



# OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

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MR. MICHAEL J. DEEGAN, SUPERINTENDENT

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. - The Serenity Prayer*

March 19, 2020  
Solemnity of St. Joseph

Dear Catholic Schools Families,

First and foremost, I pray that this letter finds you and yours healthy and safe. Just like your loved ones at home, our extended family of educators, administrators and staff have been doing our very best to embrace this new normal we have been forced to accept as life in America. While there are few things that are certain, I can however promise our extraordinary principals and devoted teachers remain committed to the mission of Catholic education.

As Catholics, we know God is with us, and it is up to us to ask for knowledge of His will, and that it be done. As Catholic educators, my team and I must use that faith to lift us up to overcome the challenges we face so that we may continue what we started last September and educate your child(ren) right through to the end of the school year. Starting this Monday, March 23, that is exactly what we will do, because that day is the first day of the rest of the school year for our Catholic schools.

This week our teachers, working with regional superintendents, principals and instructional specialists, have been researching, working individually and collaborating to craft the best, most efficient approaches to serve the needs of our students. They have been utilizing all the available technology and innovative strategies which have become the foundation for our academically superior, values-infused curriculum that has moved our schools forward for centuries. Tomorrow, they will end this week of preparation with a day of professional development centered on the best practices for delivering a robust home-based learning program for as long as it takes to complete our mission for this academic year.

- This Monday, March 23, your school's principal will share via email the overall school plans for your child(ren)'s continuity of education for home-based learning. This communication will include the specific grade level mechanisms by which teachers will be distributing assignments they have prepared and developed with family and community needs in mind. Principals and teachers will continue to revise and update plans as additional resources become available and continually communicate these changes to you in a timely manner.
- Parents who do not receive an email from their principals by noon on Monday are asked to email their child's teacher and principal so that contact information can be updated.
- All teachers, students and families will be expected to maintain safe digital correspondence between home and school. Principals will convey the protocols and specific platforms allowable according to the guidelines of the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Program. If these guidelines change, principals will communicate this.

- The students' daily lessons and assignments align with the appropriate grade level New York State standards and values infused curriculum we teach in our schools and classrooms every day. The only difference will be the method by which these lessons and assignments are delivered.
- While the content of what is delivered to your child(ren) will be the same, a home-based learning scheduling will look different. Given the realities of multiple students in the same home working with one device, students working with multiple teachers, or students having to complete their assignments at different times of the day, teachers will provide directions and expectations specifically to their students that include a suggested schedule for the day, assignments, web-based resources and other directions that can support you as you support your child's learning at home.
- The assignments and use of technology will be grade level appropriate. We will be balancing the benefits of the use of technology with the needs of our students and families. Protocols and guidelines aligned with the Safe Environment Program will be strictly followed for the safety and protection of all teachers, students and families. Please communicate your child's specific needs to your principal and teacher. This will help them to better support your student.
- Principals and instructional specialists will be working with teachers throughout the home-based learning period to ensure that both the high expectations to which they hold our students and the need for flexible collaboration with families, and each other, is in place.
- The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of New York are made richer by the diversity of our students, families, schools and regions, and so our educational response to our regional needs will reflect that rich diversity in the careful planning from our regional leaders.

Catholic schools introduced organized education to New York in the early 1800s. Our legacy has persevered through the Civil War and the first World War, educated our Greatest Generation and then flourished as hundreds of thousands of baby boomers came through our doors while the world struggled through riots, social injustice and civil unrest. The challenges we face today, while daunting, will be overcome just as they were in generations gone by. We will do so, protected by God and inspired by the love of our children.

Sincerely,



Mr. Michael J. Deegan  
Superintendent of Schools  
Archdiocese of New York

**For up to date information on COVID-19 (Coronavirus) related to our catholic schools please visit:**

**[www.CatholicSchoolsNY.Org](http://www.CatholicSchoolsNY.Org)**