



Catholic Education Coronavirus Taskforce Newsletter

June 8, 2020

Message from Father

Matthew Guckin Director of
Catholic Mission and Identity

“For God So Loved the World”

Dear Friends,

2020 has given us a decade's worth of trauma - and we're not even halfway through it!

A pandemic has placed the world in quarantine; racially-motivated killings have taken place in Georgia and Minnesota; peaceful protests have turned into rioting and looting; and 40 MILLION Americans are now unemployed.

Mayors are responding. Governors are responding. Police Commissioners are responding. The President is responding. Archbishop Pérez is responding.

But what about God? What's His response?

I remember as a kid watching the Super Bowl. And every year there was always that guy with rainbow-colored hair holding up that sign that read JOHN 3:16. Even as a kid I thought that guy was crazy.

His name is Rollen Stewart. And he is crazy. But only insofar as he's like God. God is crazy in love with us. That passage from the Bible - John 3:16 - tells us how crazy God's love for us is: *For God so loved the world*. It's from this past weekend's Gospel and it gives us God's response to 2020.

It's the whole world that God so loves. Not a nation. Not a people. Not only the people who love Him.

God loves the unlovable and the unlovely. He loves the people who love Him and those who never think of Him. God loves those who rest in His love and the person who spurns it all.

Everyone is included in this vast, inclusive love of God.

God loves each one of us...as if there was only one of us to love.

Rollen Stewart *is* crazy to believe this. But only because God is crazy to love like this.

And the more we dwell on this truth - that God so loves the whole world - the more peace we'll have in our hearts and in our world.

God bless you!

Father Matt Guckin

Director, Catholic Mission & Identity

The Office of Catholic Education Shares Archbishop Pérez's Commitment to Eradicate the Mortal Sin of Racism

On May 29th, all of our schools were asked to share a statement from Archbishop Pérez regarding the tragic death of George Floyd. All of us working in Catholic education echo and fully embrace the Archbishop's sentiments. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to read the full text here <http://archphila.org/statement-of-most-reverend-nelson-j-perez-regarding-the-death-of-george-floyd/>.

The Office of Catholic Education takes this opportunity to strongly reiterate that the dignity and sacredness of human life is the foundation of a moral vision for our society. We are committed to that moral vision by providing a preeminent, comprehensive education within an environment of acceptance, respect, and love.

We know that many in our community are hurting right now and we seek to help heal those wounds in a manner that prevents them from being torn open once again.

We must continue to develop young men and women that will speak out against hatred and injustice and that will work towards making this a better world for all. In the words of Archbishop Perez, "May God give all of us courage and solace as we work together for social justice and to preserve our land as one of equality and opportunity for every citizen. May He bring peace to Minneapolis and to our Philadelphia region and may He rekindle within each of our hearts true love and respect for our fellow human beings."

The Public Celebration of Mass has Resumed in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia

On Friday, June 5th, Archbishop Pérez held a news conference in the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul to announce the public Mass would once again be celebrated throughout the five-county Archdiocese of Philadelphia during the weekend of June 6-7. He was joined by Father Dennis Gill, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul and Director of the Archdiocesan Office for Divine Worship.

Together they addressed the pastoral and logistical aspects of our long awaited return to Mass, albeit with important and essential healthy and safety measures in place.

You can watch the full news conference here

<https://vimeo.com/catholicphilly/review/426063208/deee9b2fd0?fbclid=IwAR1urU4efly0ecsZjwaADrFn2Uzm1Qje8StD0itSPAoS5PnJbluRNxGJ564>

and learn more about programs aimed at restoring Catholic life in our parishes after the pandemic here <http://archphila.org/arise/>.

From the Office of the
Secretary of Elementary
Education

As the School Year Closes

St. Laurentius Teacher Wins ACE CAP Excellence Award

Congratulations to Mr. Notarfrancesco, Math teacher at **St. Laurentius School** and a member of the Civil Air Patrol, who will receive the ACE CAP Excellence Award Winner of the Year. Ms. Susan Mercer from the Awards Committee wrote, "I am pleased to tell you that St. Laurentius Catholic School is the 2019-2020 ACE CAP Excellence Award Winner of the Year. The awards committee was truly impressed with the program at St. Laurentius School. The program is exactly what the committee looks for when selecting a school to represent our ACE Program. The dedication of the teachers is apparent in their actions to go above and beyond for the students. I only wish I could be there to enjoy some of your classes!"

The award was announced in the May aerospace newsletter. A plaque, official letter, and some supplies will be shipped to St. Laurentius School. Mr. Notarfrancesco has gotten supplies through the Civil Air Patrol and the Air Force in order to make classes a true learning experience. St. Laurentius STREAM classes are made truly phenomenal through the cooperation of all the teachers and staff. St. Laurentius School is "A small wonder – where minds soar and hearts meet." Great job St. Laurentius and Mr. Notarfrancesco.

Pre-School End of Years Closings Celebrated in a Variety of Ways



As the calendar turned the page to June, schools will close the '19-'20 school year – a year like none other. Most schools closed their physical doors on Friday, March 13th for what they thought would be a two week period in order to contain the Coronavirus. Little did anyone know that on Thursday, April 9th, Governor Wolf would close the schools for the remainder of the school year. Schools devised creative ways to teach and stay in daily touch with the students. End of year celebrations also

took on a different look. At **Holy Family Regional School**, Parents of PreK students decorated their cars for a drive by in the school parking lot. At the end, teachers gave students their items in a brightly decorated bag. At **St. Christopher School**, cars were parked with students blowing bubbles outside their cars while social distancing.



Distance Learning

Friday, May 29th was the last day for Distance Learning at **St. Albert the Great School**. These past months have really shown what amazing, dedicated teachers the school has. They worked tirelessly at home to transition to have Distance Learning in place beginning the Monday after schools closed. It is a sad way to end our year but there were still some great projects being presented by our students this week. Our first graders finished up the year with their 2D and 3D shape projects. They also sent in pictures of their version of the Ascension of Our Lord. Our sixth graders worked on a summer retreat plan entitled "How to Have the Best, Most Awesome *and* Memorable, Holy *and* Happy Summer!" It included goals for Prayer, reading the Bible, Entertainment and Service. We are all looking forward to enjoying a restful and happy summer and we pray that we can reenter our school buildings in person in September!



My Summer Retreat Plan

Goals for Prayer:

- Pray when I wake up
- Pray before every meal
- Pray before I go to sleep

Goals for The Bible:

- Read thirty minutes a day
- See how far I get
- Try to be done before the school season

Goals for Saints:

- Get closer to Mary the Mother of God
- Learn more about Her
- Pray to her as much as I can

Goals for Hobbies:

- Tie God into sports
- Thank him for my athletic ability
- Ask him to help me be a good team player

Goals for Entertainment:

- Listen to Christian music
- Start to really like it
- Get to know the meanings of the songs

Goals for Virtue:

- Practice patience
- Practice Self control
- Become great at both

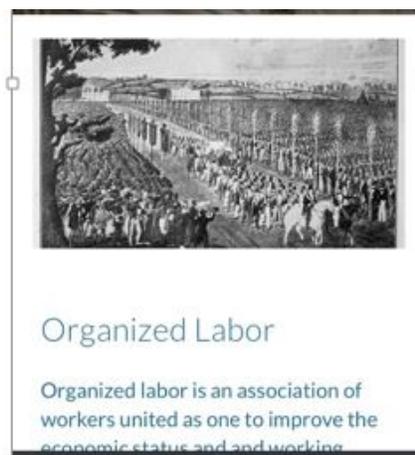
"Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."
-1 Timothy 4:12

Goals for Service:

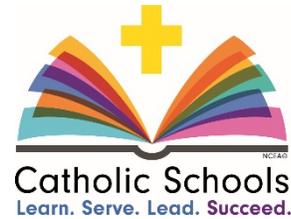
- Call someone who is lonely
- Check in on them
- Make them feel less lonely

Students STREAM Activity Includes Building Websites

St. Martha School seventh and eighth graders created their own websites using Google Sites. This STREAM activity involved multiple subjects. The seventh graders used an original political party (Federalists vs anti-Federalists) and they picked a candidate during who ran for office during that time period (early 1800s). They also came up with a campaign slogan for their candidate of choice. The eighth graders picked a time period from 1865 to 1912. They discussed different topics such as the Reconstruction era, the Gilded Age, immigrants, technology, etc. Tawanna Coates, their teacher, wanted the students to be more familiar with google resources and the students demonstrated their skills by their wonderful websites that they created. Awesome work!



From the Office of the
Superintendent of Secondary
Schools and Schools of Special
Education



Scholarship Earnings of the Class of 2020

\$412,139,607.00

A Record-Breaking Total



June 4, 2020

+ Dear Parents and Students,

As the 2020 school year draws to a close we wish to personally commend each student for their spirit of perseverance and commitment during a most difficult end of this year. Our students faced the challenges with the buildings being closed because of a national pandemic and remained committed to their educational goals. We are so proud of them!

To our graduates, the Class of 2020, we salute you! You met the final weeks of your educational journey with grace and goodness. We pray that as you begin the next phase of your journey, the Lord of All will bless you with graces in abundance. In each school's virtual graduation, your successes are highlighted and give testimony to your talents. **The Class of 2020's scholarship earnings is record breaking with over \$412,000,000.** This is amazing!! Share those talents which you have been given in abundance with your community, your university, and those whom you encounter each day. May Our Lord bless and keep you!

On, **June 7th, Trinity Sunday** Archbishop Nelson Pérez offered his liturgy for all school children to celebrate the close of this unique and challenging school year. We are grateful to the Archbishop for offering this special liturgy as the principal celebrant and homilist.

May God continue to bless each of you!

Sister Maureen

Sister Maureen L. McDermott, IHM, PhD

AOP Sports News

AOP Class Of 2020 Includes Athletic Excellence

Nearly 300 graduating senior student-athletes from AOP high schools will compete in college athletics in the 2020-21 academic year.



The complete listing [can be found here](#).

Congratulations seniors and best wishes as you pursue your academic and athletic endeavors!

**The photos included were taken prior to the CoVID-19 pandemic.*



With the 2019-20 school year coming to a close, this will be the last of our weekly newsletters. We will provide updates during the summer, as will your individual schools, on plans for reopening schools in the Fall.

From the outset of the COVID-19 crisis, the safety of our students, faculty and staff has been paramount. Our planning for the Fall of 2020 will continue to keep safety as a top priority and we will comply with the new guidelines that have been issued regarding reopening schools in the Fall.

Many thanks to our school leaders, faculty, students and parents for working together these past few months not only to keep our schools running, but in delivering a consistent, quality education. The stories in the newsletters over these past few months clearly highlighted what makes a Catholic education so special.

David J. Magee, Ed.D.
Chairperson
Catholic Education Coronavirus Taskforce

