



*Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Saint Cloud*

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June 18, 2020

Dear Catholic school parents and families,

I hope you are enjoying these days of summer with your loved ones. Thank you again for your commitment to Catholic schools. These schools continue to provide an excellent education grounded in Gospel values, community and service to others. You have my support, and you remain in my prayers.

As your bishop, I am committed to working with pastors, principals and teachers to reopen Catholic school buildings this fall. Our diocese's office of Catholic Education Ministries is assisting principals and teachers in preparing plans that meet the needs of students and that are adaptable to changing circumstances if there is a resurgence of the coronavirus at some point during the school year.

I am very proud with the way our schools responded when the pandemic necessitated building closures during the last few months of this past school year. Using technology in new ways and developing remote learning strategies allowed teachers to stay close to their students while they needed to be apart. This came with many challenges, of course, for teachers, principals and parents. This is why planning is so important as we look to the Fall.

In that regard, David Fremo, director of CEM and superintendent of Catholic schools, is working with our Catholic schools to prepare for a variety of settings: face-to-face learning, remote learning and a hybrid of the two. It is conceivable that schools may need to use all three models during the course of the upcoming academic year. Plans will need to be consistent with safety guidelines issued by state and federal health authorities. The health of our students, teachers and Catholic school families is a top priority.

David is assisting principals to form reopening teams that focus on five areas of planning: operations, school community, curriculum and instruction, student and teacher support, and Catholic identity. These areas will be incorporated into principal meetings and trainings during the summer. He also is participating in discussions with other Catholic school leaders and public school officials throughout the state to identify ideas and best practices that will benefit our schools.

As part of the planning process, we want to ensure that schools have access to the resources they need to help teachers support the educational needs of

students, particularly when it comes to remote learning. We also are emphasizing with schools the importance of continuing to foster their partnership with you as the primary educators of your children. This includes keeping the lines of communication open regarding their plans and intentions. And I ask you to reach out to your schools with any questions, concerns or challenges you might have.

It is important for each of our Catholic schools to have a plan that best meets the needs of their students and families. We are the Church together, and by working together we will provide the best Catholic education possible.

I hope to be able to visit schools during this next year to spend time with students, principals and teachers, and see how things are going. Please join me in praying for our Catholic schools as strong places of learning, spiritual growth and community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+Donald J. Kettley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'D' and 'K'.

+Donald J. Kettley  
Bishop of Saint Cloud