



# DIOCESE OF DALLAS

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## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

March 31, 2020

Dear Parents –

Earlier today, Bishop Burns announced that we would continue our diocesan closures through May 1st. While I am sure that this is not a surprise to most, I also know that seeing these dates in writing can evoke many feelings, including worry and fear.

I am reminded in times like these of the story of the centurion in the Gospels of Luke and Mark. In the parable, the centurion's daughter is sick and he goes to seek the care of Jesus. There is a large gathering going on, and many people are seeking Jesus's attention. Others are healed, and before the centurion has a chance to get Jesus's help, a servant arrives to tell him that his daughter has already died. Jesus's response to this is surprising; He does not say sorry, He does not say we have to hurry, He does not try to comfort the people around Him. Instead, He looks at the man and says: "Fear is useless; belief is what is needed."

I know that your life and the life of your family has been altered in unprecedented ways over the last two weeks, and I can only imagine the difficulties, fears and angst that many are feeling right now. I cannot take those emotions away from you, but I do want to continue to provide hope. Our teachers have been working tirelessly and heroically to prepare for this eventuality. Over the course of the last two weeks, they have worked to reinvent themselves and their craft in order to serve our students, and that work is still in its beginning stages. We are committed to expanding our offerings and our reach so that we can still form Saints and Scholars even with the limitations imposed by the world around us.

We know that you too are working heroically – guiding your families while working, teaching and maintaining your health and wellbeing. We are all in this together, and while we cannot predict the future, I do know one thing with certainty: fear is useless; belief is what is needed.

My belief is in our God, in our teachers, in our leaders, and in all of you. I am thankful that we have a system of schools that can maintain a small amount of normalcy in an otherwise impossible situation, and I am thankful that you continue to partner with us during this time.

We want to be back with our students in our school buildings as quickly as possible, but we will continue to make the decisions necessary to keep those entrusted to our care safe. Have hope! We are an Easter people, and the Lord of Light will guide us through even these dark times.

Respectfully,

Matt Vereecke