

God Calls Us



EACH BY NAME

March 2021

“Lent is a journey that involves our whole life, our entire being. It is a time to reconsider the path we are taking, to find the route that leads us home and to rediscover our profound relationship with God, on whom everything depends.” (Pope Francis, [Homily](#), 02/17/21)

In his homily for Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis invites us to look to a bigger picture of the journey of Lent. It is not only a journey into the desert with Jesus as he prepares to go to Jerusalem for his ultimate sacrifice. Our Holy Father invites us to look more deeply upon the journey of Lent as one where we commit our lives to always returning to God, his love, and his mercy. The Pope shares that through the gift of the person of Jesus, God came to us so that he could take us by the hand and walk us towards the joy of salvation.

Our planning for the 2021-22 school year is well underway. As with all things over the past many months, we recognize that there is uncertainty that exists because of the pandemic. Our schools have done an outstanding job at ensuring that students and staff are safe and that all COVID risk-mitigation protocols are followed; these will continue for the duration of the pandemic.

Understanding that our mandate is to provide in-person learning, we have also arrived at a model for online learning for the 2021-22 school year for those students that would benefit from this learning option based on their learning style. This option is significantly different than the COVID-inspired online platform presently in place, and a conversation with your child’s administration would be beneficial in understanding these differences as they pertain to your child’s learning needs.

We are asking parents to indicate their learning stance intention (in-person or online) for each child before March 22. The Division will analyze the number of requests to establish the most efficient and cost-effective way of delivering the online experience based on family choice. By families making decisions that meet their needs early on, it will allow us to create a robust learning experience for every student. All online students will be given one opportunity to return to their community school, on February 1, 2022. There will be no opportunity for students that want online learning to enroll after the start of the school year.

Please be sure to go to your PowerSchool Parent portal to indicate your intentions for each child for next year by March 22, 2021 so that we can be sure that our staffing meets the needs of our students in both in-person and online learning. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Pope Francis published an encyclical letter, [Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship](#), last fall. This month, our Religious Education Services (RES) Secondary Consultant writes about chapter 5, *A Better Kind of Politics*, and chapter 6, *Dialogue and Friendship in Society*. The article is included as an accompaniment to this newsletter.

I leave you with a final thought from Pope Francis' beautiful Ash Wednesday Homily: "Lent is a humble descent both inwards and towards others. It is about realizing that salvation is not an ascent to glory, but a descent in love."

Many blessings on your continued Lenten journey towards our God.

Sincerely,
Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent