



DIOCESE OF STOCKTON

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

May 29, 2020

Dear Catholic School Community:

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD,
plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*
Jeremiah 29:11

No one could have imagined that 11 weeks ago, when we announced the closure of our school campuses, that a two week hiatus from our campuses would extend into four weeks, and finally into summer. If we knew then what we know now, we would have said it was impossible; it could never happen; any plans would fail. Clearly we have proven to ourselves, and to others, that with prayer and a relentless commitment to our students, all things are indeed possible with God.

We want to reiterate our thanks to our parents, teachers and administrators. From the stories, videos, comments, and Facebook posts that have been shared, extraordinary efforts were made day after day to keep our Catholic identity, academic excellence, and service to others alive and vibrant in the remote environment.

Looking towards the 2020/21 academic year, we understand that many parents are filled with anxiety, asking for the exact configuration of the re-opening. Our priority remains to return to campus with a full day of in-person instruction. Planning for this is underway. With input from health officials and advisors, the Catholic Schools Office and the principals have created a baseline full return-to-campus protocol. Each school will have its own unique protocol tailored to the school's community and facilities and will submit their plans to the respective county department of public health to ensure that county and state expectations are met. We want to remind families that county and state guidelines for reopening in August are yet to be confirmed and until that time, the Catholic Schools Office and the principals cannot state with certainty what scenario will be permissible by public health officials. Our Catholic Schools Office will continue to provide updates throughout the summer. In the meantime, we ask that you keep our schools in your prayers and remember that Catholic schools are critical to the evangelical mission of the Church in America. We must do everything we can to keep them strong for the next 200 years.

As the summer break approaches, we wish our graduates all the best as they head off to their newest adventure. We pray that they will rely on prayer and the values of our Catholic faith to guide them through challenging waters with courage and confidence.

During this month of May, please join us in asking our Blessed Mother to protect and strengthen us with grace and patience as God's plan unfolds before us.

In the Peace of Christ,

Most Reverend Myron J. Cotta
Bishop of Stockton

Marian DeGroot Graham
Director for Catholic Schools