



Thoughts as we begin distance learning tomorrow, March 16, 2020

Dear Catholic School Parents:

As the weekend draws to a close, I wanted to reach out to you about tomorrow, and talk about what we can all do together to support our students and our schools.

The events of the last few days are unprecedented, and I am grateful for the understanding and trust that you have granted us, your children's educators, as we do our part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and take every precaution to keep your children safe. Tomorrow morning, we will begin our first day of distance learning for all students of the Diocese of Sacramento. We have been working overtime for this moment, and we are ready.

Every school community is unique, and our principals have been working diligently to adapt our resources to your particular needs. This is the first time that distance learning has been tried with elementary school students on this scale, and our investment in new technology over the past few years has made it possible. We are encouraging principals to use platforms with which our families are already familiar, like SchoolSpeak and Google apps; we are also blessed to have thousands of tech experts in our desks who will be able to help the grown-ups figure it out. Please expect a learning curve as we adapt to our new media, and bear with us if we have technical glitches as our pipeline fills with email, video, and other things in numbers that we - and our service providers - have never seen before.

Please expect daily communication from your principal and teachers, and know that they are doing everything they can to meet your students' needs and keep your trust. I cannot emphasize enough how much I admire the commitment, dedication, and initiative they have all demonstrated as we've prepared for this change. I will continue to reach out to you, too, as the situation evolves, and we respond to the needs, challenges, and opportunities ahead. Tomorrow is a big day for all of us, and as we approach it with a spirit of gratitude for this moment, I trust in Jesus as he calls us by name and tells every one of us: Be Not Afraid.

Things may be different for a while for all of us, but I know that, together, we can continue to teach our children all the things that make Catholic school unique. We stand for excellence, yes; but more importantly, we cultivate virtue, we model community, we show our kids the Love and saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We teach our kids to be grateful. We prepare them to be happy.

Thank you for being part of this community. We are grateful to be sharing this journey with you.

Peace,

Lincoln Snyder
Superintendent and Executive Director of Schools
The Diocese of Sacramento