



Department of Catholic Education

Archdiocese of Mobile

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April 21, 2020

Letter from the Superintendent of Catholic Schools

Welcome back from Easter Holidays. I hope everyone has had time to relax and unwind in spite of these very challenging times. I've heard from many of you that this was a very different Easter break as we all had to be creative in planning a "stay-cation." At least, there has been a break from distance learning and homework.

The Department of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Mobile continues to monitor the pandemic in Mobile, as well as, nationwide. We now know that we will **not** be returning to our school buildings this school year. I know that your children will be disappointed, as they surely miss their friends and all that school life provides. In fact, all of us want life as we know it to return to "normal" but unfortunately we are powerless in making that happen. So, in our own way we forge on and we will develop our own "new normal."

Now it is time, though, to return to "school." Our principals, their teachers and staff have all been working diligently to provide our children with ways to complete their grade level curriculum. Not only is it important to keep up with their studies, children must continue working within a routine. Teachers are still following curriculum standards to provide their students with the requirements for their grade level.

I realize and appreciate the hardship this is placing on our parents who are working from home while managing their child's education. I also appreciate the parents who must continue working outside the home and returning to the additional responsibility of educating their children.

I have heard concerns expressed about the fall of 2020, with parents wondering if their children will be ready for the next grade. This is where your efforts with distance learning will pay off. Principals and teachers are already planning and working for the opening of school in the fall. Students will be assessed to find out just where they are in their learning continuum. Each and every child will be met where they are in their achievement level. If there are deficits, they will be identified and remedied.

Please know that my thoughts and prayers are with each and every one in our school communities. I am very proud of our principals, teachers, students and parents. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support and efforts to maintain Catholic Schools and its high standard for learning.

Let us pray for the recovery and health of all those who have been or who will be diagnosed with the coronavirus. Thank you for your support and understanding. May God keep you and your families safe through these historical times.

Sincerely in the Lord,
Gwendolyn P. Byrd
Executive Director for Catholic Education/Superintendent