



# ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

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May 8, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

During this crisis and especially in the month of May, it is important for us to ask Mary, our Mother, to watch over us:

*Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, our mother; to you do we come, before you we stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer us.*

*Amen.*

During the coronavirus crisis, I have been very impressed with your school communities. You have come together and allowed the students to flourish during a difficult time. During this week of *Teacher Appreciation*, I wanted to share my appreciation and applaud all of our teachers for their efforts to support your children. We are blessed to have so many incredible teachers.

Our priority is the health and safety of all who are in our school communities. Public officials in all regions have announced the closure of school until the end of the year. In compliance with these orders, all archdiocesan school campuses are closed through the end of the school year. Distance learning will continue through the end of your school's previously planned academic year.

I know this news is disappointing to our students and school communities but we must make decisions that are in the best interests of our students, families, staff, and administrators. This week, we started working with school principals to plan for the day that the stay-at-home order is lifted. Principals and staff are now working behind the scenes to plan for virtual end-of-year events that help hold our communities together, while apart. These celebrations are so important to all of us, a community, and will hopefully ease the disappointment of not being together, in person.

Also, school leaders and staff are planning the logistics for returning student personal property to families and collecting textbooks and digital devices at the end of this academic year. Principals will communicate these timelines and procedures to you in the coming weeks.

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In closing, thank you for the expressions of appreciation for our work and encouragement that families have offered to school administrators, teachers and staff. They continue to uplift and motivate our educators. As always, please know that you are in my prayers, and that of my entire team.

We are one #ADWfamily.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William H. Ryan, III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

William H. Ryan, III  
Secretary for Catholic Schools