



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

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## Updates from the Office of Catholic Schools November 12, 2020

Dear Clergy of the Diocese of Columbus,

This letter contains a few updates on the major projects and activities of the Office of Catholic Schools so far this year. It will be my goal to provide this to you on a monthly basis going forward in an effort to keep you better informed about our Catholic schools. Without exaggeration, this has been a school year like none other. I ask for your continued prayers for our schools and all whose lives they touch.

- Adam

### **Covid Pandemic**

The Diocese of Columbus remains firm in its commitment to continue school operations to the fullest extent permitted by the health and safety regulations as established by CDC guidelines and the State of Ohio, including the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Health. So far this year, there have been cases of Covid among students and faculty, but none have been the result of spread through the schools. Instead cases are happening outside of school at gatherings and events where families let their guard down. We are confident that the safety protocols in place at each school continue to be effective.

OCS has formed a new task force to examine ways to provide ongoing support and encouragement to the educators of our Diocese. We are partnering with the Catholic Foundation and Laura Lewis of Veritas Counseling and will be working with schools during the winter months to keep morale up. The task force has also created an update to our Re-Opening Plan that address the factors that will prompt a move to remote instruction. That update is included in this bulletin.

### **Catholic Faith Formation**

This summer, the Office of Catholic Schools welcomed Dr. Therese Recinella to the staff as the new Associate Director of School Religious Education. This position was not a new addition to the office. Instead, the responsibility for schools was shifted to OCS from the Office of Religious Education and Catechesis in an effort to better focus that office on parish support. Dr. Recinella has extensive education and experience in catechesis and came to Columbus from her previous position as Director of Religious Education in the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas.

One of her first tasks has been to build out the relationship between the Diocese and the Catechetical Institute (CI) at Franciscan University of Steubenville. With Bishop Brennan's approval, we have begun the process of transitioning administrator and teacher catechetical formation to the CI to replace the previous in-house model. The process will begin this year with all new teachers and administrators.

Dr. Recinella is also forming a committee to revise the K-12 Religion Curriculum. This revision had already been scheduled for this school year, but with her arrival, we now have an opportunity to ensure that the curriculum faithfully teaches our faith and that it is tailored for the needs of our Catholic schools. It will be a curriculum separate and apart from the PSR model. The committee will begin work before Christmas.



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