

DIOCESE OF DALLAS

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

Dear Parents –

When I was in college, I spent two years studying in the seminary with the Congregation of Holy Cross. The Congregation taught one thing above all else: as ministers, we were called to be people of hope. Specifically, it was our job to be people with hope to bring.


I share that with you because I imagine that hope is not high on your list of emotions right now. With the rapid changes over the last two weeks, the entire world has been forced to deal with the difficulties of these new realities. Please know that we are aware of the closures, layoffs, uncertainty and general strain that this has placed on your family. Because of this, we feel it is critical that our Catholic School System remains robust and vital at the exact time you need it most.

Governor Abbott's decree yesterday does apply to all schools in Texas, and our Catholic schools are therefore closed through at least April 3rd. I know that many of you have already received information from your principals regarding that news. Our goal is to be back in our physical buildings as quickly as we can be, provided that it is safe to do so. Our contingency plan, however, will allow us to maintain distance and eLearning for as long as is necessary. Even as you read this, our principals are ramping up changes to their instructional schedules, creating new trainings for our teachers, and working to recreate the communal nature of our schools remotely. We will continue to partner with community services and you will be getting frequent updates from your principals in terms of resources, assistance and encouragement.

The Catholic Schools' Office has redeployed all of our efforts to support the initiatives of our schools. We will be working to ensure that the learning you have come to expect will continue and that you will have support to keep your family safe and educated. All instruction is being reviewed to ensure that each day will count toward attendance, TEA standards and TCCBED requirements. In short, this disruption, no matter how long it lasts, will not prevent us from achieving the curriculum and accreditation goals that are necessary for graduation, grade-level promotion or other learning.

Because of how quickly everything is changing, we are not going to speculate about anything beyond the Governor's immediate declaration and we will hold off on cancellations and any non-critical decision for as long as it is prudent to do so. Just know that we are thinking about the coming events, planning for each eventuality, and will continue to send updates when it is appropriate. We are also aware that you are getting these types of communications from various sources so we will only update you when we have new, relevant information to share.

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Dallas are full of people with hope to bring. We are excited, energized and eager to be back together as quickly as possible. In the meantime, we are on your team and confident that we can continue to serve you. Have hope! We are not a people in darkness; the Lord who is our light will lead us through these trying times.

Respectfully,

Matthew Vereecke
Superintendent