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Archdiocese of Los Angeles

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March 13, 2020

Dear Catholic School Parents and Guardians,

California has now entered a critical new phase in the fight to stop the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Though there are **no known confirmed cases of COVID-19 among staff or students** in our schools, we believe closing our schools will make an important contribution to the effort to slow the spread of the virus. For that reason, in solidarity with our partners in public and private education, and in consultation with government and public health officials, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles will **close our schools and move to remote learning effective Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**.

Families should anticipate the closure period to last **at least through Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>**. All planned school-sponsored activities during this period will be suspended. It's possible that **the closure period may be extended – please be prepared**. This decision will be made in coordination with local and state public health officials. We will keep you informed.

Our highest priority during this period is to ensure our schools are prepared to maintain learning during the closure. We have been working closely with school principals to provide resources for online and distance learning. Schools have developed plans in the event of closure, were provided a student-free day to work with faculty and staff to prepare, and will communicate directly with their community as to how they will address continued learning during this time of closure. The Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles will continue to provide support to schools during the closure period, on-site and remotely. The department remains in full communication with schools and in full operation.

The Archdiocese is in regular contact with local officials to ensure we are coordinating and providing information to our school communities as we receive it. Please monitor your school's parent communication platform (i.e. SchoolSpeak) for updates.

Closing schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for at least two weeks mid-year is unprecedented. We recognize the significant impact this extended closure will have on our entire community, students, families, and staff. We also acknowledge the burden this will place on our staff and working families. As a community of faith, we must come together and help one another – communicate, share resources, offer support.

Thank you for your continued patience, grace and support through this challenging period for our world. May the Providence of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit watch over our communities, heal the sick and protect our health care providers, to bring this crisis to an end.

Yours in Christ,

Paul M. Escala  
Superintendent of Schools