

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA



OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

April 14, 2020

Dear Archdiocesan High School Communities:

The governor's announcement last week that all Georgians must 'shelter in place' through April 30, 2020 has caused us to review and to delay the opening of our school buildings once again. Our Virtual Days will therefore be extended through **Friday, May 8** with the hope of reopening our buildings on Monday, May 11. Although this is unlikely to happen, we still want to provide one last opportunity to allow each school to close the year as a community similar to the way the year opened in the fall. We will continue to monitor the recommendations of the CDC and the Georgia Department of Health in order to determine whether it will be safe to reopen our school buildings on the 11th. Our number one priority will remain the safety of the students we serve and the faculty and staff who work so hard to continue to deliver our rigorous academic standards. Please be assured that our schools are prepared to continue with Virtual Days through the last day of the school calendar if needed.

There are many sacred and cherished memories which occur on our high school campuses during the month of May. Since we can no longer wait to make the necessary preparations, in collaboration with the high school principals, it has been decided that graduation ceremonies, baccalaureate masses, and other large gatherings of our students will be conducted, as much as possible, with virtual technology. We will delay to the fall the awards' assembly and other special gatherings for underclassmen. Each principal will be communicating your school's plans in the near future.

At the heart of our Catholic school education is the importance of community, where we gather together to hear, to observe, to celebrate and to pray for and with one another. While we cannot physically be together, I know that our schools are working hard to address the many challenges that we all face at this time. The relationships that have been developed throughout the school year are now being continued through online platforms. Our commitment to the formation of our students' minds, bodies and spirits remains the key mission of our Catholic schools.

As we celebrated Easter this past weekend, we were reminded of the resurrection, of new life, and of hope. Let us remain united in our faith and in our determination to persist through this most difficult time. May hope prevail over the next several weeks in our lives and in our homes.

If we are unable to open our school buildings as hoped, one last communication from the Office of Catholic Schools will be issued by **May 6, 2020**, with updates and information concerning the remainder of this school year.

Please know of my ongoing prayers for all of our school communities. Thank you for your incredible understanding, patience and support throughout our virtual learning days. God bless you and your families; together, we will persevere and be strengthened by our resolve to come through this challenge together.

Sincerely,

Diane Starkovich, Ph.D.

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Superintendent of Schools