



St. John Paul II Catholic Schools

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Holy Spirit Elementary School • Nativity Elementary School • Trinity Elementary School
Sullivan Middle School • Shanley High School

Our Lady of Mount Carmel: July 16, 2020

Dear parents and guardians:

Here in the Red River Valley a mountain seems out of place. But the opening prayer for today's Mass identifies "the mountain which is Christ."

*"May the venerable intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary come to our aid, we pray, O Lord, so that, fortified by her protection, we may reach **the mountain which is Christ**. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN."*

Set in the heights of the Holy Land, Mount Carmel is an image of Life in Christ and our Heavenly destination. Your children will once again have many opportunities to encounter, experience, and know the love of Christ as they progress in learning in the coming school year.

No matter the form of learning this year—from in-person learning to distance learning to a hybrid of the two—that fundamental mission will be accomplished.

We plan to begin *in-person learning* with the 2020-2021 opening day of school for our students in grades 1-12 on Tuesday, August 25; younger students (Little Deacons-PK-K) will have their first full day on Thursday, August 27.

To be prepared for the various scenarios we may encounter this year, we will be sharing with you our detailed health and safety plan and distance learning plan once they are approved by our Board of Directors in the coming weeks.

The successful reopening of our schools will depend on many factors, but most importantly, all of us taking personal responsibility for the common good as well as for our own health and safety. Strong relationships and trust will be the essential key with students, parents, and staff. The COVID-19 pandemic has added a whole new element to school life, so a commitment by everyone to mitigation and preventative practices will be crucial to continue in-person learning.

Parents, thank you in advance for your partnership, patience, and perseverance as we collaborate in our mission to educate the whole child in body, mind, and spirit. The mountain which is Christ helps us integrate and elevate all aspects of our schools: academics, service, the arts, athletics, social events, and friendships. That integrating love of Christ is what makes our schools such a unique gift and treasure. Thank you for choosing to share this treasure with your children by enrolling them in St. John Paul II Catholic Schools. We are #deaconstrong.

Mike Hagstrom

President, St. John Paul II Catholic School



The Mission of St. John Paul II Catholic Schools is to inspire excellence by teaching the total person and fostering the following of Christ, as taught by the Catholic Church

Prayer for Catholic Schools

(Used with permission from the University of Notre Dame's "Alliance For Catholic Education")

Preface: ... [W]e recognize that our lives and our work are totally dependent upon God. Through prayer, we entrust to God our communities and all we do in service to Catholic schools, as we share Mary's conviction:

"Nothing will be impossible for God" (Luke 1:37).



Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Let us pray:

O Christ, our Teacher,

You invite Your faithful people to make disciples in Your name and to announce good news to the poor. We thank You for the gift of Catholic schools, where

*The message of Your life, death, and resurrection is proclaimed,
Christian community is experienced,
Service to our brothers and sisters is modeled,
And worship of You is cultivated.*

Increase our zeal for ensuring that all children and families can benefit from a high quality Catholic education, and that Catholic schools grow in their ability to nurture the soul of our nation.

We ask this through the intercession of Our Lady, Mother of Catholic Schools. Amen.