



Archdiocese of Los Angeles

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Dear St. Ferdinand School Families,

April 6, 2021

We hope that you and your loved ones had a blessed Easter. This Easter season is especially poignant as our school community is undergoing a transition toward consolidation with nearby schools. We want to take this opportunity to address recent questions from some parents about the feasibility of keeping the school open.

First, we understand that the news of the consolidation was difficult for the entire parish school community. We also sympathize with the concern from some of our parents to try to keep the school open especially after the long-standing commitment to academic excellence at St. Ferdinand and its cherished place in the community. However, we must reiterate that the decision is final. It was not made lightly or suddenly, but after much consideration and discernment and out of genuine concern for students, teachers, and staff.

We are grateful for the sacrifices and support of our families and school community over the years to try to address the difficulties facing the school. Unfortunately, the school cannot maintain the same quality of education for which it is known with current enrollment and a growing operating deficit of more than \$350,000 per year even under the best circumstances. As other nearby schools have seen an increase in enrollment, St. Ferdinand experienced a 46% decrease this past year alone, the sharpest decline in the Archdiocese. As seen in past financial reports, the parish has been subsidizing the school. The Archdiocese has also provided financial assistance to cover salaries and benefits throughout this year. It was just not going to be possible to continue to operate without negatively impacting school programs, the school's ability to provide financial assistance to families in need, and employment for teachers and staff.

That is why it is imperative that the consolidation take place now so that DCS can help with enrolling students at other nearby schools for the incoming school year, one which is a half-mile away, as well as help teachers and staff find placement at other schools as positions become available during this time in the school year.

We appreciate that the majority of parents have already begun the enrollment process at your new schools. Any paid registration fees for the 2021-2022 school year will be returned to families in good standing upon our return to school so it may be used at other schools or can be used toward any remaining tuition fees for this current academic year.

We also want to acknowledge Principal Gamarra, our teachers and all school personnel for their continued hard work and dedication to ensure the best possible education and that students continue to excel as they transition to their new schools in the coming weeks and months.

We thank you for your understanding and patience as we walk together through this journey. DCS and school leadership are available to assist with any questions or concerns regarding the transition of your child(ren) to another Catholic school. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Principal Gamarra if you are in need of assistance during this process.

May the Lord's blessing be with you and all the St. Ferdinand School community so that we may find strength and hope in the promise of the Resurrection this Easter season.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Fr. Juan Ayala, O.M.I.
Pastor

Auxiliary Bishop Alex D. Aclan
San Fernando Pastoral Region

Mr. Paul Escala
Superintendent of Schools