.” Since then our communities have seen a flurry of activity and sadly, the spread of the Coronavirus in Tennessee. In response, I wanted to communicate with you several points in hopes of keeping all families and friends of our schools informed.

Our diocesan Catholic schools remain committed to the mission shared with you when you enrolled your child(ren): to nurture their growth of mind, body, and soul in a Christ-centric environment. While recent developments challenge our traditional delivery, our “learning from home plans” provide as much normalcy as current conditions allow and they also reunite classmates and teachers, even if only digitally. There is a learning curve to this, as you have all experienced by now. Please know that the principals, the CSO team, and I are in regular and frequent communication through digital meetings, emails and texts. We are all navigating these uncharted waters together and I’m quite proud of what they have accomplished in a short period of time. I am also grateful for the patience you have exercised with us.

As we move forward, please be aware of the following:

- The diocesan Catholic schools will remain closed through Friday, April 24, 2020, as requested by Governor Lee and under the advisement of public health officials.
- All schools’ activities, including athletic and all extra-curricular events, remain suspended through Friday, April 24, 2020. Please note the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association (TSSAA) has also suspended high school athletics through this date.
- All school-related trips/travel have been cancelled through the end of the year.
- Holy Week is approaching and each school will have special events planned for digital interaction. School schedules for Holy Week will not change, it is most important that your family has ample time to participate in special commemorations together at home. All schools are released (not in session) on Good Friday and Easter Monday.
- Through our weekly meetings with principals, we discuss the successes and shortfalls of our “learning at home plans,” and amend as needed. It is important that you share your experiences



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FATHER RYAN HIGH SCHOOL	POPE JOHN PAUL II HIGH SCHOOL	CHRIST THE KING SCHOOL	HOLY ROSARY ACADEMY	IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL	SACRED HEART SCHOOL - LAWRENCEBURG	SACRED HEART SCHOOL - LORETO	ST. ROSE OF LIMA SCHOOL
ST. ANN SCHOOL	ST. EDWARD SCHOOL	ST. HENRY SCHOOL	ST. JOHN VIANNY SCHOOL	ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL	ST. MATTHEW SCHOOL	ST. PATRICK SCHOOL	ST. PIUS X

with your school principal to help us make effective improvements. While there are diocesan guidelines for instruction, each principal manages their school's plan.

- Our Catholic schools will fall under the waiver for our state's required school day count, which Commissioner Schwinn granted this week. This means we will not have to make up any days to meet the 180-day requirement. As parochial schools we choose to be accredited by the state, meaning there are certain state requirements we must meet. Attendance is one of them. Please know we count "learning at home days" as school days, which is why it is important that we have evidence of students' participation (presence in online meetings, completed assignments, time on task in computer programs, etc.).
- The State Board of Education has an emergency meeting in early April. They will promulgate new rules for graduation, grading, and other pertinent school operations to be in effect during this time of crisis. My team and I will monitor their guidance and work with our schools accordingly. Again, some of their rules will apply, some will not. In no way will the quality of our program nor our commitment to teaching during this time be minimized.
- The CSO also holds membership in the Independent Schools of the Nashville Area (ISNA). We are engaging in conversations with heads of local independent schools and monitoring actions taken by the group. Of course, we are in frequent communication with the Dominican Sisters and their local campus as well.
- We very much want to continue the time-honored traditions of May Crowning, graduations, sports banquets, and field days. We do not know the form these events will take yet, but will work with schools to find creative new ways to carry them forward.

Your administrators and I will keep you informed of new information pertaining to schools. Next week Bishop Spalding will have announcements regarding Holy Week and parish matters. I invite you to continue monitoring diocesan news at www.dioceseofnashville.com where updates are regularly posted.

I again thank you for your patience. Know you are in my prayers for good health, safety, and spiritual growth as we journey through this Lenten season. Let us recall Jesus' experiences of fear and uncertainty in the Garden of Gethsemane, and align with Him these next couple of weeks. Our Easter is coming!

In Christ,



Rebecca Hammel
Superintendent of Schools



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