



Catholic Education Coronavirus Taskforce Newsletter

April 16, 2020

A Message from Father
Matthew Guckin Director of
Catholic Mission and Identity

Peace Be With You

Dear Friends,

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, Peace be with you!

They huddled behind closed doors and were full of fear. The similarity between the first disciples and our present situation is striking. In fact, one need only substitute the Coronavirus for the religious authorities to get a perfect match.

This upcoming weekend's Gospel tells us that the disciples gathered in the Upper Room on that first Easter Sunday because life had fallen apart. They were dejected and demoralized but quickly became delighted and defiant. They went from being upset to becoming unstoppable!

How did this happen? They saw the Risen Lord Jesus and realized that our God is a God who keeps His promises.

Throughout the Bible God makes over 7,000 promises....and He keeps every one of them.

I'm asking you to consider just ONE of these promises at this time. Take a break from thinking about COVID-19 and start praying with Isaiah 43. In verse 2 the Lord says this: *When you pass through waters, I will be with you; through rivers, you shall not be swept away. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, nor will flames consume you.*

We are passing through waters of sickness, rivers of uncertainty and financial challenge, and fires of death. But God has PROMISED us that He will NEVER abandon us. He doesn't promise us it'll be easy. But he *does* promise that He is with us at this time.

Friends, God specializes in bringing good out of bad. Anyone can bring good out of good...but God loves bringing resurrections out of crucifixions. We saw it on Calvary and we will see it here.

So let's go to God in prayer, cling to Him in love and trust in Him with confidence.

God bless you!
Father Matt Guckin

From the Office of the
Secretary for Elementary
Education

Elementary Education: Faith in Action

Faith lives in action throughout our elementary schools. **The Holy Rosary School** community has been busy reaching out to help others. Principal Mary Ann Gilman has contacted each family by phone to gain support. Parent Carrie Lamina, pictured here, picked up over 50 science goggles from the school and delivered them to Abington Hospital for their phlebotomists.



The students of **Saint Andrew Catholic School** in Newtown, Bucks County, made cards for the health professionals on the front line of the Coronavirus. Ms. Colleen Costello, a nurse and mother of a third grader, collected more than 70 cards and distributed them to her colleagues at Temple University Hospital. Ms. Costello continues to receive cards from the students which she gives to the doctors and nurses.



Religion and art classes came together at **St. Dorothy School** in Drexel Hill. Students received assignments with the theme of HOPE. After looking at works of British artist Andy Goldsworthy, students were asked to go out for a walk with their family and collect various items in nature and create artwork. 7th graders were asked to create a visual illustration thanking those in our community who are courageously serving us through the pandemic. Their illustration was to include a heart to show these folks that we love them and are praying for them. Illustrations like this will be seen throughout our St. Dorothy neighborhoods.



Holy Cross Regional Catholic School wanted to spread some joy and hope during Holy Week. The school held an online #ChalktheWalk campaign on Facebook. As a school community, they remain connected to the teachers and families through social media. The school community feels truly blessed to be so connected.



Online learning continues with creative projects being done across the Elementary Schools in the Archdiocese.

Good Shepherd Catholic School's second grade read the narrative nonfiction "The Goat in the Rug" this week, which recounts the true story of a weaver and her goat who lived in the Navajo Nation at Window Rock, Arizona. Teacher Erin Durkin presented her students with the opportunity to color a traditional Navajo Chief's rug and to weave their own rugs using construction paper. Sammie G. proudly displays her artwork in the accompanying collage.



At **SS. Philip and James School**, third grade teacher Mrs. Kathleen Foster, has students read a biography of a famous American. In addition to the written portion of the project, students used a soda bottle to make a model of their person. They enjoyed sharing their creations with one another via Zoom this year.

Lauren Dodd, first grade teacher at **Saint Martha School** enjoys making learning collages with her class as pictured here. Students at **Our Lady of Grace School** brightened the spirits of many with their Easter collage.



Children have questions about the Coronavirus that come up when least expected. Kevin Conwell, principal of **St. Mary School**, asked his teachers if there were any concerns at a recent Zoom faculty meeting. A first-grade teacher responded that one of her little children wanted to know if the Tooth Fairy would be able to make it to his house during the Coronavirus. Thank God that the Tooth Fairy, and Easter Bunny for that matter, are able to make house visits during the virus.

Additional Resources from the Counseling Support Sub-Committee

A Survival Guide for Parenting Through the Global Pandemic

During this time of the Coronavirus crisis, parents are facing unprecedented challenges as they work to navigate this new and sometimes frightening world with their children. In an article from *Psychology Today* (April 2, 2020), Dr. Katherine Nguyen Williams, Director of Strategic Development and Clinical Innovations at Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego, provides a simple but impactful guide for families.

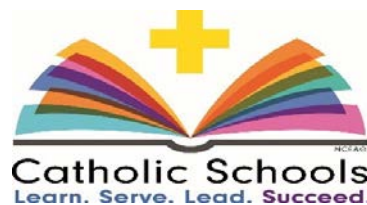
A Three Tiered Approach

- First: Talking to Your Child About the Coronavirus Pandemic
 - Do talk to them
 - Start with what they know; dispel myths; be a source of information
 - Give age appropriate information
 - Focus on what your child can control
 - Shine a spotlight on the helpers
- Second: We're All Home. Now What?
 - Model resilience

- Help your child manage their emotions
 - Do what is right for *your family* when it comes to your family routine
 - Encourage social connections with peers and extended family
 - Find opportunities for your child to be a helper
 - Use belly-breathing to help your child calm their body if anxious
 - Monitor for sudden changes in behavior or mood
- Third: Find Meaning Through the Chaos
- Practice self-care on *yourself*
 - Use this time to build positive memories

For the full article, go to [A Survival Guide for Parenting Through the Global Pandemic](#).

From the Office of the
Superintendent of
Secondary Schools



For the Class of 2020



During this time of international pandemic, everyone has grieved the loss of our lives as they have been and of joy anticipated in days yet to come. For many, it is the loss of the opportunity to visit and celebrate with friends and family, for others it is the ability to go to work or open their daily business, and for some experiencing the actual physical effects of COVID-19. Yet, through it all, ***the Class of 2020*** has been and continues to be in our thoughts and prayers.

Each school, in its own way, has sought to lift up the Class of 2020 through posting pictures, planning for appropriate celebrations, and gathering notes of encouragement. **SS. John Neumann-Maria Goretti High School** posted a request to alumni. *“We have reached out to our alumni to offer words of encouragement to our Class of 2020! In a few short days we have already received over 150 responses!! You can view them here <http://neumanngorettihs.org/classof2020/> . Please know that so many people are rooting for our Seniors during this time!!!”*

The members of the Class of 2020 remain upmost in all of our thoughts and planning during this time. Knowing that this is not the senior year you had hoped for, we are so very proud of all of your achievements, care of others, and resilience.

Secondary Schools: Serving the Community

Service to others has always been a hallmark of student life in AOP high schools. An international pandemic may have limited the opportunities for face-to-face service, but it has not dimmed the noble hearts of the students. Social separation has only challenged the local schools to be more creative and responsive to needs in this time of medical emergency.

Aware that many alumni are small business owners whose livelihoods are in jeopardy at this time, many of our schools have launched campaigns to support local small businesses. Here are a few examples:

Shanahan Strong: Bishop Shanahan invited alumni, parents, and parents of alumni to share information about small businesses in need of community support. These include restaurants offering take-out, auto services, food and beverage manufacturing, medical supplies, social services, etc. Shanahan is creating and sharing a directory for the BSHS community to reference and encourage patronage.

Roman Resilient



The students from **Archbishop Carroll High School's** Faith in Action theology classes sought to honor and support those on the front lines in health care. The students donated lunch and wrote letters to the nurses, doctors, and medical staff of Bryn Mawr Hospital. In Carroll students' own words: *"They are on the front lines, they are heroes, and we are thankful for them!"*



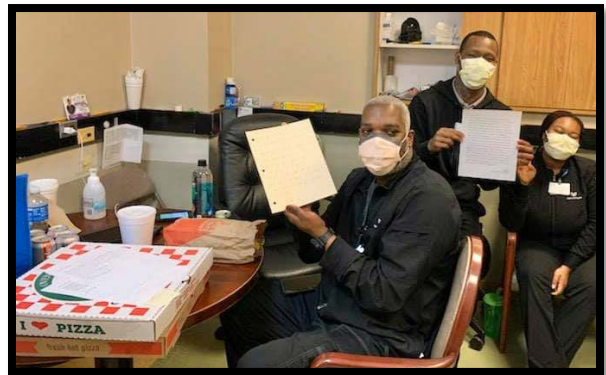
Neumann-Goretti's Assistant Principal of Student Affairs, Sr. Anne Brigid Gallagher, I.H.M. has been volunteering her time and talent to help stop the spread of Coronavirus by making masks for the St. Edmond's Home and others in need.



Conwell-Egan Cares

Alumni Support Directory

During this difficult time, CEC wanted to do their part and assist any alumni/CEC community member who owns a business that is currently offering essential services. For example, restaurants offering take-out, auto services, food and beverage manufacturing, medical supplies, social services, etc. A directory will be created and shared for the CEC community to reference and encourage patronage.



Father Judge High School is honoring Judge health care workers through their campaign #HarmsWayHeroes. “While we're all working to navigate our new normal at home, others are quietly and bravely working to keep the world moving in the right direction. These are the people who are selflessly working in harm's way for the benefit of others which is the epitome of the #JudgeGuy spirit! Help us show these #HarmsWayHeroes some Crusader love and appreciation. In the next few days, we'll begin to list names of heroes on our social media accounts asking for prayers and messages of appreciation from our school community.”



The Bambis at St. Hubert's took up the cause to support Abington Hospital workers who are doing everything they can day in and day out for the sick and those effected by COVID-19. They donated prepackaged unopened snacks, sandwich crackers, bags of snack-sized candy bars, boxes of Tastykakes, goldfish, fruit-snacks, granola bars, small bags of chips/pretzels, and bottled water.

During Holy Week, Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez released video pastoral messages in English and Spanish on the occasion of Easter 2020.

To view the video in English, please click the dedicated link below.
<https://vimeo.com/405475112>

To view the video in Spanish, please click the dedicated link below.
<https://vimeo.com/405475693>

Archbishop Pérez said, “It has been a painful, confusing, and trying time for us all, but in Christ and His triumph on the Cross, God’s great love for us prevails. That love transcends our human understanding and is more powerful than we can comprehend. It will never fail us.



So, on this Easter, let us look to God with renewed hearts and minds. May His love flow through us and inspire us to care for one another with tenderness and mercy. Let us also pray for the sick, suffering, their caregivers, for health professionals, and our elected officials.

These seemingly ominous days will pass and we shall remain united as a Christian family, as a people of hope. May God bless you and your loved ones abundantly and may the peace and joy of the Resurrection be with you always.”