



## DIOCESE OF OAKLAND

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## DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

November 1, 2020

Dear Catholic School Families,

The greatest strength of Catholic education here in our Diocese has always been the people; our committed school families and the dedicated teachers, staff and principals who choose to minister in our Catholic schools. During these last seven months, each has contributed in extraordinary ways. Our care for the whole child and selfless commitment to exhaust our efforts represent the deepest value of our collective capacity to serve one another - to love one another as we are loved. Our principals, teachers, staff and parents are some of the unsung heroes in this pandemic. I am extremely proud and grateful for your resilience, commitment and partnership.

Alameda County and Contra Costa County Health Departments have now afforded all grade levels, preschool through twelfth grade, the opportunity to consider in-person instruction. Our schools remain focused on a measured and balanced approach towards developing their timeline to return on campus. The guiding principle for all of our schools remains our students, faculty and staff's health and well-being. In this fluid time of change, our goal is to provide as much continuity and consistency as circumstances will allow, all to better serve our students.

Your principal has been diligent in their planning and preparations with your pastor, teachers, staff and parents, with consultation and guidance from our Diocese. Each school's enrollment, facilities and staffing considerations are unique and are part of the decision-making process. Your principal will continue to provide ongoing communication with your community as you work together, navigating the needs of this unprecedented school year.

Our Catholic schools have strengthened their teaching and learning through the perseverance and knowledge acquired during distance learning. Our approach to educating our students will be further enriched because of what we have experienced both as the teacher and learner. Our appreciation for and attention to the social emotional well-being of our students, faculty, staff and parent community have been more clearly understood and valued than ever before. The humility of this experience for all of us can and should awaken the critical importance of care for one another and our efforts to build a more united community of faith. A community of selfless dedication and commitment to the appreciation of the gifts we have been given will help us to move towards solidarity as we strive for social justice, peace and healing in our communities and world.

*“Education bears within itself a seed of hope: the hope of peace and justice; the hope of beauty and goodness; the hope of social harmony.” - Pope Francis*

I remain confident in our collective capacity to rise at this moment to serve the ministry of Catholic education in our schools, in our homes and in our communities. The people of the Diocese of Oakland are special - and as a result, our Catholic school communities are a cherished place to be a part of! In this coming season of Thanksgiving, please know of our deepest gratitude to each of you for choosing a Catholic education for your family. We are truly blessed to be *United in Mission* with you on this incredible journey.

The greatest blessing we can experience during challenging moments is our faith. We have faith in our God and faith in each other. God is always with us providing strength, comfort and guidance. And if we have faith, even the size of a small mustard seed, we will find our direction, peace and hope for what is to come in our school year.

*“Faith. It makes things possible, not easy. Be strong and courageous!  
Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*  
- Joshua 1:9

*Christ's peace and joy surround you,*



Kathleen Radecke  
Superintendent