



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

30 MEADOW AVENUE, BRONXVILLE, NEW YORK 10708

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Top of the Afternoon to You and Yours!

Happy Saint Patrick's Day to one and all. I know this is not how we intended to celebrate, but we will do the best we can.

Together, we honor Saint Patrick as our great Patron Saint of the New York Archdiocese and pray his prayer that all may remain safe, healthy, and connected. We will get through this-together, even though we're apart.

The Prayer to Saint Patrick

Christ with me
Christ before me
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

Also, please open this link sent out by the Archdiocese to find out more about Saint Patrick: <https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/saint-patrick>-it's a great resource to share with your children!

I know that we are all feeling the same tumult because of what we are experiencing; we are in "uncharted territory"; however, I want to assure you that we at SJS are embracing the "new normal" because we are prepared and have the tools to navigate this new frontier. As always, common sense will prevail, and our primary goal is to continue to provide access to your children's education in the best way we can.



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I am very happy to report that our SJS Faculty, as I have written to you recently, and you have seen from the communications from our teachers, has not hesitated to respond to this challenge, as we would hope that all professional, life-long learners would. To me, as a parent myself, I would feel very reassured that you are in excellent hands and that we are here to assist you. I am not making light of the situation, or denying that there are inconveniences caused by "slowly downloading" programs, or just the stress that goes with having everyone home together-these are realities; we know that as the demands increase, we need to find it deep within ourselves to find patience and coping strategies: PRAY.

Again, let us remind ourselves of all that we are blessed and try to be grateful that we have the necessities of life, and that we are prepared; let's try to have gratitude for the quiet that mostly has been erased from the hecticness of our usual daily lives.

This morning, I participated in a conference call, hosted by Dr. Noelle Beale, the Central Westchester Catholic School Regional Superintendent, along with other Central Westchester Catholic School Principals. I assure you that Michael Deegan, The Superintendent of Catholic Schools, who oversees approximately 62,000 Catholic School Students, is working diligently with his administrative team, including Dr. Beale, to put together "structure and operations" that will ensure that we remain connected and learning during this unique time.

As promised, I will now provide you with a summary of the main points of the conference call:

We left on Friday with directives that we were likely to be back in one week; however, things changed rapidly; the Archdiocese administration is working hard to find solutions and answer all of the questions being posed, and have not yet developed all of the solutions, but they remain committed to doing so. As we know, the students were given (at least) one week's worth of work with the expectation that they will complete it and submit it. (Here's where we are to be superbly thankful that we're at SJS: again, our teachers are not only rising to the challenge, they are "all over it" and have continued to communicate with their students, families and me, to assist, and to troubleshoot; we must not take that for granted!)

Going forward, more directives will be coming from the Archdiocese: more specific information will be shared to be sure that accountability regulations are adhered to.

Dr. Beale will be emailing the CW Principals for our thoughts, input and plans for how to ensure that communication, learning, and accountability are structured. She assured us that the Archdiocese will continue to generate resources for us to share.



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Dr. Beale thanked me for sending her and the SJS teachers all relevant emails that I receive (eg: from IXL and other companies).

We were asked to email the Our Lady of Guadalupe Prayer immediately, which I did.

Some of the Principals inquired about the use of ZOOM Conference to deliver lessons; as of now, it is being "banned" by the Archdiocese; further discussion will take place.

One Principal commented that she is getting feedback that instructional platforms are downloading slowly; Dr. Beale responded that with so many simultaneous users, that can happen and that the companies are aware of this and are trying to resolve it.

Dr. Beale commented on how significantly our CW teachers have embraced and used technology on a routine basis, which somewhat facilitated this shift.

As Dr. Beale explained, some of the work that the Archdiocese is doing is administrative (eg: making sure that NYS did NOT ship our assessment materials this week as had been planned), while the bulk of it is devoted to distance learning. We will be receiving more guidance in regard to both of these realms.

She reiterated that while the "one week rules" were within a narrow parameter, as the time at home has increased so significantly, new, more flexible, routines will need to be established, and each Principal is charged with determining some of these to best meet the needs of each individual school community.

I am extremely grateful for the intense support and guidance we have been given from the Archdiocese, coupled with the confidence that we all know our school communities, so we are being afforded the ability and flexibility to use our best judgement to meet the needs of each school.

I reassure you, to the best of my ability, that if you need anything, I am here to help.

Again, I believe that, thanks be to God, and Sts. Patrick and Joseph, we are well-positioned to continue with minimal disruptions to educational access. This does not mean that other challenges and obstacles will not arise during this difficult time; just know that we at SJS, while not all present in the building, are connected, compassionate and moving forward!

SJS STRONG! (Somebody make the tee shirt!)

God bless you and yours!

Respectfully,

Mary Ellen Sanchez, Principal, Saint Joseph School



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