



Archdiocese of Seattle
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

*In a spirit of communion, solidarity and subsidiarity,
the Office for Catholic Schools provides high quality professional development, resources, and best practices
to expand the evangelizing mission of our Church as we help one another form the school leaders God has destined for our time.*

April 6, 2020

Dear School Leaders, Teachers, and Families,

Forever, we will remember how we lived during this time and adapted to the restrictions set before us during this Co-Vid19 time. And, we will remember how we thrived! Our teachers and school leaders have nimbly led with courage and demonstrated the ability to make the move to remote learning. With deep respect and heartfelt gratitude, I say thank you!

Families, your world has been turned upside down as you adapt to facilitating learning at home. Our Catholic schools are a partnership that begins with the belief that parents are the first educators in the life of a child. This event has truly tested this belief. With deep respect and heartfelt gratitude, I say thank you!

The Governor just announced that our schools will be closed through the end of the school year. While the data underscores the importance of this decision to continue social distancing, we recognize the fatigue that has set in, and the challenge that this presents. We will continue to monitor the data, and to review the announcements coming from the Governor's office. If there is a chance to return, we will pursue it.

Let's take a step into the future, and allow ourselves to wonder what lessons are we teaching our children during this time? Beyond the school curriculum, students are learning the value of persistence, resilience, and hope. Daily, we muster the strength to communicate that we will return to our schedules and daily lives. When we do return, we will have new appreciation for the "normalcy" of the day-to-day routines that we have perhaps taken for granted. Routines that include play dates, family and friend gatherings, going to Mass, sharing a cup of coffee, and hugging our loved ones. Routines we now yearn for. How appropriate that we learn of this timeline during our Holiest of Weeks. In our Catholic schools, we teach the value of persistence, resilience and hope in this time of Easter. Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection offer the hero's journey, and we celebrate this story in all our lives. Jesus' story speaks to us of the courage we need in order to embrace the realities of our time. This is the value of our Catholic schools.

If you look through our social media, you hear words of encouragement, "You've got this!" "Fight the good fight!" "Run the race!" This is the time to prove ourselves. Teachers will continue to provide learning opportunities academically, spiritually and socially for our students. Principals will continue to support, affirm and guide. Families...we hope and pray that families will continue to witness the love that our schools have for your children.

Questions still abound. We will focus on celebrating end of year rights-of-passages, graduations, and rituals. All these important events need to be re-thought and re-imagined in our new reality. While we do not have immediate answers, we will work with you to identify best practices that will honor and celebrate our students. This epidemic has taught us the value of working together on a common goal: every student's learning and well-being. No one person has the answers to our questions right now, but collectively we will work together to provide a plan for this epic year, one that we will all remember for years to come.

May we all experience a very Holy week, remembering Christ's passion, death and resurrection!

We keep you all close in our hearts and prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude.

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