



DIOCESE OF ORANGE
DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

February 2020

Dear Diocese of Orange Catholic Schools families:

The safety of our students, faculty and staff is our highest priority.

We write this letter out of an abundance of caution and to inform you that there is no reason to believe Coronavirus disease (COVID-2019) is an immediate threat to our parishes and schools.

The Orange County Health Care Agency has reported one confirmed case of coronavirus within the county, although the individual – a man in his 50's - has since recovered. Further, there is no evidence that person-to-person transmission has occurred in Orange County. The risk of infection is believed to be extremely low.

As with any virus – and especially during the flu season - there are a number of steps you can take to protect your health and those around you:

- Washing hands with soap and water.
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick are all ways to reduce the risk of infection with a number of different viruses.
- Staying away from work, school or other people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.

Coronavirus is an infectious disease that causes respiratory illness (like the flu) with symptoms such as a cough, runny nose, sore throat, fever, difficulty breathing and, in more severe cases, pneumonia. People with other medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), may be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill, according to the World Health Organization.

Like all area school districts, we are in regular contact with Orange County public health officials. They have consistently assured the public that there is no need to change daily routines in any way. We, of course, understand that with the strong media coverage, anxieties are heightened and our families and staff may have questions.

According to public health officials, students and staff should continue their normal routines and take the same precautions they would during cold and flu season, including:

- Handwashing remains our No. 1 defense against illness. Please wash hands often with soap and water.
- Daily cleaning of frequently touched surfaces with chlorine containing cleaners.
- If children are not feeling well while at school, or exhibiting signs of illness, have them check in with the school's health office. We will notify parents if their child visits the health office.
- Communicate all health concerns with your physician.
- If a child has a fever, please keep them at home.
- There is no evidence to support wearing a mask prevents airborne illnesses from spreading. CDC does not recommend the routine use of N95 respirators outside of the healthcare setting. N95 masks are not designed for and should not be worn by children.
- Get your flu shot. The flu vaccine won't protect against COVID-19, but it is highly recommended to help keep you healthy.

As always, we will remain vigilant to ensure our schools are safe. Thank you for your help as we continue to ensure the safety and wellness of our students, staff, and families.

In mission,



Erin C.O. Barisano, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Orange