



May 6, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As you likely heard, Governor Murphy announced Monday that all school buildings will remain closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic school year in order to protect our children's safety and to prioritize the health of both your family, as well as the health of our teachers and administrators.

Remote learning will continue for the rest of the scheduled school year for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Metuchen and, just as they have done since mid-March, our teachers and administrators will continue to provide remote instruction across all grade levels for our students from grades Pre-K through Grade 12.

There are no words to express how much we continue to miss our students and our teachers. We will continue to do all we can to ensure the best for our students; their health, their education and their futures.

We have undoubtedly been met with challenges this year, but our students, teachers, and you – our parents – have risen to the occasion with grace and fortitude. I recognize the pressures of working from home, caring for your loved ones, guiding children through educational experiences and maintaining balance for your families. It is a thin line to walk, and I am so grateful to you for your continued efforts and support.

With yesterday being National Teacher Appreciation Day, I'd also like to celebrate and express gratitude to our teachers, who have continually adapted their teaching styles and have adjusted their plans to meet the demands of remote learning. I have been overwhelmed by the positive feedback that so many of you have shared with me about your child's remote learning experiences, thanks in large part to the dedication of our teachers. On many occasions during the time we have been shut down, I have had the pleasure of witnessing the dedication of our teachers and the passion and resilience of our students as I virtually visit many of our classrooms. They certainly give me hope and inspire me!

For our 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 12<sup>th</sup> grade families, I know this is a disheartening time, as our students and their families look forward to the end-of-year celebrations, graduations, and recognition of student achievements. With my whole heart, I wish each school and student could celebrate these traditional milestones just as we have every other year. However, this year, we must find new and innovative ways to acknowledge the accomplishments of our students and create a memorable experience for our families. We are called upon now to remain vigilant about following the directives of the New Jersey Department of Health regarding social distancing in order to guarantee the safety of all. The Office of Schools is working with each principal to develop plans that reflect each school and honors each graduate. As soon as the plans are finalized, they will be shared with you.

Our administrators and teachers are longing for our students to return to school again, and so as we continue to battle this virus, I encourage you to continue following the directives from the NJ Department of Health and Human Services, so that we can continue to slow its spread and welcome our students back this fall.

As we face these final months of the school year in a way that we could never have anticipated, I am reminded that the true gift of a Catholic education is our faith and knowing that we are never alone. God is always with us, guiding us in these days, and all our days, and forever carrying the weight of our burdens. I know this is a challenging time, particularly for those of you who may have lost loved ones or those of you who may know someone who has been infected by the virus. Please know that you are in our prayers always, but especially today as we face these difficult times together, and know that you are not alone.

Please join us in praying for the health of our students, their families, our dedicated teachers, administrators and staff members, and for all people as together we face the deepening effects of this worldwide pandemic.

Sincerely,



Dr. Robert A. Lockwood  
Superintendent of Schools